

MIXTURE WAS VERY MUCH AS BEFORE

Struggling Town Are Out Of Luck As Well As Form

By CHILTERN

WEST BROMWICH ALBION 4, LUTON TOWN 0

IT was very much the mixture as before at The Hawthorns on Saturday, with the Town attack again mis-firing and, eventually, the defence caving in so that in the end, their arrears could have been greater.

At the same time, luck is running against them, otherwise they could have put themselves back into this game with a chance and given themselves the encouragement to make a greater fight than they did.

In the first place they had what they thought was a perfectly good goal by Brown disallowed, almost immediately after ALLEN had given West Bromwich the lead with 16 minutes gone.

Seventeen minutes later ALLEN increased the lead with a terrific drive from outside the penalty area that simply rocketed into the roof of the net.

Morton matched this effort just before half-time, but his luck was out because Wallace just managed to reach the ball with his finger tips and deflected it on to the bar.

There was a period during the second half when the Town moved with a bit more assurance, and during that period Bingham hit the post and Turner saw a great first-time shot go straight at the fortunate Wallace.

But these incidents were rare jewels in what was really a disappointing display, and West Bromwich, in the last quarter of an hour, over-ran a defence that had been struggling throughout.

WHITEHOUSE increased the lead 14 minutes from time, and KEVAN headed the fourth five minutes later. Twice after that the Town woodwork was hit, and it was a relief when the final whistle went.

ONLY BINGHAM HAD A SPARK

Only Bingham provided a real spark in the Town attack, and he was too closely watched to be as effective as he can be. Cummins did a tremendous amount of work but tended to keep the ball too close, which meant that the Town had a tucked-up look in midfield, though some of it was caused through lack of support.

Brown again gave the appearance of a player struggling to regain some semblance of form; Turner was in the picture for brief periods, and Kilgannon could only demonstrate how urgent is the Town's need for an outside-left.

Much of the damage to the

Town defence was caused by Jackson, who has only recently been converted into a winger, but he had too much speed and resource for Hawkes, who came off very much second best.

The need to try to cover up weaknesses made Groves's centre-half job all the more difficult, and there were times when he could not avoid leaving the middle unguarded.

Morton was more consistent and stronger than Pacey, who did not show his old dominance in the tackle, and Dunne was fairly adequate against Aitken.

Handicapped by another knock on his damaged thigh muscle, Baynham gave a brave performance, making several brilliant saves, but has to take some blame for the first and last goals, slips doubtless brought about by the greasiness of the ball.

WEST BROMWICH ALBION: Wallace; Howe, Williams (S); Setters, Kennedy, Robson; Jackson, Whitehouse, Allen, Kevan, Aitken.

LUTON TOWN: Baynham; Dunne, Hawkes (K); Morton, Groves, Pacey; Bingham, Turner, Brown, Cummins, Kilgannon.

Referee: J Parkinson, Blackburn. Attendance: 22,400.

WHAT THE OTHER CRITICS SAID

"Luton are doomed to relegation unless they get a leader who can cajole, brow-beat and guide his men through the awful patch they have landed themselves in since Syd Owen moved from dressing-room to manager's office. They lack bite in the forward line and confidence in the defence. And there is a bad weakness at wing-half."—"Sunday Express."



"For Luton, the two heroes were Ron Baynham and Billy Bingham. Baynham could be faulted for the first goal when he dived for Whitehouse's centre and the greasy ball slipped under him."—"Sunday Pictorial."



"What of Luton? They seem certain to be demoted on this display. With the exception of Dunne and Morton, their defence tackled badly and were easily drawn out of position. And right-winger Bingham was the only forward to worry Albion."—"The People."



"Luton have got a bad attack of nerves. They are just plain frightened to play the football that took them to the Cup Final. Now they prod tentatively, shoot wildly and run anywhere but the right place."—"Empire News."



"There is no sadder sight in Soccer just now than Luton Town. Losing their fifth game in succession, they wore the sackcloth of relegation prospects at West Bromwich as clearly as a convict his broad arrows."—"Sunday Dispatch."



"For 20 minutes of the second half, Luton were still in the game. Wallace dived under the feet of Bingham to save a certain goal and was there again when Turner whipped in a first-time drive from a Bingham centre."—"News of the World."