

A gift point for aimless Luton

Birmingham 1, Luton 1: by GEORGE DUNCAN

HOW the 19,000 at St. Andrews—the lowest gate of the season—must have envied those who stayed away from this drab, “bottom-of-the-table” match. It was a scrappy, fumbling affair of aimless passes and lamentable finishing.

And the pity of it was that both teams tried so hard. In fact they kept on trying right up to the final minutes but they just hadn't the ability to turn their striving to any account.

Again it was Birmingham's defence that let them down. Rank bad judgment by goalkeeper Johnny Schofield presented Luton with a gift goal early on, and only an “out of the blue” equaliser by inside-left Jim Barrett enabled them to save a point.

But this was only fair. It would have been an injustice if Birmingham had lost — Luton plainly demonstrated why they have only scored 12 goals this season.

Bingham stars

Right-winger Billy Bingham was their best forward and he got their goal in the eighth minute. Who was the most surprised—Bingham or Schofield—it was hard to tell.

Following a three-man move, Bingham flighted over a high centre. There seemed no danger until the ball hit the top of the post and rebounded into the net

with Schofield hardly making any attempt to stop it.

Brian Orritt and Johnny Gordon worked hard in Birmingham's forward line which, as a unit, was completely non-existent.

“Goal grabber” Barrett's tally for the afternoon was: two “open” goal misses, a shot which hit the crossbar, and a goal. For the rest he was ineffective.

The lack of striking power of both attacks was amply shown by the fact that on two occasions goals went begging when the goalkeepers were well out. On another occasion, out-of-touch Harry Hooper completely failed to centre into an open goalmouth.

After an aimless first half play did improve a little and Birmingham brightened up after equalising in the 55th minute.

Just before this Barrett had missed a “sitter” from Orritt's pass.

The equaliser came from a short corner. Brian Taylor sent the ball to Orritt, who split Luton's defence with a diagonal pass. Barrett met the ball and beat Baynam with a hard cross-drive.