

LAST-SECONDS GOAL SNATCHED POINT FROM TOWN

Grim Defensive Work Came To Nought

By CHILTERN

WOLVES 3, LUTON TOWN 2

EIGHTY-NINE minutes had passed at Molineux on Tuesday and the Town were hanging on like grim death to a point. Their small band of supporters were preparing to cheer them for a determined fight and a hard-won success.

Then it happened. All that hard defensive work that had been necessary so often in this match went to nought when, with less than a minute to go, Wolves broke away and scored the winning goal.

For the Town it was sheer, stark tragedy that they came so close to gaining the point that would have given a fillip to their chances of avoiding relegation, the more so because the goal could have been avoided.

Kelly broke up an attack and passed to Turner, who, although in an open space, was dispossessed and the ball was whipped out to Horne.

As he had done a dozen times previously, the left-winger smashed it across the face of the goal, and this time BROADBENT was on hand to stab it through from point blank range.

There was just time for the match to be re-started for the Town to launch one brief, desperate attack, and that was the end of a sad story.

It began on a note that carried a deal of warning for the Town when, in the first minute, a shot by Mason was deflected by Kelly's head on to the inside of a post and was scrambled away.

In the eleventh minute it seemed to me that the old bogey of bad luck hit the Town again when Deeley was allowed to go through from what looked to be an offside position.

"OFFSIDE," SAID OWEN

Manager Sid Owen, who was much nearer being in line with the incident than I was, thought Deeley was a couple of yards offside, but play went on and HORNE drove a low centre into the far corner of the net.

First constructive movement

that the Town managed brought them an equaliser two minutes later, when McCreadie sent away Bingham, who found GROVES with a finely judged through pass and the inside-left went on to beat Sidebottom with a well-placed shot just inside a post.

Came the Wolves' biggest shock after 35 minutes when BINGHAM came into the inside-left position to meet a corner from Gregory and, at the risk of injury bent down low to steer the ball through with his head.

Again, there was a quick equaliser because, two minutes later, a miskick by McNally brought a centre that Broadbent headed in.

Down went Baynham at full length, but he could not hold on to the ball and, as it went loose, MURRAY was on hand to bang it through.

MUCH WOLVES PRESSURE

That was the state of affairs at the interval and, in the second half, the Town had to withstand a lot of Wolves pressure.

Pattern of the home team's play never varied. Without waste of time, they moved the ball, invariably forward down the centre, or down the wings, and I have seldom seen such a stream of centres as came from Deeley and Horne.

Stolid defensive work and some

poor shooting by the Wolves kept the Town in the game, but they had their moments, too, when Brown tested Sidebottom from 25 yards, McCreadie was just too slow to accept the one clear-cut chance that came his way and Gregory forced Sidebottom to save at the foot of a post.

Other than that, it was the hungry Wolves who looked the more goal conscious and only a wonder save by Baynham prevented Broadbent from giving them the lead earlier.

There were several narrow escapes, but it looked any odds on the Town grabbing a point until those last dying seconds.

Praise them for their fighting spirit in the face of superior strength which was mostly vested in the Wolves tall half-back line but, at the same time, the old problems still remain.

Gamble of pitching in 17-years-old McCreadie for his first Division I game failed because Slater was completely masterful in the middle and secured every ball in the air.

Support for the young leader was poor, but he did sufficient to show rich promise for the future and it was asking a lot of him to shine on this occasion.

OTHER PROBLEM SPOT

That other problem spot on the left wing is still there because Gregory was scarcely in it and although Turner did plenty of chasing, he was much in the grip of Flowers.

Which left Bingham and Groves as the two forwards from whom most could be expected. The latter covered miles of ground and Bingham, not quite at his best, would have been more dangerous had he received the right sort of service in the second half.

Outstanding player in the Town team was Brown, who again held the captaincy, and he worked like a trojan both in attack and defence. The strength of his tackling rivalled that of the Wolves' wing-halves and that is compliment enough.

However, Pacey was below that of which he is capable, particularly in his distribution and both Dunne and McNally spent the match at full stretch in their efforts to combat the speed and directness of the home wingers.

McNally got more of a grip in the second half, but Dunne never secured the mastery of the fast Horne.

From Kelly, there was a dour performance in difficult conditions because of the number of through passes with which he had to contend, and except that Baynham might have been expected to hang on to the ball when the second goal came, he had another good match.

WOLVES. — Sidebottom; Showell, Stuart; Clamp, Slater, Flowers; Deeley, Broadbent, Murray, Mason, Horne.

LUTON TOWN. — Baynham; Dunne, McNally; Brown, Kelly, Pacey; Bingham, Turner, McCreadie, Groves, Gregory.

Referee.—R. Reddaway, Kettering. Attendance.—30,056.