

McBRIDE DISPELS THEIR GLOOM

59/60

Luton 2, Leicester 0 : by JOHN THOMPSON

FLUNG from the comparative calm of Wolves' reserve team into the cauldron of Luton's feverish battle against relegation, Joe McBride, 22-year-old Scottish centre forward, left the field after this one-sided encounter amid one of the greatest ovations ever given to a player on this homely little ground.

The goal he made and the goal he scored had given Luton a chance of staying in the First Division.

McBride, who moved from Molineux for a £12,000 fee on the eve of this vital match, said in the dressing-room:—

"It was great to be on the winning side in my first game here. I found the pace a bit faster than I've been used to lately, but playing with such grand team-mates helped a lot."

His own goal came in the last minute. He passed to Cummins, then raced upfield for the ball to be returned.

As it came he threw himself forward and ended up with the ball and himself both in the net.

TENACIOUS

The one he made was scored 15 minutes from time. After a typically tenacious dribble he swung the ball into the goalmouth for Turner to beat Banks with a header that was diverted on the way by Appleton.

All through the first half it looked as though nothing would go right for Luton. Leicester failed to score because they kept the ball too close and held it too long.

This was only a shadow of the City side that has done so well in Cup and League lately.

One of several Luton misfortunes was a shoulder injury to goalkeeper

Baynham. Although obviously in great pain, he insisted on playing on.

In the 15th minute, Luton were given a penalty for hands. Turner, who was to miss several other golden chances and compensate for them by sheer hard work, saw his kick saved by Banks.

McBride was carefully marked by King, centre-half deputy for cold victim Knapp. Even so, he contributed to several neat touches in a level first half.

In the second, Luton swarmed on top and the ball left the Leicester half only in rare break-aways.

Banks was superb in goal and at times was helped by Luton's over-anxious shooting.

In this they matched the earlier weakness of Leicester.

In defence the outstanding player was always Allan Brown. His calm example steadied nerves that were sometimes in danger of fraying in face of Luton's desperate situation.

Bingham was covered closely by Cunningham—and the Luton backs Dunn and McNally gave scant room to Leicester wingers who always promised more than they achieved.

But this was Joe McBride's day. Worried Luton have a new hero who has given them hope.