

TOWN GAINED NO RELIEF AT CHELSEA

Team Disorganised After Injury To McNally

By CHILTERN

CHELSEA 3, LUTON TOWN 0

ALTHOUGH they remained on level terms for an hour at Stamford Bridge on Saturday, the Town never really looked capable of winning two precious points.

In fact, their defeat could have been more decisive had not Chelsea been so prodigal with their scoring chances and, in addition, had they not experienced some bad luck.

Yet, the Town had a few scoring opportunities before they went into arrears but, as it has happened so often this season, the most was not made of them.

With Collier in a distinctly shaky mood in the early stages, Chelsea might have taken a commanding lead before the match was very old and, throughout, there was a lack of soundness about the Town defence.

Not that they were without an excuse because McNally damaged a knee after half an hour and, after attention at the trainer's bench, spent the rest of the match virtually a passenger on the left wing.

That caused a re-arrangement which took Pacey to left-back, Groves to left-half and Tracey to inside-left.

Therefore, we had little opportunity of gauging whether Tracey, appearing for the first time on the left wing, can be the answer to this pernicious problem.

He was the fifth player to occupy the position in five matches, and he did show, early on, a rather more determined

approach to the job than some of his predecessors.

However, when he moved inside, he was mostly crowded out and the Town badly needed an inside-forward with the ability to hold the ball and to use it to true advantage.

THIS MIGHT HAVE CHANGED THINGS

Things could have been different had Turner scored early in the second half when he beat Crowther in a tackle, but his hard-hit shot went straight at Matthews, who parried it.

After having hit the woodwork twice and having had shots kicked off the goal-line, Chelsea took the lead after 60 minutes when GREAVES took advantage of some lax work in front of goal, to head the ball over the head of Collier.

Appeals by the Town for off-side were turned down, and four minutes later, TINDALL nipped in between Kelly and Collier to toe-end a centre from Blunstone into the net.

Apart from a couple of excellent efforts by McBride, one a terrific drive that Matthews turned over the bar, and the other a header that went inches too high, the Town seldom looked like improving their position and, a minute from the end, GREAVES headed a third goal after Collier had failed to cut out a centre by Brabrook.

Collier's lack of confidence and judgment had an adverse effect on the rest of the defence and served to expose the limitations of Kelly when the ball is in the air.

HAD STRUGGLING TIME

Although he is playing a useful role, Kelly is not the dominant centre-half to which the Town have been used for so long.

Neither Chelsea winger was ever completely shut out of the game and Pacey, not in his best form at the moment, had a struggling time at left-back and Dunne was kept at full stretch, too.

Groves was much better at left-half than he had been at inside-left and Brown played strongly throughout, though he found it hard to keep a complete grip on Greaves.

In the first half, Turner used the ball as well as anybody, and was always a potential danger which never quite accrued.

Because of lack of support, there were few chances for the hard-working McBride, and Bingham, though he had moments of sparkle, found the close marking of Peter Sillett difficult to shake off.

CHELSEA.—Matthews; Sillett (J), Sillett (P); Anderton, Mortimore, Crowther; Brabrook, Brooks, Tindall, Greaves, Blunstone.

LUTON TOWN. — Collier; Dunne, McNally; Brown, Kelly, Pacey; Bingham, Turner, McBride, Groves, Tracey.

Referee.—J. Finney (Hereford).
Attendance.—33,679.

WHAT THE OTHER CRITICS SAID

"From Luton's point of view, the least said the better. They are uninspiring and appear to have lost all heart. Their one ray of sunshine was right-winger Bingham. But he must get awfully tired of continually seeing his artistry and fine work go unrewarded."—"Sunday Express."



"Are Luton losing heart? For a club in such dire peril of relegation their display at Stamford Bridge lacked the fire and urgency, at least until the second half, that one expects from a side faced with a grim, last-ditch battle to avoid the drop. The Hatters showed heaps more fight after the change-over, but by then it was too late, for Chelsea, hitherto strangely unimpressive against the side down in the dumps, swept into a clear lead, and poor Luton, to whom every point counts, went empty away."—"Empire News."



"Dying men will clutch at a straw. Luton didn't even appear willing to clutch at a straw hat, although the sun was shining brightly over Stamford Bridge. Chelsea weren't all that good, anyhow, nor was their reputation so fearsome as the hangdog look of much of Luton's work indicated. Their play was almost entirely without purpose, unless the purpose was to fill in 90 minutes. Brown and McBride, and occasionally Groves, are exempt from this criticism. They tried in vain to get some form into the affair."—"Sunday Dispatch."



"I'm afraid Luton need far more than a left-winger to save them from the Second Division. The only time they came really close to scoring was late in the match, when Joe McBride took a Bingham pass and hit the ball so hard he almost knocked Matthews into the back of the net."—"News of the World."

"The talent that Luton have has to work too hard to cover the too many deficiencies of others. Bingham, who cannot be excused for missing one great chance, could do the work of only two forwards."—"Daily Mail."



"Chelsea, with better marksmanship and more direct finishing, could well have run to double figures against a Luton side which looks doomed for the drop to the Second Division. Alan Collier was a jittery and unreliable substitute for Ron Baynham in goal, and the injury to Brendan McNally forced him into the role of passenger for the last hour."—"News Chronicle."



"Luton were unrecognisable as the team which, for three-quarters of an hour, dominated Wolves in the fifth round of the Cup. On Saturday they were saved from a hiding only by Chelsea's haphazard shooting. The absence of Baynham and an injury which took left-back McNally to the wing were contributory causes, but for a team which must fight for every point, Luton's submission to a moderate Chelsea suggests that nothing can now save them from relegation."—"Daily Telegraph."