

FORTUNE DID NOT SMILE ON TOWN

Bingham Nearly Saved A Precious Point For Them

By CHILTERN

NEWCASTLE UNITED 3, LUTON TOWN 2

IF the Town can reproduce this form in their remaining matches and if, in addition, they have a bit of luck for a change, they can still avoid the threatened drop to the Second Division.

In losing at St. James's Park, they were most unfortunate because they shrugged off the handicap of an injury to Turner after only 14 minutes which made him a limping passenger for the remainder of the time and, on the run of the play, particularly in the second half, deserved a point.

What they must guard against in the immediate future, though, is the tendency to present goals to their opponents by lax marking and Newcastle's first two successes came into this category.

With the team badly needing the confidence booster of a good start, the Town found themselves a goal down in only three minutes when a cross by Mitchell found WHITE completely unattended in front of goal and, before anyone could do anything about it, he smartly whipped the ball past Baynham.

Rocked back on their heels as they must have been, the Town still had the spirit and the determination to fight back and were level again in the 13th minute.

Hawkes placed accurately into the penalty area a free kick and BINGHAM, showing splendid anticipation, raced into the middle to glide the ball with his head past Harvey.

A minute later and the Town might have been ahead had luck really been with them. McMichael played on Turner, who was in an offside position and the inside-right went on with a clear course for goal that was barred only by Harvey.

Out came the goalkeeper and as Turner tried to dribble around him he was brought down heavily and the ball ran for a corner.

NO PENALTY AWARD

A penalty award seemed a reasonable assumption, but the referee did not agree and, apart from losing that chance of going ahead, the Town were reduced virtually to 10 men.

More poor covering led to WHITE restoring the Newcastle lead after 27 minutes and there matters stood until two minutes after half-time when BINGHAM sparked off a Town revival with another opportunist goal.

This time, Noake provided the pass and Bingham crashed the ball past Harvey from about 15 yards. With the Town fighting gallantly and their four man forward line managing to worry the home defence, the game was much in the melting pot.

McBride came within inches of putting them ahead when he dived for a centre from Bingham which Noake met and Keith kicked off the goal-line.

Shortly afterwards, the centre-forward converted a Bingham cross, but the goal was disallowed for offside.

As the end approached, the Town began to be worn down, but they looked like hanging on to a point until the 80th minute when EASTHAM won the match with a brilliant left-footed drive that was just too high for Baynham to reach.

Best forward on view was Bingham who, following the injury to Turner, had a wandering role in the middle of the field and was always a menace to Newcastle.

From Noake, there was quite the best outside-left display we have seen for some time and Cummins showed signs of returning to form.

Unfortunately, few clear-cut openings came the way of McBride, who was a 100 per cent trier and Turner kept on courageously in the face of a severe handicap.

By the defence, there was a considerable tightening up in the second half when Pacey was more certain in his covering. Throughout, Morton and

Brown were strong and relentless in the tackle and Dunne did not experience any undue worry from Mitten.

Sometimes, the speed of Hughes was a source of anxiety to Hawkes, but he battled on, while Baynham, who had no chance with any of the goals, again impressed with the safety of his handling.

NEWCASTLE UTD: Harvey; Keith, McMichael; Bell, Stokoe, Mitchell; Hughes, Eastham, White, Allchurch, J Mitten.

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

Referee: A W Luty, Leeds.
Attendance: 29,050.

WHAT THE OTHER CRITICS SAID

"Tenacious Billy Bingham caught the imagination of 29,000 fans and fired Luton Town to a fighting performance which was worth at least a point. Luton's battle was all the more creditable because of the way bad luck dogged them, for they had star inside-forward Gordon Turner a limping passenger on the wing from the 16th minute onwards." "Sunday Dispatch."



"Luton Town, who have been experiencing for some time the bad luck common to teams in desperate need of points, were worth a draw at Newcastle, but went down by the odd goal. Luton, in fact, played at least as well as Newcastle, and if the spirit persists they cannot yet be written off in their fight against relegation."—"Empire News."



"Luton didn't look to be in with a chance early on. Even when Bingham popped up in the eleventh minute to equalise Len White's second-minute goal, there seemed no danger of Luton winning a point. Yet they came near to winning both points. Bingham was the inspiration. His tenacity was a wonderful example to the relegation fighters."—"The People."



"Luton may be languishing at the foot of the table, but there was no relegation look about this display. Newcastle were nearly taken for a ride by a team that had inside-right Gordon Turner a passenger on the wing for three-quarters of the game."—"News of the World."



"Luck is not with struggling Luton these days. And with a defence as suspect as this one they need luck."—"News Chronicle."



"Not many forwards in English football have the skill plus the spirit to make such a mark on a game as did Luton and Ireland right-winger Bingham at Newcastle. From the start he harassed United's defence. In the 13th minute he beat three tall defenders on the six-yards line to head-glance a goal which cancelled that of the home leader, White, in the second minute."—"Daily Telegraph."