

BAYNHAM'S INJURY ENDED TOWN HOPES

Team Badly Handicapped, But Problems Remain

By CHILTERN

LUTON TOWN 1, SHEFFIELD UNITED 4

WHEN in the 30th minute, Baynham threw himself at the feet of Nibloe in an attempt to prevent a low centre from Simpson from counting and was badly hurt, the Town's hopes of upsetting the calculations of the leaders disappeared completely.

Penalty of his gallantry was a fractured skull, lacerations which required six stitches, and concussion, and for 60 minutes, the Town struggled on with 10 men.

Before the mishap occurred, United had already taken the first step towards victory by going ahead in the 27th minute through a goal headed by PACE from Simpson's centre.

They had played themselves firmly into the game following something of a shock start in which the Town, playing with a good deal of confidence and enthusiasm, had upset their defence and might very easily have gained for themselves an early lead.

Then, for some reason or another, the Town lost their grip especially in midfield and United, playing neatly in approach, began to have more of the play.

However, things did not swing completely their way until the Town suffered their grievous handicap which led to Dunne taking over the goalkeeper's jersey, Morton dropping to right-back and Brown being withdrawn from the forward line for duty at right-half.

TOWN FOUGHT BACK

By half-time, SIMPSON had more or less sealed the Town's fate with a power drive that Dunne touched, but could not stop entering the net at the near post and when RUSSELL headed a third goal shortly after the interval, the Town seemed to be in for a drubbing.

However, to their credit, they fought back and they might have improved their position considerably had Turner been able to get out of the way of a shot by Brown, had Pacey made better use of a chance laid on by Bingham and Tracey been less hurried when the ball came to him after Bingham had unluckily struck a post.

When their efforts did reap reward after 84 minutes when TURNER came racing through to crash the ball into the corner of the net, they were given no chance to develop a late rally because, a minute later, PACE blasted the ball past Dunne from the edge of the penalty area.

In the circumstances, little more could be expected from the

badly handicapped Town, but the plain fact was that the first half-an-hour revealed that all is still not well with the team as constituted at present.

RIGHT WING DID BEST

Because the new left wing pairing of McBride and Tracey was very much of a hit or miss affair, the Town attack wore a lop-sided look, and Brown had a thin time at centre-forward.

What threat there was to United mostly came from the right wing where Turner was most persistent and Bingham was always coming into the game with something useful despite the close attentions of Graham Shaw.

Defensively, there was a tightening up after those Charlton blunders and maybe some signs of settling down, though that first United goal was yet another that comes into the simple category.

While Groves was quite successful at centre-half, the need for a dominant personality in the position is still there.

Hawkes had perhaps his most satisfactory game since his return to the team and there were flashes of the old Morton, who put up a commendable performance at full-back.

While he worked hard throughout, Pacey is still being venturesome in his upfield forays and the tightening up process is not complete yet.

To go into goal is not a new experience for Dunne and the way in which he performed suggested that he has been getting in some practice in the position.

LUTON TOWN: Baynham; Dunne, Hawkes; Morton, Groves, Pacey; Bingham, Turner, Brown, McBride, Tracey.

SHEFFIELD UNITED: Hodgkinson; Coldwell, Shaw (G); Richardson, Shaw (J), Summers; Russell, Nibloe, Pace, Hodgson, Simpson.

Referee: J Finney, Hereford. Attendance: 13,736.

WHAT THE OTHER CRITICS SAID

"Almost unbelievably, Luton hit back, and have only themselves to blame for not pulling the game out of the fire. Both Pacey and Tracey missed open goals before Gordon Turner at last scored with a fast ground shot six minutes from the end."—"Sunday Express."

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"Evidence of the first half an hour points to the fact that it may be necessary for the Luton manager to take his team apart and give some of his youngsters a chance. Apart from Turner and a Billy Bingham who was somewhat subdued by Joe Shaw, the Luton forwards were poor."—"News of the World."

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"So for half an hour right-back Seamus Dunne was Luton's last line of defence. Bravely though Dunne performed he got so little cover from the Luton defence that he would not have been criticised had he let in more than the three that got past."—"The People."

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"Until this tragedy Luton had surprised the League leaders with a spirited display and indeed they refused to say die at any time during their ordeal.

"But as the second-half grew older their game resistance was worn down by sheer weight of numbers."—"Empire News."

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"Luton's attack was stereotyped and their defence lop-sided—though there was a spell in the second-half when they might have drawn level with United then 3-1 ahead, had reasonable chances by Mike Tracey and Dave Pacey been accepted."—"Sunday Dispatch."

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"The team has struck rock-bottom. They are having all the bad luck and are in poor form and Bingham alone is keeping the interest of the crowd alive.

"Take away Bingham and the already declining support at Kenilworth-road will drop further."—"News Chronicle."