

EXCITEMENT CAME IN EARLY STAGES

Two Quick Goals Put The Town On Way To A Win

By CHILTERN

LUTON TOWN 3, BRIGHTON 1

VIRTUALLY, this match was won and lost in the first quarter of an hour which contained nearly all the excitement of a struggle that degenerated badly into almost complete scrappiness during the second half.

With Baker unaccountably jittery in the Brighton goal, the Town scored twice during this period, missed a penalty and went very close to obtaining at least two more goals.

The penalty incident came in the seventh minute when McNicol handled to prevent a header by Legate which had beaten Baker, going into the net, and the job of taking the kick went to Kelly, in the absence of Turner.

Kelly took careful aim and blazed the ball at least a yard wide, a miss that at that stage, seemed a major disaster in view of the utility look that was worn by the forward line which had been badly weakened through injuries.

However, the failure did not prove to be serious because after 12 minutes, ASHWORTH chased what looked to be very much of a forlorn hope following a long clearance by Baynham and he hooked the ball past Baker from an almost unbelievable angle.

Two minutes later, the Town were two up, following another kick upfield by Baynham. This time, Baker made a weak sort of effort to punch clear, but only succeeded in sending the ball to LEGATE.

Carefully, the outside-left headed the ball goalwards over the head of Baker and it finished nestling gently in the back of the net.

LEGATE OUT OF LUCK

Soon after that, there was nearly another goal for Legate whose shot went between the legs of the hapless Baker and was somehow scrambled to safety, via the foot of the post.

There was not a great deal of threat from the Brighton forward line and it came as a mild surprise when they reduced their arrears after 28 minutes.

A corner given by Groves was placed by Laverick and NICHOLAS moved forward smartly before the Town defence realised what was happening and with his head, glided the ball past the surprised Baynham.

One would have expected that this goal would have given a great fillip to Brighton's hopes of gaining a point which they badly needed from this match, but they did not seem to be able to conjure up sufficient fighting spirit to harass the Town.

Nor did that early sparkle of the Town last and it was not until two minutes from the end that MCGUFFIE obtained their third goal with a header following a long cross by McNally.

There was no disputing the fact that the Town were superior in all departments and the new look forward line moved quite smoothly in the first half, with Legate always a source of danger.

NON-STOP ASHWORTH

So, too, was Ashworth, who turned in a hard-working non-stop display and there was plenty of honest endeavour from Morton in his attempt to fill the gap left by Turner.

McGuffie had only a quiet match and Noake, continually running into trouble in needless

fashion, was a weak link on the right wing.

McNally, Kelly and Bramwell formed a barrier that was too solid for the rather haphazard Brighton attack and there were spirited displays from Pacey and Groves, neither of whom, though, used the ball as accurately as he can.

Compared with Baker, who showed a return to confidence after the interval, Baynham had an easy time and his handling was always impressive.

LUTON TOWN: Baynham; McNally, Bramwell; Pacey, Kelly, Groves; Noake, Ashworth, Morton, McGuffie, Legate.

BRIGHTON: Baker; McNicol, Carolan; Bertolini, Jennings, Crowther; Tiddy, McNeill, Nicholas, Foreman, Laverick.

Referee: M. A. Fussey, Retford. Attendance: 9,104.

WHAT THE OTHER CRITICS SAID

"Punchless Brighton potted; determined Luton, unbeaten at home since October 22, challenged for everything and took the direct route to goal. That was the difference between two fair-to-middling sides—and why Brighton are slumped low in relegation worries."—"Sunday Dispatch."

"If Luton had scored half a dozen times by the interval it would not have been surprising.

"Best of the Luton forwards was outside-left Legate—who was told weeks ago that he will have a free transfer at the end of the season."—"Sunday Express."

"Luton's defence, with Kelly and Bramwell outstanding, dealt capably with Brighton's raids, but they slipped up in the 28th minute when Tony Nicholas jumped high to head in Bob Laverick's centre."—"News of the World."

"The Luton forwards inspired by non-stop Morton and the thrust of Ashworth were in grand form at this stage and Brighton looked like being over-run. But they brightened up and even began to hit back."—"The People."

"Luton got on top in a two-goals-in-two-minutes spell in the first quarter of an hour, a combination of first-class opportunism and bad goalkeeping."—"Daily Mail."