

WHAT THE OTHER CRITICS SAID

"Gallant Luton, deprived of two players for most of the game and reduced to 10 men at crucial points in the match, almost brought off a shock draw as over-confident Swansea, flushed with a possibility of their first win of the season, relaxed their grip."—*"Sunday Express."*

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"Swansea, without Mel Nurse, won their first game of the season, but even the most ardent Welsh supporters must admit their good fortune.

"It was Luton who were unlucky. They were without Ashworth, who was absent for all but two minutes of the first half with a face injury, and with McNally carried off on a stretcher 23 minutes after the interval with a leg injury, Luton fought a spirited rearguard action."—*"Sunday Telegraph."*

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"What a sad, foul-littered game! For the third match running Swansea had a penalty awarded against them, two Swansea men—Harry Griffiths and Peter Davies—were booked by referee Catlin and two Luton men were badly injured.

"Some of the shirt-jerking rugby-style crash tackles would even have been booed in an all-in wrestling ring. It was a rank bad match, and one which most of those concerned in will want to forget as quickly as possible."—*"The People."*

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"Plucky Luton, twice hit by injury, put up a brave show at Swansea, but their nine fit men found the odds too heavy."—*"News of the World."*

TALE OF DISASTER AT THE VETCH

Crippled Town Fought A Plucky Battle

By CHILTERN

61/62

SWANSEA TOWN 3, LUTON TOWN 2

NOT in a hurry will the Town forget their last two visits to Vetch Field, Swansea, which were only five months apart, so that what happened in the first meeting was still fresh in memory.

Before the match, on Saturday, officials were expressing the hope that the team would be more fortunate than at Easter when they had Fleming, McGuffie and Bramwell injured, but alas, they were doomed to disappointment because a tale of disaster began to unfold itself in the second minute.

Then, with play going on some distance away, it was seen that Ashworth was lying on the ground, and it needed only a quick appraisal by trainer Frank King to see that hospital treatment would be necessary.

As the result of a collision with Reynolds's head, Ashworth's nose was broken, and he was absent for the remainder of the half.

In the short spell before that occurred, the Town had produced a couple of attacks which indicated real confidence, but Ashworth's injury changed all that.

With only ten men to face, and Herbie Williams making thoroughly good use of the fact that he was a spare man, Swansea began to exert heavy pressure, yet except that Williams tested Baynham with some raking drives, they did not look all that dangerous until the 25th minute when WEBSTER scored from close in after Baynham had stopped two point-blank shots.

Earlier, he had achieved the near impossible by hooking the ball over from almost under the bar, but he made no mistake after 32 minutes, again from close in after Jones had beaten Cope.

Shortly afterwards, the inside-left missed a glorious chance of completing a hat-trick when he shot wide from the penalty spot after Walden, for some reason, had elected to put on a goal-keeping act from a free-kick by Graham Williams.

A difficult half for the Town ended with Swansea nearly increasing their lead, because a shot from Herbie Williams beat Baynham and crashed against the face of the bar.

RELIEF FOR TOWN

It must have been with some relief that the Town players heard during the interval that they would be back to full strength because Ashworth, with his nose re-set and strapped with plaster, had been given permission to return.

In the first instance, it was to outside-left, but he was soon in the thick of it in his own position. However, the Town's troubles did not end immediately, because six minutes after the re-start, REYNOLDS put on a third goal after Baynham had left his goal to collect a ball and muffed his pick-up.

That seemed to settle the situation because, although the Town played some clever football in approach, all that Dwyer really had to worry him was a diving header by Fleming.

However, a ray of hope appeared when McKechnie was pulled down in the penalty area by Peter Davies. TURNER scored from the penalty spot, despite some strange antics on the goal-line by Dwyer.

There were 22 minutes left then, but almost immediately, the Town were reduced to 10 men again when McNally went down in a crushing tackle by Reynolds and was carried off with severe bruising of the shin bone.

With Morton at right-back and Ashworth in front of him, the Town fought sturdily and anxiety suddenly appeared for Swansea when, with two minutes left, FLEMING beat Dwyer from the edge of the penalty area.

Even though time was so short, the Town might have snatched a dramatic equaliser because Turner was stopped only in the nick of time.

In view of the unfortunate sequence of events, this was not a bad result from the Town's point of view and they showed the sort of fighting spirit in the face of

adversity that is necessary to collect points away from home.

For about three-quarters of the match, the defence was fighting against odds and they battled away bravely though, in the first half, I thought that there was too much of a gap down the middle and Swansea used it repeatedly.

There is still the need for more dominance from Cope and McNally was inclined to give Graham Williams too much room, but, on the other hand, there were credit marks, too.

Baynham earned some of them, mixed with some criticism, too, but in view of the way things went, the defence did not do a bad job.

Ashworth deserves special mention for his pluck in carrying on and McKechnie, who was also hurt early on, had a quiet time until the last 20 minutes when he began to emphasise his great promise.

In an attempt to overcome the handicap, Fleming wandered all over the field, as did Turner, but despite their efforts, the job was a little beyond them, though Walden, standing up well to the heavy tackling of Griffiths, might have been a danger man had he received more of the ball, but for long spells, he was without a partner.

SWANSEA TOWN: Dwyer; Sanders, Griffiths; Davies (P), Johnson, Williams (H); Jones, Davies (R), Reynolds, Webster, Williams (G).

LUTON TOWN: Baynham; McNally, Bramwell; Morton, Cope, Groves; Walden, Ashworth, Turner, McKechnie, Fleming.

Referee: J. A. Catlin, Rochdale. Attendance: 11,800.