

STRUGGLING TOWN GAINED LATE GOALS

Lack Of Inspiration In The Forward Line

By CHILTERN

UNTIL the last quarter of an hour at Kenilworth-road on Saturday, the Town looked like going down to defeat in a match which they should have had sewn up comfortably by the early part of the second half.

Inaccurate in their passing and woefully weak in front of goal, their forward line had been a vast disappointment and, for a long time, it looked as if the goal Brighton obtained in the 56th minute was destined to be the only score.

Even that should have been avoided because Baynham had a header from BERTOLINI well covered but, finally, misjudged the ball which slipped through his arms into the net.

It took PACEY, pressed into inside-forward service, to restore the balance with a well-taken goal 14 minutes from the end, a happening which seemed to shake the Brighton defence more than it should have done.

At all events, there were distinct signs of jitteriness and, with nine minutes left, after Baker had dropped a centre from Chandler, McKECHNIE was on hand to ram home the winner.

Because of the low level of forward play and the grip which defences held generally, this was no warming spectacle for a cold afternoon, and a lot of erstwhile regular fans gave it a miss, with the result that the gate figures plummeted to the season's lowest of only 7,005.

Had Turner been in his usual deadly finishing form, the Town could have coasted to an easy win, but he missed three distinctly good scoring chances, with the worst coming early in the second half when, with only Baker to beat, he turned the ball wide.

McGUFFIE FAILED ON THE LEFT WING

As a result, the Town had to struggle and there was scarcely a spark of inspiration in their front line.

Fortunately, Pacey found something like his best form after the interval, after having spent much of the first half looking like a fish out of water, and

there was plenty of determination from Chandler, even though he found the close marking of Baxter something of an embarrassment.

Unfortunately, there was not equal output from the left wing pair because McGuffie took most unkindly to the switch to outside-left and McKechnie ran into trouble too often to be effective.

Luckily for the Town, the Brighton forward line was no more effective because they had no confidence in front of goal, and their main idea of making progress seemed to lie in cross-field passes, with the result that nearly everything took too long in which to develop.

After only five minutes they switched their attack, so that only Caven remained in the position for which he was named in the programme, but they returned to something like normal after the interval.

With negligible support coming his way, this was an unmemorable debut for Caven, who made little impression on Cope, who, with Morton, who made a most successful return to the senior team, and Groves, formed a pretty solid half-back line.

With his first chance of the season presented to him through the injury to McNally, Daniel gave quite an impressive display, and Bramwell battled away more or less successfully throughout the piece.

That slip which led to the Brighton goal was an unfortunate blot on the display of Baynham, who was never in a great deal of trouble otherwise.

LUTON TOWN: Baynham; Daniel, Bramwell; Morton, Cope, Groves; Chandler, Pacey, Turner, McKechnie, McGuffie.

BRIGHTON: Baker; McNicol, Baxter; Bertolini, Jennings, Burtenshaw; Tiddy, Sitford, Caven, Nicholas, Goodchild.

Referee: F Cowen, Manchester.