

WALDEN INJURED AND TOWN LOST

Suffered Cruel Blows In Closing Stages

By **CHILTERN**

LUTON TOWN 1, OLDHAM ATHLETIC 2

NOT much goes right for a team when they are in a bad patch. The Town discovered the truth of this forcibly on Saturday when even their sternest critics must have deemed them unlucky to have suffered their fifth home defeat of the season.

Not that they played well, but they certainly did not get a fair rub of the green so far as luck was concerned and they suffered two crowning blows in the last quarter of an hour.

First came when Walden went down and stayed there after a foul by Williams. After some first aid on the field he was led off and eventually taken to the dressing room with what turned out to be a broken collar-bone.

At that time, 75 minutes, the score was 1-1, and, showing greater spirit than in the first half, the Town forwards had been looking as if they might snatch a winner.

However, immediately Walden fell, they had an escape, Colquhoun shooting against the far post with Baynham well beaten, and that proved to be the shape of things to come.

Five minutes from the end Bramwell gave away a corner which Johnstone took, and EDGER, with an eye for a trap opening, nipped in to beat Bramwell to the ball and flicked into the net with his head.

Even then the Town did not become resigned to defeat, and their second slice of misfortune came seconds afterwards when Turner was badly obstructed.

Scenting a chance of reprieve, Fincham went up into the attack ready for the free kick which Morton lobbed accurately into the penalty area.

FINCHAM HIT THE BAR

Fincham reached the ball with his head, but was defeated by inches from securing the equaliser because the ball struck the cross-bar and came back into play after which it was scrambled away for a corner.

Even after that there was another hectic scramble in front of the Oldham goal, but the equaliser eluded the Town.

However, they could not have much complaint about being behind at the interval, because Oldham had moved with the more authority with the wing-halves, taking advantage of a gap in midfield, giving fine service to a forward line that showed more assurance than did that of the Town.

Even so there was a smattering of luck and also of loss of concentration on the Town's part about the way in which their goal came after 25 minutes.

Pacey was penalised for a foul inches outside the penalty area and Johnstone feinted to take the kick. Obliging the Town's defensive wall fell for the trick and moved, and WHITAKER came up from behind to crack the ball at goal.

Even then he might not have scored but for the fact that the ball struck Fincham to be deflected into the roof of the net giving the surprised Baynham no chance.

LEFT-WING WEAKNESS

Prevailing Town weakness in the first half was on the left-wing, where Riddick seemed out of his depth and Jardine was completely in the grip of Taylor.

For the second half they were switched, but there was no marked improvement, though the Town came more into the game and TURNER put them level after 54 minutes, following a move begun by Smith.

After that, Pacey slammed the ball into the roof of the net, but the goal was disallowed because Riddick had handled immediately before that.

Great pity of the injury to Walden was that he had been showing some semblance of his best form and represented the greatest threat to the Oldham defence. Despite the lack of support, Turner was the next most dangerous, but Smith seemed lacking in thrust, though he did show the ability to use the ball constructively.

Star of the defence without any doubt, whatever, was Fincham, who subdued a dangerous centre-forward in Lister, and he received fair backing from Pacey and McGuffie.

This was not one of Morton's best games because he was worried by Whitaker, and the hard-fighting Bramwell had not a complete grip on Ledger.

But the defence could not be held to blame for this defeat because apart from the bad luck that was experienced, there was

a lack of balance in attack and no effective link in midfield.

Baynham could not be held to blame for either goal, and he showed plenty of confidence in his handling.

LUTON TOWN: Baynham; Morton, Bramwell; Pacey, Fincham, McGuffie; Walden, Smith, Turner, Riddick, Jardine.

OLDHAM ATHLETIC: Bolland; Taylor, Marshall; Frizzell, Williams, Sievwright; Ledger, Johnstone, Lister, Colquhoun, Whitaker.

Referee: D. Brady, Rotherham Attendance 6,222.