

ADVANTAGE WAS NOT RAMMED HOME

Town Faded Out After A Two-Goal Thrust

By Chiltern

LUTON TOWN 2, BARNSELEY 3

JUST two minutes of glory came the way of the Town in this vital relegation struggle at Kenilworth-road on Saturday. They came early in the second half when two goals suddenly made the 4,555 spectators forget their frozen feet and brought roars of real encouragement for a team that had been struggling previously.

Unfortunately, it did not last because the Town, with Barnsley obviously badly shaken by the turn of events, failed to hammer home the advantage they had gained.

The brief excitement followed the first half which produced little in the way of thrills. In midfield, the Town looked confident enough, but they overdid the hot passing, were most inaccurate in their use of the ball, and fell into the old habit of their attacks fizzling out when they reached the region of the penalty area.

A goalless first half was fair comment on what had happened, because both teams promised little in the way of finish, which made it all the more surprising that five goals came after the interval.

Certainly, it was against the run of the play when KERIR put Barnsley ahead only three minutes after the resumption when he chased a through pass through a gap left by Fincham's failure to intercept and stayed off a challenge by Morton and Reid.

There was improvement by the Town after that, with Pacey and Reid making worthy scoring attempts, but it was not until the 56th minute that they drew level.

TWO IN TWO MINUTES

There was a slice of luck about the goal because as TURNER met a pass from Walden, the ball struck Wood and ricocheted in a completely different direction from that expected by Williamson.

Before Barnsley had time to settle down again, O'ROURKE had swept in a pass from Turner for his first goal for the Town, and that was when the Town should have taken command.

However, they did not prove to have the driving power to do so and, gradually, Barnsley came back into the game.

What led to their hopes being revived was a dreadful mistake by Smith who, back in his own penalty area and under no particular pressure, suddenly turned the ball straight to BYRNE.

It was a clear-cut chance, but the centre-forward made hard work of it because twice Baynham pushed out point-blank dives before the third attempt was successful.

That reverse subdued the Town, so that there was not

much hint of another rally, but, even so, no one was prepared for them to lose the game in the dying minutes.

O'ROURKE BEST OF ATTACK

With only three minutes left, BYRNE chased a ball down the right wing, followed by Fincham, who missed his tackle, and the centre-forward went on to draw Baynham out of his goal and place the ball in for an unexpected winner.

This setback was serious for the Town, who looked nothing like the team they were in the first half at Fulham last Saturday. Attack changes failed to bring cohesion, and the enthusiastic O'Rourke emerged with the most honours.

Apart from being the means of conceding the second goal, Smith had a nightmare match in which nothing would go right for him, while Reid, despite hints of brilliance, has still not hit the form that made him such a star at Northampton.

Turner suffered from lack of adequate support, but proved his opportunism with another goal, while Walden was mostly subdued, though he did give promise of better things when the Town went ahead.

Far and away the best Town player was Pacey, who was strong in defence and always trying to drive on the attack, and Bramwell, too, came through creditably.

After a comfortable sort of first half, Fincham began to run into trouble afterwards, when he was too easily drawn out of position and was apt to commit himself to the tackle at the wrong moment.

Neither Morton nor McBain could be said to be completely satisfactory, though both did tolerably well, and Baynham, suffering from lack of cover, could be faulted for the first and third goals.

LUTON TOWN: Baynham; Morton, McBain; Pacey, Fincham, Bramwell; Turner, Smith, O'Rourke, Reid, Walden.

BARNSELEY: Williamson; Hopper, Brookes; Wood, Winstanley, Houghton; Sheavills, Kerr, Byrne, Cochrane, O'Hara.

Referee: J. Osborne, Ipswich.
Attendance: 4,555.