

TWO TRAGIC MINUTES FOR THE TOWN AT BRIGHTON

Tinsley injured, then Reid missed a penalty kick

By CHILTERN

BRIGHTON 2, LUTON TOWN 0

THERE were two separate minutes of tragedy for the Town in this League Cup replay at Brighton on Tuesday.

First came in the 34th minute when Tinsley, going down at the feet of Gould to clear a free-kick from Hopkins, received a nasty blow in the small of the back and was carried off on a stretcher.

Second was in the first minute of the second half when, with the score sheet still blank, Reid missed a penalty.

Tinsley's injury was diagnosed as bad bruising and he came back at the start of the second half after having had a pain-killing injection. However, he was no more than a limping passenger at outside-left and the Town were virtually reduced to 10 men for more than half the match.

That penalty miss, which could have cost the Town the chance of a lucrative home tie with Ipswich Town in the next round, was an amazing affair.

Slough had been pulled down by Baxter as he cleaved his way goalwards and Reid's shot struck the bar. Possibly, it was touched by Powney, but the inside-left received a second chance because the ball rebounded to him only for him to hit a post on this occasion and then it was scrambled away.

Certainly it was not a penalty taken in the classic style and after the confident way in which he took the one on Saturday it was surprising that he did not keep his shot low.

Substitutes are not allowed in this competition and Read switched from centre-forward to a more orthodox position for him — in goal where he did well despite a tendency to punch out high balls which probably stemmed from the way in which the Brighton inside-forwards bore in.

By dint of dour defensive play, the Town kept level so long as to suggest that extra time might be necessary to decide the tie.

Brighton had their chances, far more than were created by the Town, but their shooting

was mostly wild and they were often frustrated by good covering, particularly by Rivers.

However, in view of the Town's handicap and the pressure Brighton exerted, I suppose a goal was inevitable and, sure enough, it came in the 63rd minute and was almost a carbon copy of the one CASSIDY scored in the first meeting, though on this occasion the ball came from the left with the lively Knight the purveyor of the pass.

After that, the Town, with their crippled forward line which had not functioned well even when it had been at full strength, had just one chance of saving the match when Edwards infiltrated into the penalty area, but did not connect properly and Powney was able to save.

Just before that happened SMITH had his name taken after protesting against the disallowing of a goal and, five

minutes from the end, the former England leader put the issue beyond doubt from close range after Riddick had missed his tackle and Thomson had failed to clear from inside the penalty area.

This was Smith's comeback match, but he did not leave a great impression because Rivers, gaining in confidence with each match, played him extremely well. Strong in the air and always difficult to pass, Rivers has obviously come to stay.

The bold defensive experiments which the manager has made are paying off better than those in attack and Riddick did extremely well as an emergency left-back, so well in fact, that there need be no hesitation about putting him there for a League match.

Thomson was again solid and strong in the tackle, while Edwards and Moore were indefatigable in their efforts, as they had to be because the ball was constantly coming back at them.

Forward, the Town were disappointing, particularly on the extreme wings where they compared most unfavourably with Brighton.

Neither Slough nor McKechnie could provide the material that was necessary and when the latter switched into the middle, he was blotted out by Gall.

From Gibson, there was a patchy sort of display which left Reid as the forward from whom the Town had most to hope but, hard though he tried, he could not make up for the deficiencies around him.

BRIGHTON: Powney; Hopkins, Baxter; Davies, Gall, Turner; Gould, Collins, Smith (R), Cassidy, Knight.

LUTON TOWN: Tinsley; Thomson, Riddick; Edwards, Rivers, Moore; Slough, Gibson, Read, Reid, McKechnie.

Referee: G. W. T. Davies (Romford).

Attendance: 11,475.