

BRILLIANT TOWN BACK WITH FIVE

69/70

LUTON TOWN 5, BRADFORD CITY 0

WITH GREAT EFFECT, the Town hit back at those who were inclined to doubt their ability to stay in the promotion race following their disappointing performance at Hillingdon last Saturday.

Showing a 100 per cent improvement in their form they had this vital match against their bogey team Bradford City in the first quarter of an hour. By then goals had come from Matt Tees and Malcolm MacDonald, the product of a lively, confident start which induced mistakes in the City defence.

Both goals could be attributed initially to defensive errors, but at the same time praise is due to the opportunism of the two Luton strikers.

For a time the City had the courage to fight back but they found that the Town defence was in uncompromising mood.

Gradually, Bradford's challenge faded, as it was bound to I suppose in the face of these two early hammer blows, and the final crunch came just after half-time. One minute they were within inches of being in 2-1, when Ham hit a post, and the next it was 3-0 when Collins accepted a snap chance.

That left no doubt about the Town's superiority, and for the most part of the second half they were able to coast along.

There could have been further goals early on, but in fact they were delayed until the last ten minutes at a time when the City had been reduced most unfortunately to ten men. First Middleton was hurt, to be replaced by the substitute, and then with a quarter of an hour left Leighton was carried off on a stretcher, and then it was that the Town went on to record their biggest victory of the season.

MacDonald nets three

Both goals came from MacDonald, the second from the penalty spot, making his total three in all, which must give a decided boost to his confidence, which has seemed to be low in recent matches.

All in all, I should say this was the Town's most brilliant showing of the season, and it came exactly when it was needed. The pity was that there were not more here to see it, because the attendance plunged to 11,857, the lowest yet.

Whether this was due to the hangover from last Saturday, or the imminence of Christmas, is impossible to say, but it was a disappointment especially in view of the vital nature of the encounter.

One could have certain sympathy with the City in view of their injury troubles, but the plain fact was that they were never really in the same class as the Town, principally and initially I feel because the Luton defence was the sounder and was able to weather the early storm.

There was hard running all the way round, good defensive covering, control in midfield and snap in front of goal. In fact, all the ingredients that go to make a successful promotion side.

The fact that Phillips was brought on for Tees did not I feel detract from the first-choice centre-forward's performance, but was probably mostly due to a desire to give the ex-amateur some experience. In all it was a highly satisfying performance by the Town.