

TOWN THREE UP AT

By ERIC PUGH

THE INTERVAL

THE FLU scare which Bradford City broadcast yesterday, although it had some foundation, did not eventually prevent them selecting what they regarded as their first-choice team for this vital match at Kenilworth Road.

The only changes from last Saturday's Cup winning side were the restoration of Tom Hallett to centre-half, which enabled Tony Leighton to revert to left-half and Peter McConnell found himself wearing the substitute's jersey.

So the City could be regarded as at full strength, and so I suppose could the Town.

So far as personnel were concerned, the Town chose the eleven players who began the ill-fated Cup tie at Hillingdon, but with one difference MacDonald and Collins switched shirts, if not positions.

Peter Phillips, the former England amateur international, was the substitute.

After a murky morning, the weather cleared considerably, and in view of the amount of rain there had been during the past week, the pitch was in good condition, though, of course, on the soft side.

The attendance was less than the recent average, and the fans saw an encouraging start by the Town when Collins, in a more attacking role than usual, had a couple of shots beaten down after some initial liveliness by Tees.

This was followed by a corner which Liney failed to cut out, and there was a terrific scrimmage in front of the Bradford goal, during which Keen had a shot blocked by MacDonald, unwittingly I think, and then Jack Bannister saw a shot deflected inches wide.

In the first five minutes the Town could have built up a lead, but the City were undeterred, and fought back for Middleton to push the ball through. Davie partially saved, and the ball went to Ham, whose shot was blocked.

In the next City raid Davie and Slough collided, and both were hurt but able to continue.

City had got over their early uncertainty, and a somewhat sketchy punched clearance by Davie left him stranded, with the ball going to Hall. The winger lifted the ball from a fair way out, over the goalkeeper's head, but there was sufficient cover at the back to remove the possibility of disaster.

Bradford City were certainly beginning to look dangerous, and Davie, yards out, narrowed the angle sufficiently to remove the danger posed by Middleton cutting in.

HUGE ROAR

The goalkeeper parried the ball, and collected it at the



No. 1:
Matt Tees

second attempt. Then there was a huge roar when the Town took the lead in the ninth minute through TEES.

Instead of pushing the ball back to Liney, Stowell tried to beat MacDonald, who got a boot to the ball and forced a corner. This, French placed perfectly, and Tees, coming in from the right, made a brilliant header that beat Liney all the way. By coincidence, the goal came at exactly the same time as the one the centre-forward scored last Saturday, and it was pretty much a carbon copy of that effort.

Even better was to come, because in the 13th minute the Town went two up, and again it was a defensive error, this time by Atkins, which led to the success. French had done the initial raiding, and Atkins, gaining possession, tried to pass back to Liney.

Showing splendid anticipation, MacDonald raced after the ball, stayed its pace, and smashed it between Liney and the near post. It was a splendid piece of opportunism by MacDonald.

Certainly this was the most lively attacking display by the Town for some weeks, and it was noticeable that MacDonald had been mostly in the middle with Tees on his right. Fundamentally, the difference between these teams so far, was that the Town were more sound in defence, and were committing fewer errors.

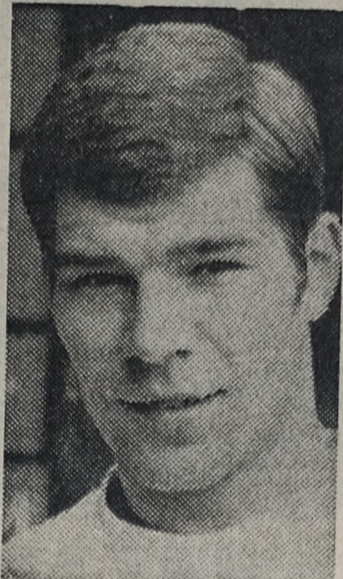
French was prominent, with several decisive runs. To their credit, the City were still seeking to make ground in constructive fashion.

Next action at the other end came when Ryan latched on to a pass by Keen, to crack in a low cross which struck a defender on the legs.

UNMARKED

Back came the Town, and Tees suddenly found himself unmarked, but angled, so that he had to cross the ball to Keen, who hit in a tremendous drive which Liney did extremely well to reach—the ball went for a corner.

From this there was further bombardment of the City



No. 2:
Malcolm MacDonald

goal, with an appeal for a penalty presumably for hands interspersing a number of shots that were beaten down.

How the Town did not secure a third goal is something that left everyone wondering, and was entirely due to the quick reaction of Liney.

A corner by French was met on the volley by Jack Bannister, well inside the penalty area, and his hard drive looked booked for the back of the net.

But somehow the goalkeeper reached it and turned it over the bar. It was a quite fantastic piece of work.

Certainly there was plenty of action for the crowd now, and much of it was coming from the Town.

Again the Town struck, and Tees was unlucky when he tried to turn a through pass from MacDonald past Hallett, with whom he collided heavily, and the bounce of the ball went the way of City.

As the Town's course prospered, French made a dangerous burst, which was cut off at the last minute, and then a sudden City breakaway brought a snap shot from Middleton, and a fine full-length save from Davie.

Immediately after this there was a dash down the right wing by Ryan, from a pass by French, and the right-back flashed the ball across the face of the goal at a terrific pace with Liney well beaten. The goalkeeper was beaten in the next minute by an Allen header which finished inches wide of the far post.

Immediately, the Town came back and COLLINS increased their lead after 44 minutes when he raced in to slam a centre by French past the startled Liney. Half-time:

LUTON TOWN 3
BRADFORD CITY ... 0

It had certainly been a tremendous first half for the Town, whose form was considerably above anything they had shown in recent weeks.

Again at the start of the



No. 3:
John Collins

second half the Town tore into action and there were prospects of another goal when the hard-running MacDonald outpaced the defence and unselfishly passed to the better-placed Tees. But he got considerably too much power on his centre, and the centre-forward could not reach it to apply the touch which was needed.

Ryan continued to use the overlap well, and earnt applause for finding his way into the City penalty area before

TEAMS

LUTON TOWN: Davie; Ryan, Bannister (J.); Keen, Nicholl, Slough; MacDonald, Collins, Tees, Allen, French. Substitute: Phillips.

BRADFORD CITY: Liney; Atkins, Cooper; Stowell, Hallett, Leighton; Hall, Ham, Corner, Bannister (B.), Middleton. Substitute: McConnell. Referee: Mr. D. J. Lyden.

the effect was spoiled by his cross being intercepted.

Things were not going quite right for the Town in front of goal at the moment. A centre by Keen just eluded Tees, and a break by the City led to Stowell sending through Ham. Davie showed good anticipation by leaving his goal to narrow the angle.

Again the Town moved forward, French sending Allen down the left wing, but the City were showing more resilience in defence now, and the gaps were not so frequent.

FIRST-TIME

Another good movement started by Jack Bannister, and carried on by Collins, brought a first-time shot from MacDonald from about eight yards, which sent the ball soaring too high, but there was no time for him to pick his spot.

Despite a little better showing by the visitors' forwards at times, there was no sign of the Town relaxing their grip, and Keen headed wide after another tricky run by French.

Peter Phillips was doing some warming up on the touchline, and after 68 minutes he came on for Tees. The first-choice centre-forward did not seem to be hurt, and I imagine the idea was to give the former England International some experience of League football.

In the meantime, Middleton had been hurt in a crunching tackle with Ryan and went off. McConnell was pitched in as Middleton was led hobbling to the dressing room.

Naturally Phillips was teamed up as second striker with MacDonald.

Phillips was first in action chasing a long through pass by MacDonald, the pace of which finally eluded him.

FRACTURE

Then came a sad happening, when Tony Leighton, the vastly experienced Bradford City player, went down in a heap so far as I could see without a challenge by any Town player.

There were urgent calls for a stretcher, and the fact that he was put on this with his legs strapped together, seemed to indicate that there might be a fracture. On the other

hand, the trainer seemed to be holding the player's knee, which could indicate cartilage or ligament trouble.

This must have been the final straw as far as the City were concerned, because as they had already committed their substitute, they were reduced to ten men.

Immediately there was nearly a fourth goal for the Town when Phillips broke through and Liney, some yards outside his goal, luckily stopped the ball from going through.

Then the Town had a cruel flash of luck when MacDonald

How the goals came

TEES for Luton after 9 minutes.

MacDONALD for Luton after 13 minutes.

COLLINS for Luton after 44 minutes.

MacDONALD for Luton after 80 minutes.

MacDONALD for Luton after 86 minutes.

moved smartly, on to the through pass, and with Liney beaten all the way, sent the ball crashing against the far post.

Now French was operating quite a lot on the right wing, but it was from this quarter that MACDONALD secured the Town's well deserved fourth goal after 80 minutes.

MacDonald found himself an untenanted spot on the wing, collected a through pass and drove it with deadly accuracy into the far corner.

There was nearly another from Phillips, Liney again scrambling the ball away with his feet.

With four minutes left, the Town were awarded a penalty when MacDonald was pulled down by Hallett, and MACDONALD took the kick himself.

Liney dived in the right direction, but the ball went under him and into the net for the Town's fifth goal.