

Did they fall back — or were they pushed?

NORWICH CITY 1, LUTON TOWN 1

THE QUESTION nearly every Town fan at Norwich was asking afterwards was whether the fact that the team were so much on the defensive during the second half was planned and voluntary, or whether they were forced into it by an improvement in the home side.

I put the question to the Town's coach, Jimmy Andrews, and he completely refuted any idea that the Town pulled back in an effort to maintain the narrow lead they had gained before the interval.

What happened in his view was that Norwich began persistently to pump the ball over the heads of the mid-field men, causing them to a marked extent to lose the grip they had held in the first half.

In addition, he thought that the ball was not being held long enough, so that Norwich were able to maintain more pressure than they had previously.

The Norwich equaliser, in fact, came in the second minute of injury time, in a second half that lasted in all 48 minutes.

Even the most ardent Canaries' supporter had resigned himself to defeat well before that, because, even though they did much of the pressing, Norwich lacked an opportunist, and for this reason I do not rate highly their chances of staying in the promotion race.

Credit

Credit for the goal belonged to Anderson, who had come on for Briggs after 57 minutes, and some of the Norwich improvement could be traced to the added drive which he brought.

He went high to meet with his head a high cross. The ball beat Read fairly and squarely, but Bannister was behind him and, unable to reach the ball with his head, punched it over.

Unaffected by the tension FOGGO calmly blazed the ball past Read for an equaliser that had simply seemed not on the cards, principally because of the

resiliency of the Town's back four.

With Sir Alf Ramsey, the England team manager, watching, having apparently taken notice of some of manager Alec Stock's broad hints about the worthiness of some of his players for under-23 honours, Malcolm MacDONALD, one of the focal points of interest, was on the mark early.

With only 13 minutes gone, he was quick to take advantage of a bad misunderstanding in the home defence to take the ball on and guide it past the despairingly advancing Keelan.

That set the pattern for a

In the net

MacDONALD for Luton after 13 minutes.

FOGGO for Norwich after 89 minutes.

first half, in which the Town held all the trump cards, and during which they looked far superior to the opposition.

They needed another goal, however, and MacDonald was within inches of getting it when he swung left-footed on to a through pass by Keen, the ball going the wrong side of a post.

Throughout the first half, there was no danger from Norwich, such a grip had the Town taken in midfield, where Keen was outstanding. It is a long time since I saw him so strong and determined in the tackle.

Court and Collins, who came in as deputy for Hoy, who had not quite recovered from muscle trouble, did a manful job, too, but both tended to lose touch with the second-half situation when, admittedly, things became considerably more difficult.

There was a great first-half display from Jimmy Ryan, probably the best he has put on for the Town so

IT'S THERE!

Moment of jubilation for Malcolm MacDonald as he gives Luton a well-deserved lead in their match at Norwich, watched by England team boss, Sir Alf Ramsey.



far, as Black found to his cost. He scarcely knew what to do to stop the former Manchester United winger.

It was from Ryan's centre that MacDonald was again unlucky to miss by inches—so it can be seen that, quite conceivably, he could have had a first-half hat-trick, a fact that will not have eluded Sir Alf.

Dominating

Nor can he have failed to have been impressed by Nicholl, living up to his reputation as being one of the best young centre-halves in the country.

Nicholl's domination in the air was complete.

There was fine backing from Slough and, if John Ryan was not quite at his best, especially in his distribution of the ball, he and Bannister proved to be difficult to pass.

Like the rest of the defence, they had to withstand a good deal of pressure in the second half, when the Town had one slice of luck. That happened when Stringer headed against the angle of the woodwork from a corner by Paddon.

That apart, Read was again in brilliant form.

Disappointed though he must have been that a point eluded the Town at such a late stage, manager Stock was not despondent.

"We would have settled for a draw before we came. It is a good result and it extends our unbeaten away record to eight matches," he said.

NORWICH CITY: Keelan; Payne, Black; Stringer, Forbes, Briggs (Anderson); Livermore, Silvester, Howard, Paddon, Foggo.

LUTON TOWN: Read; John Ryan, Bannister; Collins, Nicholl, Slough; Jimmy Ryan, Court, MacDonald, Keen, Givens. Substitute: Goodeve. Referee: R. Crabb, Exeter. Attendance: 17,038.