

Town caught out Bristol

BRISTOL CITY 3,
LUTON TOWN 2

THIS Good Friday tale of woe could well be entitled, in view of the Town's performance in the previous match against Birmingham, "How do you like it?"—with apologies to Shakespeare.

At Ashton Gate, they found themselves on the receiving end of the sort of tremendous revival they themselves staged less than a week before and, as in that case, the winners gained only what they deserved.

On the face of things, to lose a two-goal lead as the Town did, comes into the near criminal category and, certainly, having reached that position somewhat fortuitously, they ought to have been able to keep their heads in front.

So many chances were wasted by the City in the first half, and such bad luck did they have in front of goal, that most people thought that their problems about relegation had been increased when the Town came off at the interval leading 2-0.

The goals came from what is rapidly developing again into a productive partnership between Busby and MacDonald. **BUSBY** obtained the first in the 23rd minute when, on the half-turn, he met on the volley a centre from MacDonald, and Cashley was well beaten.

Two minutes from half-time, both went for the ball together when the luckless Cashley allowed a drive by John Ryan to break away from him, but **MacDONALD'S** foot got there first to prod the ball home.

Yet, for much of the first half, the Luton defence, usually so sound and unflappable, had lived dangerously and escaped narrowly on several occasions.

Garland and Galley missed highly acceptable chances before the Town went ahead and Galley, for whom just about nothing went right, failed with a near-open goal and then shot against a post with only Read to beat.

Certainly, the halfway situation was unfair to the City, but when a team is chasing promotion as are the Town, it is essential to accept

fashion

what the fates offer, something which I feel that, on this occasion, the Town failed to do.

Despite the City's misses, both Busby and MacDonald went close to adding to the lead, but there was the underlying thought that the Town were much more brittle at the back than usual, and they seemed to have difficulty in clearing the ball out of their muddy penalty area.

In fact, the whole pitch was like a paddy field and that the teams should produce what was popularly acclaimed as the best match at Ashton Gate this season was a credit to them.

Certainly, the City played football a cut above their station and, in the end, they had the man for their giant-sized task in Garland.

TWO-GOAL LEAD LOST AS TIDE TURNS FOR CITY

In the 59th minute, two minutes after Merrick had replaced the limping Hill, Garland sparked off a goal spree that was to bring three in eight minutes and leave the Town rocking back on their heels.

First he shot against a post and **ROOKS** blasted in the rebound. Then, in quick succession, he first put City level, then ahead. When the second came, laid on by Wilson, the Town defenders, including Read, stood appealing, presumably for offside after a linesman had lifted his flag somewhat tentatively.

GARLAND showed much more urgency, and his well-placed shot landed in the far corner of the net. A minute later, a similar move, drew Read from his goal, and **GARLAND** drove the ball into the roof of the net.

Immediately, the Town brought on Goodeve for Anderson, and then, with something over a quarter of an hour to go, pushed Slough up as a

striker — something that did not pay off, because the City did not leave the gaps in defence that had been evident earlier.

In fact, City came close to clinching a more convincing victory, because the Town had an incredible escape from Garland and Galley, and in almost the last minute, the latter's ill-luck continued when he again hit a post.

Disappointment this certainly was for the Town, but although I was assured that Nicholl was perfectly fit, he seemed to lack confidence on this occasion.

His task increased because Moore could not take a grip on Garland and was less effective than usual.

Nor were John Ryan and Slough as solid as they can be, while Read, despite some splendid saves, was left stranded more than once.

There were spells in the first half when Givens and Keen suggested a grip in midfield, but it was not of a permanent nature, and the hard-running Bristol men were able to find space for themselves.

By and large, MacDonald did not get a lot

of change out of the rugged Rooks but, all the same, was concerned in both goals, which should have been enough to insure against defeat.

It is when things turn against the Town in this fashion that one could wish for a little more experience in various positions, but that, of course, is something that will come with time.

Always, the quick-moving Busby was on the look-out for the odd chance, taking up good position but, with Anderson none too productive, and Jimmy Ryan not often used as an orthodox winger, support for both him and MacDonald was not of the best.

BRISTOL CITY: Cashley; Jacobs, Drysdale; Wilson, Rooks, Hill (Merrick); Tainton, Garland, Galley, Wims.

LUTON TOWN: Read; John Ryan, Slough; Givens, Nicholl, Jimmy Ryan, Busby, MacDonald, Keen, Anderson (C).

Referee: D. R. G. Nippard, Bournemouth. Attendance 18,846.