

Hole's moment of agony in great Goldstone fight

Brighton and Hove Albion Res. 1
Langney Sports 0

A MAGNIFICENT second half failed to produce the goal Langney Sports so desperately needed in Monday's Sussex Senior Cup Final at the Goldstone Ground.

Roared on by over 1,000 of their own supporters, they were far from disgraced in their first appearance at the home of Brighton and Hove Albion.

Pete Cherry's men threw everything into an absorbing second half and the final whistle was greeted with relief by the Albion side.

Afterwards goal-scorer extraordinary Nigel Hole spoke of the moment of agony that so nearly brought the vital strike which could have altered the destination of the county's premier trophy.

Albion were clinging precariously to their solitary-goal lead when the outstanding Paul Callingham took a free-kick from just inside the Langney half.

Skipper Mick Green just missed with his head, Paul Stevens pounced and swung over a cross from the left and Hole's volley, from just five yards out, spun off 'keeper Mark Beeney's feet.

Said Hole, 'I thought all I had to do was to get the ball on target, but the 'keeper stuck out a foot and it went for a corner.

'I was also fouled in the area later on and even their right-back said it was a penalty.'

The official attendance was 1,336, but it seemed well over 2,000 and with the Langney fans in full voice Albion must have thought they were playing away.

In the first half, it was Albion who made all the running as Langney seemed over-awed by the occasion.

The full-timers appeared to have time and space to play the ball around and it was Cherry's team who were forced to do the chasing.

Bryan Wade was inches over with a fine header and Steve Dell

Ken McEwan at the Sussex Senior Cup Final

saved superbly from David Savage and then smothered the ball before Savage could pounce on the rebound.

Danger

Much of the Albion danger was stemming from the right flank where John Crumplin was getting over a stream of crosses and Savage scooped the ball over the bar as confusion reigned in the Langney defence.

But Cherry's men had their moments and Derrick Smith swooped on a Paul Stevens through ball to test Beeney for the first time.

Then Paul Filsell's fine header was saved by the 'keeper following a Mick Green cross.

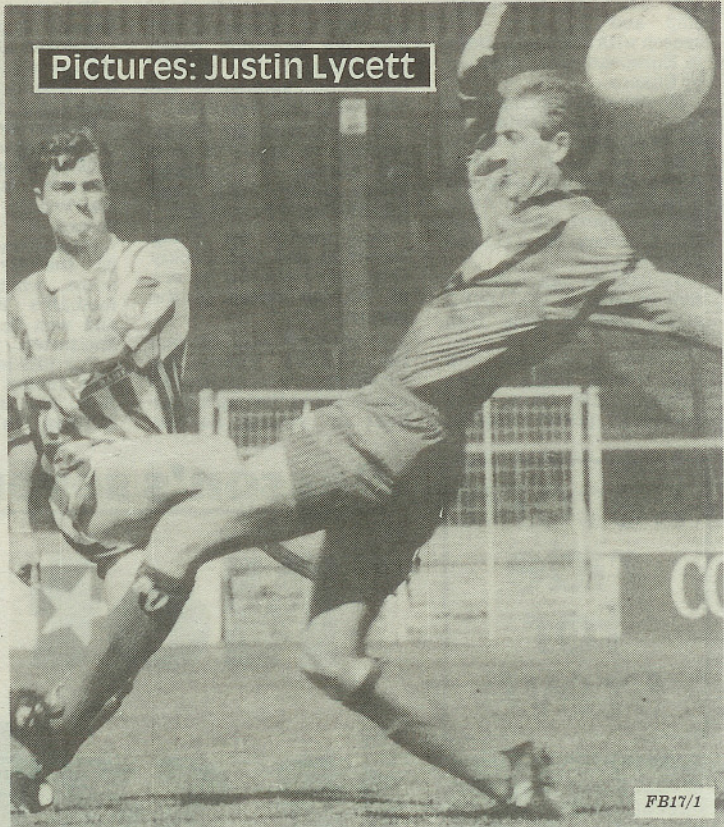
But it was a different story after the interval as Paul Callingham started to relish his midfield freedom after spending the first 45 minutes as sweeper.

The speedy Danny Ashworth also created problems with some menacing runs down the right.

Former Langney youth player Danny Simmonds joined the action as part of a double Albion substitution, but was unfortunately booed whenever he touched the ball by Langney fans who seemed to think he was guilty of desertion.

But despite Langney's new-found fire and fury, the killer goal could so easily have come in the 62nd minute when Jason Morley cleared Savage's effort off

Pictures: Justin Lycett



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BEST foot forward by Langney's top scorer Nigel Hole at the Goldstone on Monday.

the goal-line.

Then a sparkling move involving Smith and Hole ended with the always battling Green a mile off target when well placed.

Matt Jones, obviously not relishing a second Cup final defeat in three years, was active at both ends as his team fought so gallantly for the equaliser.

Sent flying

Hole seemed to be sent flying in the area following yet another immaculate Callingham free-kick and a Stevens rocket from the left whistled past the angle of the upright.

It could have been all over bar the shouting at 83 minutes when Dell did magnificently to foil Wade in a one-to-one situation.

Joe O'Neil made a two-minute appearance after Pete Roberts, who had played well at the back, limped off but as O'Neil afterwards admitted, there was not time for even him to put a foot wrong.

But at the end of the day

there was only pride at this Langney performance.

They had done remarkably well to reach the showpiece final and had certainly not let anyone down in front of many critical eyes at the Goldstone.

After the presentations, they saluted the fans who had provided fantastic support on a truly memorable day.

As coach Eddie Woods said later, 'We'll be back — and it'll be that much easier next time.'

LANGNEY: Dell, Stevens, Morley, Jones, Roberts (O'Neil), Ashworth, Filsell, Green, Hole, Smith, Callingham.

ALBION: Beeney, Crumplin, Stemp (Wolahlo), O'Dowd, Iovan, Reed, Briley, Wade, Funnell (Simmonds), Williams, Savage.

Man of the match: PAUL CALLINGHAM.