

Luton Town Below Their Best At Newcastle

Late Goals In Each Half Spoil Unbeaten Run

(By Chiltern)

NEWCASTLE UNITED 2
Clifton, Pearson (penalty)

LUTON TOWN 0

NEWCASTLE UNITED—Theaker; Craig, Ancell; Gordon, Denmark, Wright; Birkett, Scott, Frost, Clifton, Pearson.

LUTON TOWN—Coen; King, Dunsmore; Finlayson, Dreyer, Roberts; Carroll, Redfern, Billington, Connelly, Stephenson. Referee—J E Williams, Bolton.

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GOALS IN THE CLOSING STAGES of each half, each following fouls by Luton players, beat the Town at Newcastle. This defeat broke a run of five consecutive matches without defeat, and tore away the last shreds of their chance of earning promotion.

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FROM THE WAY THE GAME WENT, Luton should not have lost, for they had rather more of the play than the United, and yet could not bring their attacks to a successful conclusion. This was the main trouble throughout, for the forwards, who were good in midfield, failed to round off their work.

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LUTON HAD THEIR BIG CHANCE in the second half when Newcastle lacked the services of Wright, who had to leave the field with a leg injury. However, this handicap only served to make the United fight harder, and the Town could make little impression on their defence.

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THAT WAS A CURIOUS PART OF THE MATCH, for in the first half, when the home side were at full strength, the Town forwards caused the opposing defence to falter on many occasions. Yet when Clifton had to be drawn out of the attack in the second half, they were easily held.

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THE FIRST HALF went very much in Luton's favour, and during the opening half hour, most of the play was in the home half, although Newcastle were dangerous when they broke away. However, Luton were proving themselves the more capable side, and there is no doubt that they should have been ahead at the interval.

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AT TIMES they were unlucky, particularly when Theaker found full-blooded shots from Billington and Carroll strike him and bounce away. From these re-bounds, Redfern and Connelly each had a chance, but were too slow to accept them.

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THERE WERE SEVERAL EXCITING scrambles in the United goalmouth, and although Frost and Scott missed simple chances, the Town were always the more likely side until five minutes from the interval, when Newcastle took the lead unexpectedly.

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THIS GOAL WAS THE TURNING POINT of the game, and Luton never showed their best form afterwards. A Newcastle attack developed on the right, and Clifton was weaving his way through when he was tackled from behind by Dunsmore, and brought down.

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A FREE KICK WAS AWARDED promptly, and was lobbed into the goal-

mouth by Gordon. This would not have brought a goal had the marking been closer, but, as it was, the ball went to CLIFTON, who was unattended, and the inside-left headed well out of Coen's reach.

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THE TOWN DID A LOT of attacking in the early part of the second half, but there was much close play among the forwards, and with Newcastle relying purely upon defence, they could not get to close quarters.

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THEAKER HAD VERY FEW SHOTS to save during this period and the inside men did not run into position quickly enough to accept some nice crosses from Carroll and Stephenson. When they did get the ball, they were shut out by a solid wall of defenders.

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AT TIMES, NEWCASTLE had only two forwards, the others being called back to help the defence. Newcastle were intent on clinging to their slender lead, and although in some of their rare attacks, Clifton and Frost missed possible chances, they seldom looked like adding to their account.

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AT THE SAME TIME, Luton never looked like getting an equaliser, and much of the play was scrappy and aimless. Apart from this, some feeling crept into the play, and free kicks were all too frequent. The crowd thought they would have a bit of fun too, and began throwing orange peel on to the field.

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THE CLIMAX CAME seven minutes from the end, when Roberts rushed across to tackle Pearson, and was held to have fouled him. I did not think that the tackle merited a penalty, but the referee did, and PEARSON netted from the spot.

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LUTON WERE BELOW THEIR BEST, and, apart from the first half-hour, never showed what they can do. This was most apparent in attack, and although the forwards tried hard enough, nothing came off for them near goal.

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BOTH REDFERN AND CONNELLY kept the ball too close, and Billington, after having the better of his duel with Denmark before the interval, was well held afterwards. Neither Carroll nor Stephenson received consistent support, and each put in some good centres when given the opportunity.

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THE DEFENCE had its moments of uncertainty, but, on the whole, was sound enough. Finlayson and Roberts broke up many a raid, but were not at their best in attack, and many of their passes failed to reach their objective.

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DREYER WAS AS DETERMINED and wholehearted as ever, but he could not always subdue Frost, who was a very nippy leader. King and Dunsmore were always a formidable pair, and gave the wingers little rope, while Coen did everything that was asked of him.