

OLD, OLD ARGYLE STORY OF EVERYTHING BUT SCORE

1972

HUGHES BAULKS DESPERATE ATTACK

Ply. Argyle - - - 0 Luton Town - - - 0

(Att. 17,191)

By PILGRIM 50/61 8 4 50

THE tragedy of Plymouth Argyle continues. Another point was dropped at home to travel-weary Luton this afternoon. Argyle did everything but score, and a significantly smaller crowd of 17,000 was left waiting for an Argyle home goal. There has not been one by Argyle in the last 219 minutes of Home Park football—a tragedy indeed.

Meanwhile Coventry won and Bradford captured a point and three points separate Argyle from the next club—that's an awful gap at this stage.

Changes in Argyle's attack resulted in a reversion to their F.A. Cup-tie forward line. Dews was declared fit, and resumed at inside-left. Luton made one change from the side which defeated Barnsley yesterday, Waugh coming in for Gardiner on the left-wing.

The ground was bone dry, and a unit of Plymouth City Fire Brigade spent three hours at the ground this morning "softening-up" the turf. Teams:—

PLYMOUTH ARGYLE—Shortt; Ratcliffe, Jones; Dougall, Chisholm, Porteous; Strauss, Squires, Tadman, Dews, Williams.

LUTON TOWN—Hughes; Cooke, Aherne; Watkins, Owen, Shanks; Glover, Kiernan, Stobbs, Taylor, Waugh.

Referee: Mr. B. M. Griffiths (Newport).

A strong gusty wind was blowing across the ground.

Chisholm won the toss and decided to play with the wind advantage and Argyle started off in militant mood and in the opening seconds Squires hit the ball first-time just over the Luton bar.

IN NET ANYHOW!

Plymouth soon forced a corner and as Williams crossed the ball Chisholm came through with a bounding leap to fist the ball into the net. The referee quite rightly gave Luton a free kick.

The wind tended to keep play on the right-wing and when Kiernan and Glover made ground quickly in that direction, Chisholm swept the ball from Glover's feet into touch.

Argyle were doing most of the attacking as Dews slipped the ball into the middle, but Tadman was beaten by the bounce and the ball ran out of play.

A Squires-Dews move gave Tadman another chance, but the centre-forward sliced his kick and the ball again rolled out of play.

Not to be outdone, Squires flicked the ball over his head into the goalmouth, where, with

Strauss challenging closely, Hughes managed to punch it clear to Williams, whose first-timer grazed the Luton bar—a great effort.

Argyle continued to call the tune, but had poor ideas about finishing.

Neither side was able to harness the freakish wind, which defied efforts to produce cohesive football.

Dougall twice sent wide with long-range efforts, and then Porteous was on the mark with a 30 yards drive, Hughes hurling himself in the air in vain, as the ball passed over his outstretched hands and just over the bar.

SO NEAR AND YET—

Argyle's attack were putting in plenty of shots as Tadman from the left wing landed one on the top of the netting and then Williams again grazed the crossbar with another effort from close in.

Then twice in as many minutes Dews was on the mark. His first

was a snap effort which Hughes collected at the second attempt, and then followed a glorious left-footed shot which Hughes had to go full length to save.

Playing against the wind Luton's attack was not much in evidence, although once Stobbs raced through the middle and slipped the ball across to Waugh. Ratcliffe raced back to rob the left-winger and save the situation.

Argyle were making desperate efforts to notch that all-important first goal, but a Luton head or leg usually prevented the Luton charge from falling.

Dews was again on the target, this time with another full-blooded drive which passed over the Luton goal with Hughes turning a somersault in the process.

Shortt in the Plymouth goal had not been seriously tested and play was directed still in the Luton half.

Once Squires, taking a shot quickly on the turn, brought the best out of Hughes with a good drive—a good shot and an equally good save.

Squires and Dews were giving Tadman plenty of openings, but the centre-forward was not displaying sufficient determination to make the most of them.

Close on half-time Argyle were awarded a free kick just outside the box, but Chisholm sent the ball well over the top. Half-time:

PLYMOUTH ARGYLE 0

LUTON TOWN 0

Playing with the wind Argyle had missed the boat in the first half. They dominated play, yet they had nothing to show for it.

With more determination at the vital moment they might have been three goals to the good at the interval.

PENALTY APPEAL.

The wind appeared to have died down somewhat when Argyle set about their business on the resumption in a determined manner.

Squires and Porteous drove wide and then Shortt was brought into action for the first time when Taylor tested the Plymouth 'keeper with a ground drive.

In a subsequent attack Argyle appealed for hands by a Luton defender, but the referee waved play on.

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Porteous.

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Argyle's attack could make little impression against a defence that saw to it that their approach was not made in easy stages.

Hughes came out to collect a free-kick from Ratcliffe and in subsequent Luton pressure Shortt fumbled a close-range header from Taylor, but managed to get the ball away safely.

Then Chisholm slid into the tackle in the Argyle goalmouth to halt another Town raid.

When Hughes could not control a bouncing ball from Dews he had to concede a corner as Tadmān tried to head the ball out of the goalkeeper's arms.

Chisholm headed only inches wide from a well-placed corner-kick from Williams.

Porteous was struck on the face by the ball, but resumed without attention.

For a while Luton began to call the tune and Shortt collected a header from Kiernan near the post, and in another raid Waugh came racing through to hook the ball over the bar, but the referee had already signalled offside.

Luton came again and when Stobbart squared the ball Porteous all but put it through his own goal.

Then it was Argyle's turn and with goalkeeper Hughes away from his charge Strauss sent the ball well over the top from 18 yards.

OVER AND OVER AGAIN.

Argyle became the aggressors again as Tadman raced across the field, but drove the ball over the top.

That was the order of things this afternoon as time and time again the light ball was sent merrily on its way over the bar.

Argyle fought desperately for a goal in the closing minutes. Williams had a chance as he hustled through the middle, but his pass, intended for Tadman, went astray.

Williams quickly redeemed himself by sending over a perfect centre, which Tadman headed into Hughes's arms.

Matters looked bad for Plymouth when Glover was in possession away on the right and fired in a rasping drive which Shortt saved but could not hold the ball.

Chisholm tipped the ball back to his 'keeper and stood towering over him while Shortt cleared his line.

Plymouth continued to press in the closing minutes and a through pass from Dougall was missed by several Luton defenders and Hughes just beat Williams in a race for the ball. Result:

PLYMOUTH ARGYLE 0
LUTON TOWN 0



COMMENTS

Argyle missed the boat again. It was the old story of dominating play and yet having nothing to show for it.

The forwards made an effort to redeem themselves, but were totally inept within scoring range. Argyle's story was one of erratic finishing and near misses.

Time and time again the light ball was sent merrily on its way over or outside the Luton posts.

More ball control and less fly-kicking in such wretched conditions would have paid dividends.

Neither side was able to harness the strong, swirling, gusty wind or to control the storm-tossed ball.

Argyle's attack was never really convincing or determined enough to break down a cast-iron defence which had only given away one goal in six matches.

Squires and Dews were the pick of a forward line which seldom blended and did too much waiting for the ball.

Chisholm controlled the Argyle defence with ease and Shortt must have had one of his quietest afternoons of the season.

Argyle should have had two points in the bag.