

# EARLY BLOWS SET TOWN STRUGGLING

## Desperate Pressure Was Staved Off By Rovers

*By Chiltern*

LUTON TOWN ... 1 DONCASTER ROVERS 2

**Desperately though they fought after suffering the shock of conceding two goals in the first quarter of an hour at Kenilworth-road on Saturday, the Town had to yield invaluable points to the Rovers.**

The game was won and lost during those vital early minutes and it was ironical that the more dangerous pressure had come from the Town and that Doncaster scored in what were almost their only serious attacks during that period.

No team can afford to give another two goals start with real hope of getting away with it, but, in normal conditions and with reasonable luck, the Town might well have done so.

It was not that they played badly. The forwards, at least, did sufficient pressing to have assured another convincing win, but, to a large extent, the tactics they adopted did not suit the very heavy going and their raids all too often broke down against the determination of the Rovers' defence.

Many of the Town's victories this season have been gained by pinning their faith on finding a way down the middle and giving Pye all possible support.

In this instance, this move did not work because Paterson gained a grip on the centre-forward and, in view of that, it would probably have been more valuable had the main point of attack been switched to the wings.

There was, too, a tendency to make the short pass, too often doomed to interception by the quick Rovers' defenders and insufficient use was made of the long ball.

### ROVERS' DEFENCE HAD

#### A GRUELLING

Mistaken tactics or not, the Town still managed to give the Rovers' defence a real gruelling and had the visitors been less solid in this department and had Paterson been led the dance that Pye usually leads opposing centre-halves, they would have been in real trouble.

Even when HERBERT scored the Doncaster goals during scrambles following corners, the Town always looked as if they could pull the game out of the fire.

Seven minutes from half-time, MITCHELL scored a grand goal from Pye's pass and, after that, the battle was on with a vengeance.

The second half was mainly a story of heavy pressure by the Town, relieved only by occasional breakaway by the Rovers' forwards that were more speedily dealt with by the Town defence than had been the case in the early stages.

Had the Town drawn level, they would probably have broken the Doncaster resistance, but the longer the Rovers kept their lead, the more forlorn did the Town's hopes begin to look.

Yet, they threatened to equalise all through the second half without ever getting to the point of doing so.

### SHOTS WERE DEFLECTED

Several shots that might have counted suffered the fate of being deflected en route and although there were some close calls, the Rovers held firm and literally packed their goalmouth at times. Chances cropped up and were missed, so the Town paid the penalty in full.

Had things gone right for the Town, there would have been little doubt about the final result, but they never really started to swing in that direction after the early Doncaster blows.

Both were due to bad defensive covering and Streten again showed that he is not cutting out the high crosses with the confidence that used to be the case.

This was emphasised by the danger that Doncaster's few corners brought.

When Doncaster's forwards did get on the move, the speed with which they switched the ball about worried the Town defence and Harrison's roaming caused some first half trouble.

Owen settled down splendidly after an uncertain start, but Morton was the pick of the defence. Without reaching his best, Aherne was more certain than Dunne who seems to have struck a bad patch, and Shanks had only a moderate sort of day.

With Pye mostly held, much of

sting was taken out of the attack, and Moore, though getting in plenty of shots, was not quite the force he has been.

On the other hand, Watkins showed much better form and both Davies and Mitchell were dangerous and could have been given more opportunities.

LUTON TOWN: Streten; Dunne Aherne; Morton, Owen, Shanks; Davies, Moore, Pye, Watkins, Mitchell.

DONCASTER ROVERS: Hardwick; Makepeace, Graham; Brown, Paterson, Miller; Tindill, Lawlor, Harrison, Herbert, Walker.

Referee, J. R. Dunbar, Staple-

ford, Attendance: 15,258.