

RECALL OF WATKINS A GREAT SUCCESS

Town's Win Put Them On Top Of Second Division

(By Chiltern)

LUTON TOWN 3 STOKE CITY 1

Fast, progressive football, plus the acceptance of sufficient chances to take a dominating grip on the game, not only enabled the Town to maintain their 100-per-cent home record, but took them to the top of the Second Division.

These were the first away points Stoke had dropped, but they did not look like a side that had done so well on tour. Never did they threaten to build up for themselves anything approaching a winning position and they were a bit fortunate to get away so lightly.

Once they were over the early settling down stage, the Town's re-shuffled attack, the constitution of which was not settled until the morning of the match began to show convincing form.

Had Scott not been transferred to Middlesbrough overnight, he would have been at inside-left, and, it was probably a lucky chance for the Town that the deal went through, otherwise Watkins would have been merely a spectator.

Recall of Watkins to tackle once more the job he did so ably during the season before last, proved to be a master stroke, for his quiet, controlled and strong play enabled him to become the player who began a number of the Town's moves and he rarely wasted a ball.

Much of the praise for the smoothness that the front line attained belongs to Watkins, who showed just how good a ball player he is.

LEFT WING DANGEROUS

His cleverness, combined with the thrust and speed of Adam, meant that the left wing was a great success and all three goals came from these two players.

First was from WATKINS after 23 minutes with a low shot from something approaching the inside-right position after he had created the opening himself. Possibly, Robertson would have reached the ball had not his attention been distracted by Adam passing his foot over the ball without touching it at all.

Eight minutes later, Robertson was picking the ball out of the back of the net again when ADAM, who had drifted in from the wing turned in a cross by Cullen after a fine movement.

All this time Stoke had been most innocuous in attack, with the Town defence firmly and confidently breaking up all their attempts to make ground, and there was little shooting from them.

ADAM'S second goal of the match came after 66 minutes, when he was left with a gift opportunity after Robertson had dropped the ball from Turner, who crossed it from the dead-line.

Not until the closing stages did Stoke become anything like dangerous, and it was while Turner was off the field having attention that BEVANS obtained their only goal after Streten had pushed out a drive from Oscroft.

WELL-BALANCED DISPLAY

This was a well-balanced, cohesive display by the Town, and there was effective work from the right wing of Cullen and Turner, with the former more direct than he is on some occasions.

However, a query still remains about the centre-forward position and whether MacEwan will eventually be the man to fill it. No one can doubt his enthusiasm and his capacity for taking the weight in the middle, but his finishing was inaccurate and he did not get a lot of change out of Thomson.

Always on top, the defence were masters of the situation from the start, with great strength in the middle line, where Morton and Owen were outstanding and Shanks was always prominent.

There was soundness at full-back and little in the way of a serious test for Streten until the closing stages.

LUTON TOWN: Streten; Dunne, Aherne; Morton, Owen, Shanks; Cullen, Turner, MacEwan, Watkins, Adam.

STOKE CITY: Robertson; Short, McCue; Mountford, Thomson, Sellars; Bevans, Hutton, King, Cairns, Oscroft.

Referee: J. W. Malcolm, Leicester.

Attendance: 17,325.