

Other Critics Were:

NOT LAVISH IN THEIR PRAISE

National newspaper critics were not lavish in their praise after Luton's 1-0 win over Portsmouth and they still had faults to find.

However, they were unanimous about two things. First, the team showed a great improvement on their Easter displays, and secondly, Les Jones gave an international-class showing at left-back.

"Luton should have won by a wider margin, and probably would have done but for the agility of Uprichard, the stopping power of Rutter and the somewhat monotonous way in which Pearce, Luton's latest leader, became involved in the offside trap."—"News of the World."

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"Luton were well worth their win over Portsmouth, and the score would have been more decisive but for some clever goal-keeping by Uprichard. Luton still face problems in attack, but they looked a more formidable force than they were in the Easter matches."—"Sunday Express."

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"Lack of understanding in the Luton forward line spoiled the approach work, and with the possible exception of Turner, it was a shot-shy attack."—"Sunday Pictorial."

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"Left-back Les Jones was the best in the Luton team. In this match he was faultless and his cool, cultured positional play would be an asset to the Welsh national team."—"Empire News and Sunday Chronicle."

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"Luton had eighty per cent of the game, but were foiled by the alert Norman Uprichard, Portsmouth's Irish international keeper."—"Reynolds News."

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"Luton deserved their win ... Portsmouth were quiet enough not to disturb a nesting sparrow."—"The People."

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"While Luton have never yet been able to regain the rhythm and punch they lost around Christmas-time, their latest forward formation at least did well enough to worry a strong Portsmouth defence."—"Sunday Dispatch."

STRUGGLE WITHOUT MUCH TENSENESS

Turner's Goal Enough To Give Town Two Points

By Chiltern

LUTON TOWN 1, PORTSMOUTH 0

THERE was a quiet sort of atmosphere about this match which seemed to lack the usual tenseness of a struggle for League points and could perhaps be traced to the fact that both teams had achieved a position of safety.

Yet, despite the liveliness of the ball on the hard ground, some calculated football was played, with the Town attack, re-cast once more, showing improvement on their showing at Chelsea.

Not that this was a particularly difficult thing to achieve, but there was added liveliness, and sufficient method to enable them to take the upper hand for most of the second half.

What was missing still was the final punch, but even so Uprichard was given opportunities of showing the qualities that have made him an automatic choice as Ireland's goalkeeper.

His saves apart, there were some close things at the Portsmouth end and the Town deserved to win by more than the one goal that came their way.

WHEN LUTON ESCAPED

Not that all the close calls happened to Pompey, for in the early stages the visitors might very well have gone into the lead had things really gone right for them.

There was a shot by Harris that just missed the far post, and another that struck a post with Baynham well away from the ball. Then only by blocking the ball with his foot did the goalkeeper manage to prevent Henderson from scoring.

Once the Town took the lead in the 42nd minute, though, they seemed to be in no particular danger because the Portsmouth forwards faded right out of the picture and the Town were in no sort of trouble until Portsmouth produced something approaching a late rally.

During this there were confident appeals for a goal when Baynham, on the goal-line, stopped a drive from Penk that threatened to get in between him and the near post. The referee promptly waved on play, and that was just about Portsmouth's last chance.

The Town's goal was secured

by TURNER, whose flick from close range changed the direction of the ball after Pearce had helped on a centre by Adam.

Without being a complete success, Pearce was a willing worker on his first appearance in the middle. He tried to keep the line on the move, but was too frequently caught offside.

However, with Turner often looking dangerous inside the penalty area and Groves doing the midfield work, there were signs that the old two-pronged effect can be regained with this set-up.

Had Adam really been able to finish consistently, he could have made a name for himself, so much of the ball came his way, particularly in the second half.

On the other hand, Pounder would probably have welcomed more of the ball early on to enable him to settle down, for he showed signs of being overawed by the occasion.

Star of the defence was Jones, whose distribution of the ball was more on the lines of that of a half-back than a full-back, and his was a highly polished display.

Morton and Shanks were right on top of their jobs, Dunne was never in much trouble, and what came Baynham's way was dealt with easily and capably.

Some mistakes were made by Kelly, rectified by good covering, and he was not completely happy against Henderson and the awkwardly bouncing ball.

LUTON TOWN: Baynham; Dunne, Jones; Morton, Kelly Shanks; Pounder, Turner, Pearce, Groves, Adam.

PORTSMOUTH: Uprichard; McGhee, Mansell; Gunter, Rutter, Dickinson; Penk, Gordon, Henderson, Barnard, Harris.

Referee: C. W. Kingston, Newport, Mon. Attendance: 17,824.