

ARSENAL BEAT LUTON BY 1-0



All eyes on the ball as a Henderson header dropped on to the roof of the Luton net.

Bloomfield scores from wing move

By JIM GAUGHAN

JIMMY BLOOMFIELD'S goal in the 21st minute of this afternoon's match against Luton gave Arsenal their first League win at Highbury since November 15.

The crowd of 56,501 saw both sides fight hard to overcome the heavy conditions. Luton were rather unlucky not to save a point.

Billy McCullough, 22-year-old Irish left-back, signed from Portadown early in September, made his League debut for Arsenal, taking over from Dennis Evans. Bill Dodgin returned to centre-half instead of Jim Potteringham, John Petts came in at left-half and Tommy Docherty switched to right-half to rest Gerry Ward. Centre-forward Len Julians, signed from Leyton Orient on Christmas Eve, made his first home appearance for Arsenal.

Luton had to make two changes in the side who shattered Arsenal 6-3 at Kenilworth-road yesterday. Terry Kelly deputised for Sid Owen at centre-half and Brendan McNally was at right-back instead of Seamus Dunne.

Spreadeagled

Arsenal made the first move, Julians breaking away on the left to try an angled shot which Baynham pulled down without difficulty.

Then Luton spreadeagled the Arsenal defence with some rapid positional switches which put Brown clear on the right wing.

His centre found Bingham in the inside-left position and a neat header only just failed to put Gregory right through. As the ball ran loose, Kelsey picked up and cleared.

Arsenal looked like breaking through when Henderson cut into the middle and slipped the ball past Kelly. Groves, however, lost control in the mud.

Kelsey saves

Only a great save by Kelsey prevented Luton going ahead in their next attack. Some fine passing put Bingham clear of McCullough and he hit a tremendous shot which Kelsey knocked down and gathered at the second attempt.

Arsenal's forwards, operating in the muddiest half of the field, overdid their efforts to smash their way through the middle. Clapton showed what could be done on the wings, where

the going was finer, when he ran away from Hawkes and hit a powerful low shot which Baynham saved at the foot of a post.

Then Henderson emphasised the point when he began the move which put Arsenal ahead in the 21st minute.

Henderson passed inside to Groves who flicked the ball back to the oncoming Bloomfield. The first shot hit Baynham and rebounded to Bloomfield whose second attempt crossed the line before a Luton defender booted the ball away.

Clever passes

For a time Arsenal put on heavy pressure, but the forwards were still inclined to bunch in the middle.

Luton favoured more open methods and, with McCullough uncomfortable against Bingham, Arsenal's defence was not secure.

Gregory made one fine run which ended when Dodgin got a desperate foot to the ball and managed to turn it back for Kelsey to clear.

Cummins made clever passes

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Vic Groves hobbles on Arsenal left wing

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and some hard work by Docherty and Pets was needed to close up the gap made by Luton's inside-left.

Groves limping

Though Julians worked hard to hold the forwards together Arsenal looked really dangerous only when the ball was on the wings, which was still not often enough.

From one of Henderson's centres Baynham had to huff himself face down in the mud to prevent Julians turning the ball into the net.

With Vic Groves limping, Luton were having more of the play and once again Kelsey robbed them of an equaliser with a magnificent one-handed save from Gregory.

Half-time: Arsenal 1, Luton 0.

Arsenal began the second half with Groves hobbling on the left-wing and Henderson at inside-right.

Henderson burst through and saw his hard, low shot rebound from Baynham's body just out of reach of Julians.

McCullough now seemed to be settling down and twice in two minutes was cheered for determined tackles which stopped Gregory as he tried to get away on the right.

Brilliant tackle

Bloomfield, out of touch and often holding the ball too long, made one good attempt to get Clapton moving. Hawkes, however, saved Luton with a brilliant tackle.

The Luton forward giving Arsenal most trouble at this stage was the elusive Bingham.

One of his cross-field runs resulted in Adam getting away from Wills, but fine covering by Dodgin gave Gregory no chance to make use of the centre.

The question now was whether Arsenal, with Groves little more than a spectator, could hold out in such tiring conditions.

They were still far from being the side we knew a few weeks ago, but they were certainly fighting for the ball and making all-out efforts to get the goal which would put them safe.

Henderson lifted a pass from Wills over the bar and Julians only just failed to reach Docherty's free kick with his head.

Over empty goal

Again it was Bingham who threatened Arsenal with a dazzling run and a brilliant centre which Kelsey punched away. The ball landed at the feet of Cummins who shot over the empty goal.

Twice the speed of Kelsey in leaving his goal got Arsenal out of trouble.

Result: Arsenal 1, Luton 0