

ARSENAL'S WORST FOR 30 YEARS

Arsenal 0, Luton 3.

By JOE HULME



BILLY BINGHAM . . . he made it so tough for Arsenal's Dennis Evans.

ARSENAL boss George Swindin must be a very worried man. And that great manager of yesteryear, Herbert Chapman, must surely be turning in his grave. For there cannot have been such an appalling Arsenal performance for 30 years.

No doubt, Swindin was glad he was not there to see it. Still, he must realise that now it is a race between disaster and getting his casualties fit in time to save the ship.

Until these casualties, particularly Tommy Docherty, are back in the side, I see plenty of trouble ahead for my old club.

They're giving away far too many goals (20 in the last five matches, three of which were at home).

Docherty's iron character is needed to rule their defence and when Mel Charles is fit I would like to see him as the attacking spearhead.

Charles is the man to provide the punch so urgently needed.

It was all too easy for Luton Town. On this form they should soon pull clear of trouble.

They were on top from the start. And they stayed there—by the simple process of moving the ball firmly in the mud while Arsenal tried to tip-tap their way through.

Take Luton's first two goals. Each time outside-left Tony Gregory banged the ball home. And each came from a cross from that prince of right-wingers, Billy Bingham. Rough luck that Arsenal left-back Dennis Evans should come back after four months to meet Bingham at his best.

To cap it all, Arsenal goalie Jim Standen missed another Bingham cross completely for inside-right Gordon Turner to tap in the third goal.

Arsenal's troubles started before the game. With the team selection. I was amazed to find that Danny Clapton, once an England outside-right, was to go through the motions at outside-left and that David Herd was picked for outside-right.

Why not Jackie?

Why on earth did Arsenal leave out Jackie Henderson? I'm told he was fit but was dropped. In these heavy conditions, strong Jackie is surely too good to omit.

By using the ball quickly, Luton's attack had Arsenal's defence—one man excepted—in one panic after another.

The exception was centre-half Bill Dodgin, who stayed firm when all around him were floundering.

Wing-halves Gerry Ward and Johnny Petts could not hold Luton's punchy inside-forwards Bob Morton and Gordon Turner.

While Arsenal were still in the game, I liked the look of the new Irish right-back Jimmy Magill.

Luton's defence made a tremendous contribution to this useful victory. I thought centre-half Terry Kelly was particularly good.

He was wonderfully well supported by wing-halves John Groves and Dave Pacey, while the backs Seamus Dunne and Alan Daniel hardly put a foot wrong.

ARSENAL.—Standen 7; Magill 7; Evans 5; Ward 6; ★DODGIN 9; Petts 6; Herd 5; Barnwell 5; Julians 6; Bloomfield 7; Clacton 7.

LUTON.—Baynham 8; Dunne 8; Daniel 8; Groves 8; Kelly 8; Pacey 8; ★BINGHAM 9; Turner 8; Brown 6; Morton 7; Gregory 8.

Referee: R. H. Mann (Worcester) 9.