

POMPEY FADE, BUT SHARE THE POINTS

62/63

Luton ram home equalizer after splendid rally

(By LINESMAN)

Pompey had only themselves to blame for dropping a point in a 3—3 draw at Luton today after holding a 2—0 interval lead. They let things slide so badly that the struggling Town side were allowed to come back into the game and even snatch a last-minute equalizer.



ALLAN BROWN who scored Pompey's second goal with a penalty kick.

Once again, Pompey took a good following with them, and the blue and white favours were well in evidence on the sparsely-filled terraces.

Pompey, who were unchanged, included two former Luton players, Brown and McCann.

Bottom-of-the-table Luton preferred Lornie at centre-forward for Turner.

LUTON TOWN
Standen
McNally Bramwell
Morton Pacey McGuffie
Clapton Lornie Walden
Fleming McKechnie

PORTSMOUTH
Referee: Mr. V. James, of York.

The match opened with a scare for the Pompey followers, for Morton sent Clapton chasing the ball down the right-hand side of the penalty area. The winger centred despite the fact that it was clear the ball had gone out of play.

It bobbed about in the goal-mouth before it was eventually established that the referee had given a goal kick.

Luton were soon back again, and this time Wilson kicked behind for a safety corner.

Dodson, who was anxious for a good match to end his lean spell at outside-left, worried McNally and got the ball through to Saunders. The centre-forward, who was in a good position, mis-hit his shot, but it was still deflected for a corner, which came to nothing.

Dickinson floated over a fine dropping centre which Saunders just failed to meet with his head. McKechnie flicked the ball over Brown cleverly enough, but his final shot was very weak.

Luton were in real trouble when Barton pushed the ball through to McCann, and it was not cut off properly by the home defenders. Bramwell hooked it away, but Saunders, following up on the right, hit it straight back into the side netting.

It was a lucky escape for Luton.

Saunders turned the ball into the Luton goal after ten minutes, but the excitement soon ended as he was given offside.

Saunders scores

Two minutes later, however, SAUNDERS side-footed the ball over the goal-line to put Pompey ahead.

The danger started out on the right wing with Barton, who beat his man and drew another defender before slipping the ball to Gordon. The inside-right, who had previously brought a save from Standen, shot for goal, and Saunders made absolutely certain of the ball going over.

Luton's best effort so far came

from Lornie, who held off the attentions of Brown and Gunter before trying a shot which Shearing held confidently enough.

Saunders had to receive attention, apparently for a cut on the face, but he continued holding the piece of padding in his hand in case it was needed.

Gunter made a good interception and pushed a pass out to Barton at the start of another promising attack, but Pacey cut out the danger before Saunders could get to the centre.

Continued in Back Page

Goalscorers

- 12min. ... SAUNDERS
- 37min. BROWN (pen.)
- 70min. ... Walden (pen.)
- 72min. ... SAUNDERS
- 77min. Lornie
- 89min. McKechnie

LINESMAN'S COMMENT

During the second half at Luton today, there was the unusual spectacle of Pompey captain Jimmy Dickinson being quite demonstrative with his poor-playing forwards.

It looked as though he was telling them quite firmly that they had to buck up their ideas and come into the game and put Pompey back into line.

Although Dickinson's words had some effect on the forwards, defensive mistakes contributed to Pompey losing a point.

The scene was set for them to record a big win over this woefully weak Luton team, but their second half play was inexcusable.

Saunders and Brown (penalty) had given Pompey their interval

lead, and although it looked as though they would win as they pleased, there was a warning for them even in the first half. For Walden should have equalized with the score at 1—0, and then it took a superb save from Shearing to stop Lornie scoring.

It seemed unbelievable that Pompey should let the game slip from their grasp so disastrously. In a sudden spurt of scoring, the whole complexion was changed.

It looked as though Pompey, despite themselves, would hang on for a win, but in the last moment, Shearing was in trouble again, this time with a corner from Fleming, and McKechnie was standing right on the line to snatch the equalizer.

OPPOSITION VERDICT

Showing far greater cohesion in attack, Portsmouth should have had this game well sewn up by half-time.

From their point of view it was a very encouraging display marred only by the fact that the forwards in particular eased up in the second half.

It could well have proved fatal if Luton had only a forward able to take advantage of the territorial advantage the Town gave in the closing period.

In the first half Portsmouth tore the Luton defence to shreds. Saunders quickly and completely released himself from the grip of the former under-23 centre-half Pacey, and Luton were usually thrown into a panic whenever he was on the ball.

With a little more steadiness early on and a little more luck later he might have found a hat full of goals. With Gordon shooting with accuracy at every oppor-

tunity, McCann working the ball cleverly, and Dodson and Barton giving the Luton full backs the run around, the Pompey attack had a rare field day in this early period.

Had Luton possessed one forward with the same calibre and speed, however, Portsmouth might well have been in trouble, for Gunter and Wilson showed signs of uncertainty on occasions, and Wilson in particular had a very uneasy opening spell.

With little to bother them from the Luton inside trio, Brown, Snowdon and Dickinson were able to stroll through the first half.

Pompey's attack eased up in the second half and Luton had more than a fair share of the play, but they could never produce the same first-class fire and enthusiasm of Pompey's attack in the opening half.

Many errors by anxious Luton

Pompey should have conceded the equalizer when a hefty clearance from Wilson rebounded off Fleming and went straight through to Walden. The outside-left was in a splendid position, but he shot wide of the far post as he was challenged by Gunter. It was certainly a most fortunate let-off.

Pompey were the better side, however, and Barton and then Saunders almost bored their way through.

Shot wildly

It did not take long to realize why Luton were at the bottom of the table. Although the approach work of Walden and McKechnie was good enough in one way, the inside-left shot wide, and then when McGuffie came running up he shot wildly.

Gordon was floored in mid-field, but he recovered in time to rush into the penalty area to head a free kick from Brown—just wide of the post, after Saunders had been impeded by Pacey.

Pompey had to thank a brilliant save from Shearing for not losing their lead after 30 minutes. Lornie met a cross from Clapton, and fairly slammed it for goal.

At the very last moment, Shearing turned the ball over the bar.

Even Wilson came up to take advantage of some poor Luton defensive play, but his shot was saved near the post by Standen.

McNally handles

Pompey were two up after 37 minutes. McNally handled an awkward ball and the referee had no hesitation in giving a penalty.

BROWN slammed the spot kick past Standen.

Pompey nearly scored again when Saunders got his head to a cross from Gunter and Standen brought off a fine save.

After a throw-in by Dickinson, who ran on to take the return pass from McCann, Luton were once again in danger.

The ball came through to Dodson and then back to him again. Finally he hit it across the goal-face, and Barton went flying through the air as he tried to meet it with his head. He only just failed to connect for what would have been a spectacular goal.

Half-time:
LUTON TOWN 0
PORTSMOUTH 2

It took another fine save by Shearing to stop Luton getting an early second half goal. The Pompey defence seemed strangely off guard, and the ball went leisurely through to Fleming.

The inside-right tried to place the ball inside the far upright, but Shearing managed to get his hands to it and palm it away.

Dickinson added a touch of much-needed craft to the match by the way he covered the ball from McGuffie with McKechnie making a determined attempt to win possession.

Dickinson was calmness itself as he cleared in his penalty area.

It was certainly still poor fare for the crowd, with an anxious Luton side making mistake after mistake.

In the disorganized rushes which Luton were making, Shearing was holding the ball confidently, whenever called into action.

Poor McNally, who had given away the penalty, watched anxiously as his header went straight to Barton, but Pompey could not capitalize on the error.

Snowdon gave away a corner stopping McKechnie, and when this came across, first Dickinson and then Brown, cleared.

McNally fouled Gordon in the centre-circle and the Pompey man had to receive attention for an ankle injury.

It looked as though Dickinson had decided that it was about time his forwards did more, for he was seen being unaccountably stern with them.

Shearing was in trouble with

Luton

a centre from the right with Lornie challenging him, but he turned the ball for a corner.

Dickinson was still having a few words with his forwards for allowing this poor Luton team to have so much of the play.

Paid penalty

Pompey paid the penalty—literally—after 70 minutes when Lornie appeared to have fluffed a chance, but when sprawling as Snowdon stopped him.

The referee gave a penalty against the Pompey centre-half, and WALDEN hit the penalty past Shearing.

Just as it looked as though Pompey had let the match slip from their grasp, SAUNDERS restored the two-goal advantage in the 72nd minute.

He cut diagonally across the penalty area before hitting his shot which Standen appeared to have well covered. Instead of gathering as expected, however, the goalkeeper let the ball slip

out of his grasp and under him. It trickled over the line for a goal.

A bad foul by Bramwell, who fairly chopped Barton down from behind just outside the penalty area, halted another dangerous Pompey attack. Then Saunders sent a shot just over the bar.

A bad mistake by Shearing resulted in Luton scoring again after 77 minutes. The goalkeeper went up well enough to get to Walden's centre, but did not take it and LORNIIE was there to convert.

A good move between Barton and Saunders split Luton wide apart again, and when the centre-forward centred, Morton very nearly put through his own goal.

At the other end, Shearing made a good save from Lornie. In the last minute, Luton got the equalizer.

Fleming took a corner out on the right and completely deceived Shearing. McKECHNIE was standing on the line to turn the ball over.

Final:
LUTON TOWN 3
PORTSMOUTH 3
Attendance: 8,156.