

TOWN'S SECOND-HALF RALLY

DESERVED VICTORY

Revival started by Reid penalty goal

By CHILTERN

LUTON TOWN 2, NEWPORT 1

65/66

A RECURRENCE of Billy Harber's ankle trouble caused Luton Town manager George Martin to make a late change for the home match with Newport County this afternoon.

Instead of Billy Stark, the new signing, travelling direct from Colchester to Charlton to play for the reserves as planned, he was switched to Luton.

Obviously, Stark was a contender for the vacancy in the forward line, and the final decision did not come until half an hour before kick-off time. Then, Mr. Martin decided that Tommy McKechnie, who has played on the wing at times should take over at outside-left so that Stark became the substitute.

There was some reasoning behind this decision, because Stark is purely an inside forward, and it would have been asking a lot of him to make his debut out of position.

The alternative would have been to reshuffle the attack, but that was something that the manager wished to avoid, in view of the improvement shown on Wednesday.

Newport, though they put up a good performance in holding Third Division opponents Southend to a 2-2 draw in the League Cup, also made a late change for today's encounter.

Five minutes before kick-off time it was announced that right-back Frowen was not playing, and that David Williams, named as substitute earlier, was to play instead.

Then immediately after that, over the loudspeaker system, it was said that Frowen was the substitute.

Why the change was made was a mystery, because I checked in the Newport dressing room just after 2.30 and no change had been made then.

Newport were still without Derek Tapscott, their Welsh international, who is on the injured list.

PITCH IN SPLENDID CONDITION

After the deluge yesterday and following the dry morning, the pitch had recovered remarkably well and looked in splendid condition.

Despite the fine weather, which was all against the fore-

TEAMS

LUTON TOWN: Tinsley; Thomson, Jardine; Edwards, Rivers, Moore; Slough, Gibson, Read, Reid, McKechnie. Substitute: Stark.

NEWPORT COUNTY: Weare; Williams, Bird; Cooke, Rathbone, Rowlands; Morgan, Pugh, Reynolds, Hill, Jones.

Substitute: Frowen.
Referee: J. Osborne, Ipswich.

cast, the crowd, five minutes before the start, was very thin.

After a quiet start, the game suddenly erupted, with Jardine making a long run half the length of the field before passing to Read. The centre-forward swung away for goal willingly enough, but Rathbone was in the way.

The nearest approach to goal was when Read switched the ball out to the right wing. Slough shot, the ball was deflected by Bird, but not sufficiently to defeat Weare.

A CHANCE FALLS TO TOWN

Slough next forced a corner which Moore headed away, and when the ball was returned to the Town end Morgan was caught offside.

A chance fell to Town when Reid floated the ball across, but it went just out of the reach of either Read or Gibson. In the end it went out to Edwards, whose 20-yard drive rose just too high.

Newport's reply was down their left wing, where Jones closed in dangerously to shoot uncomfortably close to a post with Tinsley scrambling across.

Town enjoyed a let-off when Rivers was penalised for pushing, and Bird smacked the ball through a crowd of players to hit the post.

Before the danger was cleared, Tinsley had to pull down from under the bar a dangerous cross from Jones.

Newport were a little the more persistent in their pressure, and Tinsley had to dive to a shot from Newlands. He could not hold on to the ball,

and finally retrieved it on all fours.

With 19 minutes gone, Newport took the lead through MORGAN.

The movement developed on the left, with the Town defence being drawn over to try to cope with Jones. The winger's centre came across with deadly accuracy, out of the reach of Tinsley and Reynolds, who tried to meet it, and eventually it was Morgan who was left the chance of heading the ball into the net.

So far there had been nothing from the Town anything like their form in the second half against Brighton, and the forwards, showing little discernible pattern, were falling easy victims to the Newport defence.

They were awarded a free kick when Read was pulled down heavily, but Moore's shot hit the crowd of players and spiralled into the penalty area before being cleared.

Nor was the Town defence looking happy under pressure, particularly in their covering, and Morgan again went close



with a header which landed on top of the net.

Town at last began to show some improvement, but the constructive build was not there. They forced a couple of corners, from the first of which Gibson headed over, and then Read suffered a cut over an eye in trying to head in the second, but the damage was not serious enough to require stitching, at least at this juncture. Read, in fact, made do with a piece of wadding with which he dabbed the cut.

Rivers was penalised for pushing Reynolds, but I made him not wholly to blame, because the centre-forward was backing into him persistently.

NEWPORT IN TROUBLE

A well-placed corner kick by Slough had Newport in



Left-half John Moore scored his first goal for Town to give them the lead after 59 minutes.

trouble, and Weare was injured. Finally Williams put the ball behind, but there was no corner because the referee had given Newport a free kick for a foul on the goalkeeper, who needed attention.

While this was going on, trainer Watkins took the opportunity to put a strip of plaster over Read's left eye.

Another free-kick against the Town for pushing, this time against Moore, put Newport on the attack again after they had spent a period defending, but it fizzled out when Rowland sent behind.

LACKING IN BASIC SKILLS

When the Town returned to the attack, Gibson put the ball just wide after Read had headed it down to him.

Fundamentally, however, the Town were very much lacking in the basic skills of the game.

There was no real sign that the Town could take a grip on this game. Indeed, Newport

were now pressing, though not very seriously, partly because of their tendency to become offside.

Newport's defence was going along quite comfortably against this stingless Town attack.

Then the crowd suddenly found cause for applause on two counts when clever passing by Reid and Gibson led to the latter making a terrific drive from 20 yards. Weare threw himself across his goal to bring off a brilliant save.

From this, Newport hit back again, and a foul by Moore on Hill brought Newport a free-kick in a dangerous position, but it went to waste. Half-time:

LUTON 0
NEWPORT 1

In the first minute of the second half, the Town should have drawn level, because Slough was left with a good chance from a cross by McKechnie but, unmarked, he shot against a post.

There was more life about the Town now, and Weare did well to hold at full-stretch a high lob by Gibson with Read running in quickly behind him.

With the Town keeping up the pressure, Read came through quickly to reach the ball before Weare, who had come right out of his goal, but the centre-forward was so acutely angled that all he could do was send the ball for a goal kick.

PENALTY GOAL FOR TOWN

Another chance for the Town went astray when Gibson, after taking advantage of a mistake by Rathbone, was left with only Weare to beat. Somehow the goalkeeper clawed the ball to safety.

As things developed, however, McKechnie secured control but was roughly brought down by Williams.

Without hesitation, the referee pointed to the penalty spot, but before the kick could be taken attention had to be given to McKechnie and Weare, who had been in the wars again.

When play was on again, REID made no mistake from the penalty spot to put the Town level after 53 minutes.

There was a sudden rush to the Town end after this, and Newport appealed for a goal after Tinsley had fallen on the

How the can GO

MORGAN for
after 19 min
REID (penalty
after 53 min
MOORE for
59 minutes

ball absolutely on the line after a centre from the right.

Then the Town replied briskly to take the lead through MOORE after 59 minutes.

This was Moore's first goal for the Town and it was a well-taken effort. He smacked it first time into the net from just inside the penalty area from a pass by Gibson in a heavy raid on the Newport goal.

So the tables had been turned with a vengeance, and the Town were at last beginning to play with something approaching the force and determination they showed on Wednesday.

There was some threat from Newport after this, for obviously they had been taken aback by the sudden turn of events.

By dint of scrambling methods, the Town survived, and play settled down in mid-field.

It was Newport's turn for panic in defence when Cook lobbed the ball behind his own goal with Gibson in close attendance, but Weare was hanging on to everything in the air, and he did so when Slough put across a corner.

After 70 minutes, Newport introduced a substitute when inside-left Hill went off injured, and Frowen came in.

He went to his own position of right-back, with Williams moving to outside-right, Morgan inside-right, and Pugh inside-left.

TOWN'S LEAD NOT IN DANGER

There was not much in it, though the Town's lead did not look to be in particular danger. Read headed narrowly wide, and then, seeking to reach a centre by Slough, apparently forgot that was no longer wearing the green jersey, and pulled down the ball with his hands.

Neither team looking very deadly in attack, though Rathbone narrowly avoided putting into his own goal when he headed away an effort by Edwards.

After this, Slough was heavily pulled down, but, as he had been fairly consistently, Read was beaten in the air to Thomson's free kick.

The upshot was a free kick badly placed by McKechnie with lardine coming through.

With the end in sight, the Town were still on the attack.