

TOWN HOLD A POINT IN STORMY AFFAIR

Unlucky Thomson was sent off the field

By CHILTERN

65/66

DONCASTER ROVERS 1, LUTON TOWN 1

STORMY and tempestuous, that was the character not only of the weather, but of the play at gale-swept Belle Vue, Doncaster, on Tuesday night, and the Town can take comfort from the fact that they will never have to fight harder for a point.

For one thing, just about everything went against them, with their first misfortune the losing of the toss, so that they had to face a howling gale and rain of such severity that it threatened to cut short the play.

But the biggest blow of all, after they had survived 45 minutes of tremendous buffeting, was the sending off of Thomson eight minutes after half-time.

The marching orders came shortly after WHITTAKER had given the Town the lead from the penalty spot after Ripley had both unnecessarily and blatantly floored O'Rourke.

When the Thomson incident occurred, not only the play, but the referee were at the other end of the ground, and the latter had to consult a linesman to find out what had happened.

There is no doubt in my mind that Thomson was unlucky, because he retaliated after having received a hard blow across the mouth, and yet the Doncaster player who administered it was not even booked.

At first, in the general milling about of players, it seemed that Thomson would have his name taken and that would be the end of that, but although he was not con-



Matt Woods

cerned in any other development, he was sent off, holding his swollen mouth.

STARRING ROLE BY TINSLEY

There were other incidents, such as the deliberate kicking of Edwards right in front of a linesman, who took no action, and for the trouble that brewed up I would pin the blame on the twin causes of the atrocious conditions and insufficient control by the referee.

With Tinsley playing a starring role, making brilliant save after brilliant save, the Town achieved their first objective,

which was to reach half-time on level terms.

To do so required the highest determination by the defence because such was the strength of the wind and rain that the Town were confined to breakaway in which Read and O'Rourke went close.

At half-time there seemed some doubt about whether the match would go its full course, but the rain had stopped and the force of the wind lessened somewhat.

Doubtless, with the thought that they had missed the boat, Doncaster attacked with some fury, and the admirable Woods twice cleared off the goal-line following brave saves by Tinsley.

GREAT GENERALSHIP OF WOODS

Nor were the Town's troubles over because Edwards was injured, and although their handicap of being down to 10 men told, they still managed to break away, and Read and O'Rourke—from quite severe angles—missed the far post by inches.

With Harber at right-back, there was increasing pressure on the Town defence, but Tinsley was apparently unbeatable until six minutes from the end when JEFFREY headed downwards a corner by Wilson, and the ball slithered through the mud under the diving goalkeeper, who would undoubtedly have saved had the ball bounced at all.

With two minutes left, Edwards was hurt again, but he kept on gallantly, and there was no doubt that the Town earned their point.

Apart from Tinsley, there was star rating for Woods for his generalship and the way in which he dominated the middle. In fact, the whole defence, with Reid and Moore working non-stop and Edwards having his best match so far, gained full marks, and Thomson was doing well until his unfortunate experience.

Seldom was there the opportunity for the attack to flow as it can, but O'Rourke and Read kept thrusting through bravely, both Harber and Whittaker worked with a will, and French, apart from some excellent distribution did some invaluable linking up in midfield after the Town became reduced in numbers.

DONCASTER R: Potter; Kelly, Nicholson; Wylie, Ripley, Rickets; Wilson, Jeffrey, Sheffield, Gilfillan, Coleman. Substitute: Ogden.

LUTON T: Tinsley; Thomson, Edwards; Reid, Woods, Moore; Harber, Read, O'Rourke, French, Whittaker. Substitute: Riddick.

Referee: P. Baldwin, Middlesbrough.

Attendance: 4,134.