

# WHAT THE OTHER CRITICS SAID

# TOWN'S SPEARHEAD WAS VERY BLUNT

## Crewe were forthright and more determined

By CHILTERN

**CREWE ALEXANDRA 2, LUTON TOWN 0**

"Luton can consider themselves unlucky in losing. Throughout they looked the better team and deserved at least a draw.

But the real master in this game was the pitch. Neither side could control the ball on a hard bumpy ground and players found it difficult to keep their feet on the frozen snow."—"Sunday Mirror".

"Luton showed some bright ideas in mid-field, but their forwards had neither the guile nor the punch to more than occasionally trouble Crewe goalkeeper Willie Mailey or outwit a watchful 'defence'."—"Sunday Express".

"Crewe mastered the frozen pitch and skidded to a much-needed win. For both sides self-preservation and not glory was the golden rule as minor casualties piled up.

"Luton's forwards were rapped by the fans for tough play as they tried in vain to crack Crewe's formidable defence."—"The People".

"The pitch was the master in this Fourth Division game. A bone-hard, lumpy pitch defied the efforts of both teams to keep their feet and control the ball and produced a game of misdirected passes and desperate clearances.

"Isolated Crewe raids were mostly foiled by Luton's off-side tactics. Luton winger French had his name taken for kicking at Leigh after a fierce tackle by the Crewe full-back."—"Sunday Telegraph".

"Crewe made a shaky start but settled down better than Luton on the frozen snow-covered pitch.

"Luton, vigorous and aggressive, made hardly an impact on the Crewe defence."—"News of the World".

CONDITIONS at Crewe on Saturday were such as to lend weight to that body of opinion which feels that there should be a break in the football season during the worst of the winter weather.

Not that there was ever any fear of the match being put off because the pitch, though iron hard, was level but a thin covering of snow tended to make the slippery surface even more treacherous.

However, conditions were the same for both teams and Crewe won finally because they showed more determination in attack and adopted more forthright methods than did the Town.

Had it been a goalless draw which, for a long time seemed to be on the cards, I would have said that the Town were ahead on points by virtue of their greater ability in midfield.

But this was not a day for frills in approach. What was needed were some good, hearty, block-busting tactics and, with the twin spearhead of Read and O'Rourke sadly blunted and very much in low gear, the Town just could not supply them.

Yet, they had their chances. Read missed one in each half through indecision, or maybe, it was inability to control the lively ball quickly enough. O'Rourke should certainly have scored almost immediately after the Town had become two down.

### ODDS SEEMED AGAINST A GOAL

As it was, the most praiseworthy attempts came from Whittaker, who had two shots scrambled off the goal-line, and Rioch, who, from 25 yards, missed the post by so minute a margin that he was entitled to think that his luck was right out.

Until the 61st minute when SANDIFORD marked his first home appearance by forcing over the line with his body a centre from Gowans, the odds seemed against a goal to either side.

There was evidence of slack marking here, but the second goal, nine minutes later, was rather more clear-cut because Kane pushed through an accurate pass to WHEATLEY, who ran on to flash the ball past Tinsley.

So, it was failure away from home again for the Town and failure it will continue to be unless there is a re-adjustment of ideas, particularly in attack.

O'Rourke, said to be the target of three First Division clubs' scouts, was frankly disappointing and Read, so often a source of worry to opposing defences this season through his harassing tactics, seemed unable to get into the game at all.

### RIOCH WAS THE BEST FORWARD

By quite a margin, Rioch was the best forward, especially in the first 60 minutes or so and there was an improvement on recent away showings by French, who had his name taken in the first half. Whittaker was always lively and willing to take a chance, but I thought he rather overdid his wandering.

When the forwards are in this shot-shy mood, the problems of the defence will always be increased and with the difficulty in turning quickly on the tricky surface, they had enough on their plates at the start.

Woods and Moore did well enough, but Reid's marking was not close enough, even though he did his usual amount of work in covering.

Better balanced than most, Riddick gave quite a polished display, Jardine was enthusiastic and rugged and Tinsley did nothing wrong, apart from a nagging doubt about whether he should have cut off the centre that brought the first goal.

CREWE A.—Mailey; Marshall, Leigh; Bradshaw, Barnes, Bodell; Gowans, Kane, Sandiford, Wheatley, Matthews.

LUTON TOWN.—Tinsley; Riddick, Jardine; Reid, Woods, Moore; French, Read, O'Rourke, Rioch, Whittaker.

Referee.—H. Richards, Oldham. Attendance—3,534.