

Luton look good even in mud

Luton 3 Torquay 2: by PETER GILL

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EITHER Luton or Torquay would grace the Third Division on the evidence of the great display they put on in the mud. Luton were clearly the better side, using a fluid pattern of play that often had full-backs Riddick and Jardine as spearhead attackers.

Torquay, with their 4-3-3 plan, placed a lot of concentration on defence. They had to, in the face of relentless first-half pressure by Luton.

Unfortunately, the attacking was not accompanied by the all-important goals, and Luton received a nasty shock in the 23rd minute when Robin Stubbs snapped up a half-chance to put Torquay ahead.

Within a minute, John O'Rourke had levelled matters with a typical goal, and so matters rested until half-time, when Luton must have rued having missed so many chances.

Attacking

Still, they continued in an attacking frame of mind, and after 59 minutes 18-year-old Bruce Rioch put them ahead with a flashing left-footed drive from 20 yards.

O'Rourke increased the lead eight minutes later, and it looked all over for Torquay, but they changed their tactics and got back into the game with a goal from their most dangerous forward Ron Barnes a quarter of an hour from the end.

That they were in a position to fight for a late equaliser they owed

to goalkeeper Mike McGuire, who made a series of tremendous saves.

Even when he was injured, 10 minutes from the end, he insisted on carrying on, and he was deservedly cheered off the field by the home fans at the end.

But for McGuire, and some solid defensive play by Wyatt, Luton would not have had to endure the cliff-hanging they experienced in the closing stages. Then Torquay threw in everything in a great effort to rescue a point, but were foiled by the tightness and composure of the Luton defence, in which Woods, Jardine and Moore excelled.