

Tough match in mud

LUTON TOWN 2
DARLINGTON 0

THERE was another hard, tough match in atrocious conditions of thick mud on Saturday when the weather cut the attendance for the visit of Darlington to 9,774 which was regarded as satisfactory in the circumstances.

Darlington had spent the previous day as spectators, watching the Town at Colchester and, from the events of the first 20 minutes, it seemed that their journey had been both necessary and rewarding.

Moving the ball about freely, they did plenty of attacking, whereas the Town tended to try to drag the ball through what quickly became a morass.

When the Town did press, they found themselves faced by some uncompromising tackling, with O'Rourke receiving the major share of the attention.

However, it was through his work that the game swung in the Town's favour after 23 minutes because his centre from the right eluded both Moor and Edwards and there was WHITTAKER to stab the ball into the net.

STERN ACTION WAS NEEDED

As the conditions became more difficult, the number of free kicks increased, but there was no sign of the referee taking the stern action that seemed necessary.

Darlington tried everything they knew to draw level, but were foiled by some good goalkeeping by Ramage and then, in the 65th minute, the Town put themselves in a more tenable position.

O'ROURKE was fouled by Ratcliffe, Whittaker's free kick threaded its way through the crowd and O'Rourke, with his back to the goal, flicked it past the surprised Moor.

This produced quite a spurt from the Town and Moor had to go full length to shots from O'Rourke and Edwards, as did Ramage to one from McGeachie.

Although the Town lost Riddick through injury 18 minutes from the end and Read came on as substitute, their lead was never in dire danger and they deserved their success.

Riddick, Woods and Jardine formed a solid line in defence, with Moore backing them up strongly and Gibson coming more into it after a slowish start. Ramage's display was his best in the senior side so far and he made at least two memorable saves.

Forward, there was the customary probing from O'Rourke and Whittaker and the usual covering of much ground by Reid, but the right wing was rather out of joint.

LUTON TOWN: Ramage; Riddick (Edwards), Jardine; Gibson, Woods, Moore; Harber, Edwards (Read), O'Rourke, Reid, Whittaker.

DARLINGTON: Moore; Peverell, Keeble; Yeoman, Jacques, Ratcliffe; McGeachie, Hutchinson, Cummings, Sproates, O'Neill. Substitute: Hopper.

Referee: G. Martin, Whitchurch.