

Luton's strikers closely marked

By CHILTERN

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LUTON TOWN'S important derby match at Watford this afternoon opened sensationally with a goal for the home side after only two minutes. It was a blow the Town had hardly expected, but they fought back gamely.

Ironically, their efforts were often blunted by Watford's offside defensive tactics—which is the sort of game to which the Town themselves have frequently resorted.

There was a terrific following for the Town, and at 1.30 a long queue of cars was waiting on the M1 to take the first turning off to Watford.

As was expected, Terry Garbett had so far recovered from stomach trouble to lead the Watford attack, but Luton's Graham French was not so lucky. He had to stand down with an attack of enteritis, and John Ryan came in as his deputy.

The Town turned out all in white to provide a marked contrast to Watford's yellow shirts and black shorts.

Branston won the toss without gaining any advantage, and a early raid by Watford, sparked off by Dyson, was smartly stopped by Slough.

A long throw-in by Dyson brought further trouble, as did a sortie down the left by Williams, who produced a centre which Jardine missed. There was a tense couple of seconds before the trouble was cleared.

WATFORD GOAL

It had been a tearaway start by Watford, and they were rewarded in the second minute when some uncertain covering in defence left LOW with the simplest of chances of side-footing a pass from Dyson past Read, whose dive had not enabled him to cut out the centre.

This was a tremendous shock for the Town, and underlined the queeziness with which their defence had opened.

As the Town fought to get back into the game, Rioch was brought down heavily by Williams, but the free-kick brought nothing.

The Town persevered, and

TEAMS

WATFORD — Walker; Welbourne, Williams; Eddy, Garvey, Walley; Scullion, Hale, Garbett, Dyson, Low. Substitute: Owen.

LUTON TOWN—Read; Dougan, Jardine; Slough, Branston, McDerment; Ryan, Lewis, Sheffield, Rioch, Harrison. Substitute: Allen.

Referee: Mr. N. Burtenshaw, of Great Yarmouth.

after approach work by Rioch and Lewis, Sheffield tried his luck from fully 30 yards, the ball just clearing the bar with Walker struggling to reach it.

SLOUGH DRIVE

Slough was now emerging into the attack in an effort to enable the Town to recover, and he produced a fine rising drive which Walker did well to catch.

When Watford swung back to the attack Read faced with a challenge from Garbett had to punch clear, and then, when Dyson operated his long throw-in, Branston was forced to concede a corner.

Watford were certainly getting to close range with more facility than were the Town, and Garbett got up above Branston to head just wide a centre by Hale.

So far, the Town had not settled down into any cohesive midfield pattern, their passing was inaccurate and too high a percentage was being intercepted.

THE BITER BITTEN

Twice in quick succession when the Town attack moved, they were caught offside—which was rather a case of the biter being bitten.

In the first 20 minutes, Watford had half-a-dozen corners against none for the Town, and there had also been three long throw-ins by Dyson which were almost as good as corner kicks, judging by the trouble they were causing.

The Town's strikers, Lewis and Sheffield, were both being closely marked.

SPECTACULAR

The first clear-cut chance to fall to the Town came on the half-hour, when a quick switch by Lewis and Sheffield sent Rioch racing into the Watford penalty area, but before he could control the ball,

Eddy came across to make a spectacular clearance.

Brilliant work by Scullion, who beat Ryan and Dougan in quick succession, put Watford on the attack, but the winger, who had veered out to the left, put his centre too near to Read.

Similarly, Ryan erred at the other end, and Sheffield was penalised for charging the goalkeeper.

A clash between Branston and Scullion led to some "Calm down" gestures by the referee.

There was a narrow escape for Watford when Harrison made a low centre, Sheffield making a great attempt to convert. His first shot was braten down, but doggedly he regained possession, only to find four defenders converging on him to scramble the ball away.

Half-time:

WATFORD 1
LUTON TOWN ... 0

Harrison was again in the picture when Sheffield

Luton on 'Big Match' TV

"Big Match" on London Weekend ITA tomorrow afternoon will feature Watford v Luton Town.

Screening begins at 3 o'clock, and lasts for an hour.

sent him away, and his shot looked destined for the far corner of the net until Walker pushed it out at full-length. Sheffield was waiting for the rebound but it did not reach him before Williams put the ball behind for safety.

There came a let-off then at the Town end following a misunderstanding between McDerment and Branston, Hale going through with only Read to beat. To the Town's relief, he chose to shoot as Read advanced, and lifted the ball over the bar. It was a wonderful opportunity.

Despite this, there were encouraging signs from the Town forwards.

The Town restarted in encouraging style, and Ryan made a long centre from which Walker saved Sheffield's header.

At the Town end, Read had to come out hurriedly when Garbett and Scullion followed up a high back pass by Branston.

Branston was penalised about six yards outside the penalty area for bringing down Scullion from behind, the winger having to have attention.

Hale pushed the free-kick sideways, but Dyson's first-time drive flashed just wide of the post with Read at run-stretch.

MISTAKE

There could have been an equaliser when Hale made a bad mistake inside his own penalty area, and Sheffield quickly on to the ball, saw his shot beaten out again.

Rioch then collected a pass from McDerment in midfield and swung the ball out to Ryan. His high centre was almost under the bar when Walker, challenged by Sheffield, punched it over. But instead of the corner-kick for which the Town lined-up, there was a free kick against the centre-forward.

Now the Town were beginning to open up things in a constructive way, in marked contrast to much that had gone on earlier.

Offside was still something of a bugbear to the town as they fought for an equaliser.

Williams made a long run pursued by Lewis, and with

How the goal came

LOW for Watford after 2 minutes.

no-one coming out to challenge, he was allowed to get in a shot which Read only just managed to negotiate by the far post.

Now, it was Watford's turn to put on the pressure, and Slough had to give away a corner. Lewis then took a chance with a long back pass to Read, which was very nearly intercepted by Garbett.

At this stage, the Town brought on Allen for Slough—a move greeted by boos from a section of the Town's supporters.

TOWN IN TROUBLE

A chance fell to Garbett when Branston failed to intercept a through pass, but the centre-forward wasted it.

Then Rioch put Read in trouble with another chancy back pass, and this time Read had to dive at Dyson's feet.

Lewis got the ball into the net from a centre by Rioch, but it was only by the use of his fist, in addition to which the whistle had already gone for offside.

Read next had to hurl himself across his goal to keep out a drive by Garbett.

A couple of heavy raids by the Town, in which Lewis and Harrison featured well, were frustrated by the packed Watford defence.

Allen was moving up into the Town's attack now, and looked dangerous when Walker dropped the ball, but the goalkeeper regained possession.

ALL-OUT ATTACK

With the game in its last 10 minutes, the Town threw everything into attack—and even Branston was caught off-side in the Watford penalty area.

Watford when they broke out were finding spare men in the open spaces, and they very nearly went further ahead when Scullion produced a shot that hit Read on the leg, followed by two shots by Dyson.

Read again served his side well with a full-length save from Garbett.

The Town hit back, and Ryan made another long centre, which was again too close to Walker, Rioch putting himself in an easy shooting position, but there was anticlimax as he sent the ball high over the bar.

In almost the last minute, the Town gained a corner on the right, for which nearly everybody went up, and after the ball had bobbed about, Walker punched away.

Result:

WATFORD 1
LUTON TOWN ... 0