

## THE DUCKWORTH MATCH VERDICT



WHEN Barry Butlin rose high in the Oak Road goalmouth to head Luton ahead in the 27th minute, it looked like a dream start for the Town in their new First Division career.

But it was not to be. Although they outplayed Liverpool in the first half, and might well have turned round three goals up they slipped back in the second half and Heighway was given far too much leeway in the goalmouth and put the Mersey-men into a 2-1 lead with 17 minutes left.

Luton's lead, in fact, lasted only four minutes before Smith thumped in an equaliser.

And Luton's hopes faded late in the game when Clemence made a world class save at the feet of Husband who had raced away on his own.

Though they might not have managed to win today, there is plenty of reason for optimism in the Luton camp. In the first half today they were just as good as Liverpool—maybe better.

Perhaps they shot their bolt too early, but it is to their credit that they were still fighting for an equaliser in the dying minutes.

In fact Aston very nearly got in with four minutes left. But Clemence moved fast to stop his dipping shot.

Butlin had a marvellous game. He won just about every ball in the air and even the lanky Thompson and England's Hughes could not tie him down as he chased — and won — endless crosses from Aston.

Aston himself had a fine match and with good prompting from midfield by Anderson, Hindson and West, Luton looked an accomplished team.

Young Litt, standing in for Faulkner, did a good job on Boersma, and if they continue to play like this, Luton can look forward to a happy season.

# TOWN MAKE FANS WAIT

## Lewis and Allen break the spell

By CHILTERN

WITH the Town on top from the start, it was perhaps surprising that harassed Plymouth managed to hold out for as long as they did in this afternoon's match at Kenilwerth Road.

But after half an hour of brisk, crisp football by the Town, Lewis put them ahead direct from a corner, and they changed over deservedly two-up thanks to an Allen goal.

After a test this morning, Bruce Rioch was pronounced fit enough to return to the Town team at inside-left. That left three contenders for the centre-forward position and the choice was Keith Allen, with Laurie Sheffield becoming the substitute and Ian Buxton being the odd man out of the 13 who were named yesterday.

This match marked the return of John Moore for the first time since he badly tore a ligament of an ankle against Mansfield Town on September 18, but the other regular who has been missing for some time, Freddie Jardine, has to wait a while longer to begin his comeback.

Plymouth, managed by former Luton wing star Billy Bingham, made changes from the team beaten at home last Saturday. Bickle and Burnside were recalled at inside-forward, Neale moved to left-back in place of Sullivan, and Reynolds became the substitute.

Considering the amount of rain there has been this week the pitch was in remarkably good condition—a tribute to the work the new groundsmen has put in, and to the formula he has found for getting rid of surface water.

### GOOD CROWD

It was a bright, sunny afternoon and considering that the Saturday before Christmas is notoriously the worst of the year for attendances, there was quite a good crowd.

London Weekend Television were her, and this game is being screened as the Big Match tomorrow afternoon.

### TEAMS

**LUTON TOWN:** Davie; Dougan, Bannister; Slough, Branston, Moore; French, Lewis, Allen, Rioch, Harrison. Substitute: Sheffield.

**PLYMOUTH ARGYLE:** Dunne; Reeves, Neale; Hore, Molyneux, Piper; Davey, Bickle, Tedesco, Burnside, Maher. Substitute: Reynolds.

**Referee:** Mr. D. W. Smith, of Stonehouse, Gloucs.

Although Branston lost the toss it did not make any difference because the Town were set to attack their favourite Oak Road goal anyway, and Rioch was prominent in a couple of early raids.

When Plymouth hit back, the Town's offside trap failed to function and it required a first-class save by Davie to keep out a first-time drive from Tedesco.

Dunne was first in action, dealing easily with a long shot by Dougan. At the Town end, Branston conceded a corner to keep out a low centre by Davey.

Rioch was being used as a striker along with Lewis, and Allen had settled down in a midfield role.

### SWERVING

Then came a narrow escape for Plymouth as Harrison swung right-footed on to a loose ball from 25 yards. It was a deceptively swerving shot, and Dunne had to make a last-second push at it to turn it around the post.

Harrison, who was blatantly obstructed by Davey, was spoken to by the referee but did not stand still while the referee was talking to him and so he was booked.

From the free kick Harrison slipped the ball inside to Rioch, who let go a tremendous drive that Dunne did well to save.

### ALLEN DRIVE

In a determined Town raid, Allen cracked in a rising drive that Dunne just managed to scramble from under the bar.

Rioch suddenly came into the picture with a long run on the left in which he beat Molyneux, but was stopped at the expense of a corner by Reeves.

### HARASSED

Quickfire work between Slough, Allen and Moore brought a shot from the last-named which struck a defender. Then after Rioch had been bowled over in the penalty area, Allen had a shot deflected for a corner, which brought problems for the now harassed Plymouth defence.

However, the Town, full of

that the all-important first goal was eluding them.

With 25 minutes gone, Piper was injured in a tackle with Lewis, and was taken off the field on the Bobbers' stand side for further attention.

Piper looked in pretty poor shape as he began to limp around the ground accompanied by the trainer, but he returned soon afterwards.

There was criticism from the Town when the referee did not penalise Hore after he had heavily pulled down Rioch.

Plymouth were having more than their share of luck—there was an amazing save by Dunne from a Rioch header that looked booked for the back of the net.

### INSWINGER

Rioch was shooting when ever the opportunity came. Another of his efforts was deflected for a corner, from which the Town took the lead direct through LEWIS after exactly half an hour.

In past weeks Lewis has made a habit of taking corners on the left and producing big inswingers with his right foot. This time he did it with deadly effect. The ball swung and Dunne, confronted by several players, was completely deceived and the ball went into the top of the net without anyone being able to touch it.

A great crossfield pass by Lewis sent away French, who cut in, leaving a trail of defenders behind him, and



Keith Allen, who gave the Town their second goal after 36 minutes.

again Dunne had to go flat in the mud at the foot of his near post.

After a spell of inactivity the Plymouth forwards broke away to gain a corner on the right. Molyneux met it with his head and Davey had difficulty in pushing it over the bar before falling into the back of his net.

With 36 minutes gone, the Town's position improved still further when they secured a second goal through ALLEN. The move was begun by Harrison swinging across a low centre which Lewis slipped inside. Allen, following up from behind, had time almost to pick his spot before blasting the ball in from point-blank range.



Brian Lewis, who put the Town ahead direct from a corner.

by this near-miss, gained two corners in quick succession, which produced some unusually hectic activity in front of the Town goal.

A corner to the Town was well placed by French, and Allen's attempt to flick it in with his head just went wrong with the ball hitting the side netting. Half-time:

**LUTON TOWN ... 2  
PLYMOUTH A. ... 0**

The Town resumed on the attack and the lively Rioch sent the ball skidding across the face of the goal just too fast for the onrushing Lewis.

Moore was penalised for obstruction on Davey, and there was a certain amount of slackness in dealing with the free kick, which was finally pushed out by Dougan.

Now Plymouth were beginning to make a fight back without really managing to look dangerous. The Town were soon attacking again through Harrison, whose powerful drive was dangerously deflected by Molyneux, and the ball went for a corner. From that, Rioch brought Dunne to his knees again with a right-footed shot.

### AUTHORITY

The Town were settling down again, and Rioch went through to take on three defenders—including the goalkeeper. The ball went to French, whose shot struck Dunne, on the ground.

Next, Moore came through with much of his old authority to send away Harrison, who was just wide of the far post.

Dunne continued to save Plymouth from a real drubbing — again he made a remarkable diving save when Rioch, meeting the ball on the volley, sent it speeding for the corner of the net.

After 62 minutes there came a substitution by Plymouth, with Tedesco coming off and Reynolds going on.

Again Plymouth were pushed on the defensive Lewis sent away French, and the ball finally went to Dougan, whose attempted cross was blocked.

Plymouth were still fighting, and this half the Town had not really been the dangerous force of earlier in the game. But they were still the more menacing, and Slough went close when Rioch pushed a free-kick to him through a crowd of players.

Now there were serious attempts by the Town to drive home their attacks, with Slough appearing more frequently in close support.

There was a word from the referee for Molyneux after a foul on Allen, who had to have attention before he could carry on.

With both Lewis and Moore injured, we had the situation of two Town players being at-

## How the goals came

LEWIS for Luton after 30 minutes.

ALLEN for Luton after 36 minutes.

tended to at the same time. In the event, the trouble to neither seemed serious, and the Town were soon hammering away again for the goal that had proved so elusive this half.

Rioch drove the ball straight at Dunne from the edge of the penalty area, and then was just frustrated by Molyneux as he went to challenge for a centre by Harrison.

In almost the last minute Rioch, who had taken some "stick," was hurt again, but he carried on gamely. Result:

**LUTON TOWN ... 2  
PLYMOUTH A. ... 0**

## MATCH DETAILS

**LUTON TOWN:** Horn, John Ryan, Thomson, Anderson, Litt, Garner, Aston, Husband, Butlin, West, Hindson. Sub: Shanks.

**LIVERPOOL:** Clemence, Smith, Lindsay, Thompson, Cormack, Hughes, Keegan, Hall, Heighway, Boersma, Callaghan, Sub: Toshack.

**Referee:** Mr. H. Davey (Nottinghamshire).

**Butlin (Luton) in 27 minutes**

**Smith (Liverpool) in 31 minutes**

**Heighway (Liverpool) in 73 minutes**

**Attendance: 21,062**

CHRISTMAS KOU  
by Eva A. Grange (producer)  
UNITED SERVICE AT OAK  
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ERING FOR