

GRATEFUL LUTON SNATCH THE POINTS



Luton defender Terry Branton kicks clear from the challenging Keith East during a Boscombe attack. — Echo picture.

BOSCOMBE 0 LUTON TOWN 2

WITH snow and frost cutting the Football League programme to only four matches, Boscombe were grateful to get in their Dean Court fixture on a pitch only a little affected by the frost and bathed throughout by bright sunshine. The result, however, was not so bright for the Cherries, who after holding promotion co-challengers Luton fairly comfortably in the first half, conceded two goals after the interval.

This defeat, which followed a fine run of five points from three matches, means that Boscombe are now only two points ahead of Luton, who have a game in hand.

Boscombe were unchanged for the third successive match, after bringing back a point from Torquay—and two from Barrow.

Luton, forced to make changes because of injuries, recalled Laurie Sheffield and Freddie Jardine, both of whom have been out of the side for more than two months.

Boscombe: Jones; Gulliver, Bannister, Slough, Branton, Moore, French, Lewis, Sheffield, Allen, Jardine. Sub: McDerment.

Luton Town: Davie; Dougan, Bannister, Slough, Branton, Moore, French, Lewis, Sheffield, Allen, Jardine. Sub: McDerment.

Referee: J. R. Osborne (Ipswich).

Though there was never any doubt in the minds of Boscombe officials that this match would not be played because of ground conditions, there was one problem—COULD LUTON GET THROUGH?

The players had trouble in leaving snow-bound Luton, but once they had reached Waterloo and headed towards the sunny South, their anxieties were allayed—more specifically by a phone call on their behalf from British Rail at Winchester, which confirmed that all was well in Bournemouth.

OFFENSIVE

Luton kicked off in bright sunshine, defending the Brighton Beach end. They broke quickly from a defensive position with Lewis and Sheffield combining to give Allen a chance.

This brought a corner from the diving Roger Jones, and Boscombe had some trouble in getting the ball away. Luton came again down the left with Jardine, Sheffield and Lewis carving an opening for French which he sent well wide.

There was only temporary respite for Boscombe and Luton came quickly through with Sheffield's speed and accuracy giving Jardine a chance he was too slow to take.

Play was confined to the main stand side—where there was a five yard section in shadow and still very slippery.

In these early minutes, Boscombe had little constructive to offer in attack but moved through promisingly as Longhorn, Pound and East combined effectively.

A venturesome Miller checked a Luton attack in the centre circle, but his forward ball towards the left wing found two Boscombe attackers off-side. Then it was Luton's turn again with Sheffield showing craft and control in avoiding three tackles but failing to find an unmarked colleague.

STRONG

Miller was strong in defence as Luton tried twice to force their way through the centre, but then when Longhorn appeared to have his fellow forwards on the move, Luton covered so well that there was no sign of an opening for East or Pound.

In the next Boscombe raid, Pound had the ball whipped off his feet by the challenging Moore who moved forward quickly to pave the way for a shot from Allen. This he lifted far too high.

A mix-up in the Luton defence let in Peters. Big Branton though was in the middle and he came across to make a successful tackle in the penalty area. From the clearance, Luton

made a quick break, ending only when Jimmy White stepped in near the edge of the penalty area. Then the visitors made another right-wing forage. White once more showed how to tackle, and win possession.

Now it was Boscombe's turn again, with Gulliver trying to make an opening, unsuccessfully. Bolton being checked in full flight and Peters cutting in from the left to hammer the ball across the face of the Luton goal.

DISAGREEMENT

Luton made ground in the shadow of the main stand with a couple of throw-ins. Then a slight altercation between Miller and Sheffield brought an end to the raid, and a free kick to Boscombe.

A forward lob from Gulliver was held well by goalkeeper Davie, slipping slightly as he grabbed the ball to hold off a challenge from Pound and East. When Luton tried once more a quick attack down the right, White was there again.

THE OVERLAPPING STOCKS MET A FINE PASS FROM LONGHORN ONLY TO FIND THE HEAD OF SLOUGH AS HE CENTRED TO THE PENALTY SPOT.

The Dean Court pitch was standing up well to the match and

POOLE POOLS VOID

POOLE Town Football Supporters' Club pools coupon is void today because of the cancellation of so many matches.

while some players showed uncertainty, there was not too much sliding and slipping in the circumstances.

Ray Bumstead, with help from Pound, made ground down the right and they gained a corner for their efforts.

Bumstead's cross was weak, and Bolton, though anticipating well, only managed to screw the ball into the side netting as he attempted a shot on the turn.

A clearance by White brought applause, but a second or two later he was penalised as he got a tackle underneath Lewis's less. The free kick by Moore was headed away by Bolton and sent forward, too far by the eager East.

Though Luton continued to look more dangerous, the Boscombe defence had now settled down to cover well and there were few direct chances.

Nevertheless, there was an anxious moment when Allen allowed a corner from French to go through his legs, but neither Jardine nor Sheffield could get anywhere near the ball.

A spirited raid by the Cherries ended outside the Luton penalty area where Pound was fouled by Branton. White's free kick, though deflected towards goal, did not prove a worry to the defence.

A fine pass from Lewis had Gulliver struggling as it went inside him. Jardine just didn't have the speed to match the accuracy of the pass and the chance went begging.

Longhorn tried to find the head of Bolton in the opposing penalty area. While this one was cleared, it was only as far as the half-way line, where a free kick from

White landed on the head of Ken Pound.

SLIPPERY

Here again, the ball was inches away from Bolton's control. Luton similarly suffered on the slippery surface as they tried to make a way through on the left.

Miller twice found himself sliding on his bottom towards the side-lines as he tried to check a threatened Luton raid. On the sunny side of the ground there was more reliability in the players' movements and some promising raids from both teams.

Even so, there was an effective counter from both defences and throughout the first half hardly a sign of a clear-cut opening.

Just before the interval, Luton full-back Dougan moved forward to send across a dangerous ball which skidded off the top of White's head, dangerously near

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BOSCOMBE

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the far post, but wide enough to give a corner.
H.T.: 0-0.

Boscombe started the second half with Derek Burns substituting for Lou Peters. This was Burns's second appearance of the season; he played in the second match of the programme at home to Plymouth.

Boscombe were in lively mood in these early minutes with a number of promising attacks and a near thing in the 14th minute, when a shot from Bumstead was booted off the line by Luton's Dougan.

Twice French initiated excellent moves for Luton down the right, but on the first occasion received insufficient support, and on the second held a little too long and allowed Boscombe to cover with ease.

It took the attentions of three Boscombe men to keep French in check when he got the ball once again. And it was carried on by Lewis to give Luton the chance to take the lead in the 57th minute.

Lewis managed to push the ball square for centre-forward SHEFFIELD to make a full turn before sending a right-foot shot just wide enough of Jones.

DIVING

A good shot from Pound had Davie diving; then East was thwarted as he tried to get past Dougan close to the touch-line.

Offside checked, Luton's next attack with Sheffield a matter of feet the wrong side of Miller as he tried to make use of Lewis's pass.

There came a chance for Boscombe with Longhorn pouncing on a headed clearance from Gulliver's centre, but sending the ball too wide to trouble Davie.

A fine cross from Gulliver was taken well by Davie high above his head, and then the Luton goalkeeper saved spectacularly at the foot of the post, a header from East.

Luton immediately hit back with a second goal and again the opening was created indirectly by French, whose cross was headed against the underside of the crossbar with JARDINE positioned to stab the ball home in the 68th minute.

Boscombe had now lost much of their mid-field confidence, though they did break well with Gulliver in full cry only to find Bolton in an off-side position.

It was now so casual Luton as they slowed the pace of the game and held possession for long periods, but while French, Lewis and Slough combined effectively in this context, they couldn't find a way past Miller and White.

Off-side—and it must have been only just—robbed East of a chance as he tried to connect with a lob from Stocks and then Stocks had to hit the ball back to Jones as Luton had three men up ready to take advantage of any slip.

Another good cross from Gulliver deserved better finishing, but Longhorn's attempt only sliced the ball away, nowhere near its target. A free-kick was lobbed into the centre by Gulliver, but Branton's head was there once more and Luton were out of trouble.

Gradually they pushed Boscombe back and even when White pounced on a loose ball he could only lob it forward to a group of off-side colleagues.

Boscombe conceded a corner on the right. A fine tackle by Gulliver gained relief.

Boscombe—Take 16

Result:
BOSCOMBE 0
LUTON TOWN 2

Attendance: 8,469.