

# Town beat Crewe to keep in promotion hunt

By CHILTERN

LUTON 2, CREWE 0

THE TOWN made heavy weather of beating lowly Crewe before a crowd of 13,384 at Kenilworth Road last night. Crewe were deeply committed to defence in an effort to secure a point to ease their relegation worries and their tactics kept the Town at bay almost to the interval.

Not until two minutes from half-time did they get their heads in front—and then it was not a forward but Alan Slough who broke the deadlock. Even though Crewe showed more signs of willingness to attack after the interval, the Town's lead never seemed in real danger. Yet they could not afford to relax until near the end when Keith Allen sealed a victory that was completely necessary to keep the Town's promotion hopes alive.

It was a difficult game for the Town, with Crewe adopting tactics of such a negative nature, but on the other hand the Town attack did not really show the penetrative power expected.

The pitch was heavily sanded, a relic of last week's severe weather, but it seemed to have recovered reasonably well. Kicking towards the Oak Road end, the Town were quickly on the attack, but the first decisive shot came at the other end, a swinging effort from Gater that missed the angle of the woodwork.

However, the Town were soon back again to gain a free kick when Allen was pulled down by Barnes, but Crewe were packing their penalty area at the first sign of danger, and Leigh headed away Lewis's cross.

In that they had Gannon, normally a wing-half, wearing the No. 11 shirt, it seemed obvious that the visitors had come to try to save a point if they could.

## MANY FOULS

The opening stages had been marked by a series of fouls, and there was one against Branston after he had pulled down Tarbuck as the lively inside-forward was

foul on French. Some of the Crewe tackling was ruthless in the extreme.

There could conceivably have been a penalty when Lewis was charged in the back, but this produced no reaction from the referee.

Now there was almost no attempt by Crewe to mount an attacking movement and they were wholly concerned with trying to keep their goal intact.

When they did throw off their defensive shackles, Tarbuck was pulled down by Moore just outside the penalty area but no danger accrued.

## BREAKTHROUGH

With all the pressure the Town were exerting, a goal had to come sooner or later, and it was SLOUGH who did the trick with just two minutes left before half-time. He left Mailey helpless with a searing drive from near the edge of the penalty area.

Half-time:

|             |         |
|-------------|---------|
| LUTON TOWN  | ..... 1 |
| CREWE ALEX. | ..... 0 |

First incident of the second half was a thrust deep into the Crewe defence by Dougan, who let go a shot that Mailey did well to stop.

Being a goal down encouraged Crewe to show a greater willingness to attack, but Davie, who had been almost completely untroubled, was not brought into action.

The Town were still the more persistent attackers. They looked aggrieved when Stott seemed to handle the ball, but their appeals for a penalty were turned down.

Slough was emerging as the Town's most consistent marksman, and he had a longer-range effort that was too high.

Moore should have done better with a loose ball than push it rather aimlessly forwards, so that Mailey was able to cut it off, and then the referee had an admonishing word with Lewis for a foul on Mailey — his second against the goalkeeper in a few minutes.

For almost the first time the Town defence got itself into a tangle through the efforts of the energetic Tarbuck, who was stopped finally only through the concession of a corner.

## SCRAPPY

Play had become rather scrappy, with the Town still not showing sufficient penetration to break down the Crewe defence, which was not quite so deep as it had been. In fact, they now were risking three men up front.

Certainly Crewe were more in it now, and were at least testing the Town defence, something they had not accomplished during the first half.

The Town's superiority was not as marked as it had been but there was a chance to improve the position when Allen broke through. However, his shot struck Mailey, who was giving a brave display.

A free-kick just outside the penalty area looked promising for Crewe, but nothing came of it in the end. Meanwhile, the Town were struggling to find something approaching their first-half ascendancy, and they were not worrying the Crewe defence to the same degree.

With about 13 minutes left, Jardine was injured in a late tackle and while he was be-

## Watford date

DATE for which the Town fans have been waiting—that of the re-arranged visit to Kenilworth Road of Watford —was agreed yesterday as Wednesday, April 30 (7.30) and, barring further postponements, that will be the end of Luton's fixtures for this season.

Stockport County will be here on the eve of the Cup Final, Friday, April 25, (7.30) and the visit to Bristol Rovers has been fixed for Monday, March 31.

ing attended to some trouble apparently broke out between Ratcliffe and French, to which the referee's attention was drawn by a linesman racing on to the pitch. Both players were booked.

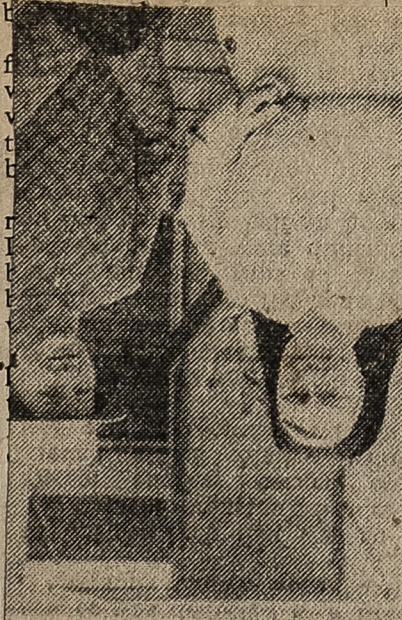
Now the Town were threatening to go on to the rampage again in something of their first-half style, and Slough made another brave effort which Mailey saved.

Then with 11 minutes left, the Town at last got the goal that seemed to make their victory inevitable, and ALLEN was the scorer. Lewis did the early work, being sent through and his attempt to lob the ball struck Mailey. It rebounded, and Allen, following up, headed into an empty net.

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

**CREWE ALEXANDRA:** Mailey; Lowry, Leigh; Stott, Barnes, Gater; Ratcliffe, McHale, Hollett, Tarbuck, Gannon. Substitute: Curley.

Referee: T Lockett, of Worcester.



EMORI

SIREAILEY Village WI held a handicraft show and produce competition at their meeting last week and the standard of the exhibits drew praise from Mrs. Towse, chairman of the county handicraft committee. Mrs. Stanford won a prize for fruit cakes and the over-all winner of the other classes was Mrs. Laird, snr., with Mrs. Grigg second.