

This is what the fans come to see



Bristol Rovers 'keeper Larry Taylor is stranded on the deck as a shot from Brian Lewis (out of picture) rattles into the net to put Luton two up

LET'S HAVE MORE SHOUTING—STOCK

ALEC STOCK, hard-talking manager of Luton Town, last night called for more vocal support from the Luton fans. "We want more yelling," he said. "Even from the members' stand. That's what the players want to hear, lots of yelling."

He was talking in the Kenilworth Road boardroom after the Town had romped to a 3-0 win over Bristol Rovers, to narrow the gap between themselves and the leaders.

Explained Mr Stock: "We get lots of shouting and cheering when we are attacking. But we also want it when we are hanging on. That's what football supporters are for — to support. We've got a grand crowd here, but we could do with a bit more noise."

There was plenty to shout about last night. Luton played some delightful football and were never really extended by a Rovers attack that contained elegant individuals but little punch.

It was one of those polite nights. Luton, ahead after two minutes with a Sheffield header, never looked like being upset. Bristol were outstandingly sporting, and while they were winning, Luton were content to keep it on the: "After you, Claude," basis.

Not a flinch

Most significant point of the night, apart from the fact that Luton won, was the return to first team football of Bruce Rioch, the club's forward star who had a cartilage operation only six weeks ago.

Rioch came through without a flinch. Playing on the left wing, he did not have a difficult night, in spite of a fine performance from Rovers right-back Bobby Jones.

Rioch showed several glimpses of his exciting ability when he moved into the middle in the second half, and embarked on determined runs down the middle.

He did not look too keen on the wing position where he looked hampered by the touchline. Once he escaped its shackles there were signs that Rioch is just about ready for League football again.

It is interesting to note that Rioch's return coincided with a visit from Spurs' manager Billy

**Luton 3
Bristol Rov 0**

**By ROGER
DUCKWORTH**

Nicholson. But Alan Slough has been playing well too....

Well placed

This was a good all-round show by Luton. They experienced a few dull patches in each half, when bad passing and slow thinking lost them both possession and momentum.

But this was more than compensated by the good football they played.

Right-winger Graham French, who continued his excellent run of top form football, laid the first goal on for Sheffield. He put over a well-placed centre, and the Luton leader picked his spot well before heading past Larry Taylor.

After such a promising start, Luton were unable to score again in the first half, but they played some most attractive football that pleased a substantial crowd, and the Oak Road end singing: "Now you've got to believe us — we're going to win the League."

Although frustration had crept in at not being able to add more goals, there was an air of contentment at half time, and a promise of better to come.

Thrilling

Clever Bristol winger Ken Ronaldson almost upset things in the first minute of the second half when he should have scored from a low cross, but he gave Sandy Davie time to pounce.

With Allen, Moore and Slough covering well in midfield and prompting the forwards, Luton rarely looked troubled, and in the 62nd

minute Brian Lewis scored a thrilling goal after being put through by Sheffield. Lewis worked well all evening, and looked sharp in the penalty box. He took his goal with a cool head, chesting the ball on and beating Taylor with the hard rising shot.

Inside-forward Bobby Brown scared Luton with a drive against a post that rebounded on to the back of the diving Davie's head, but Rovers wasted the opportunity.

Slough had another active night, and, back in his midfield role after deputising at centre-half, he looked smooth in attack and had several good shots either blocked or saved.

Classiest

The match kept at the right temperature. It was well-modulated and attractive to watch. While you always felt Bristol were holding something back, they looked tight enough in defence to stop Luton scoring again.

Yet five minutes from time Allen scored a goal that must rate among the classiest of his career. And it came from a situation that had looked most unlikely to produce a goal all night — a corner.

Throughout the piece, twin centre-halves Stuart Taylor and Larry Lloyd, both huge men, had ruled the goalmouth — especially in the air. But with the crowd calling for an improvement in goal average, Allen screwed into the air to blast home a French corner with his head.

It was the third classic goal of a refined evening.

An evening that was to

TOP SIX

	P	W	D	L	F	A	P
Watford	34	20	9	5	56	20	49
Swindon Tn	34	20	7	7	53	27	47
Luton Tn	34	19	6	9	53	30	44
Plym'th A	37	16	10	11	44	38	42
B'nemouth	34	17	6	11	52	32	40
Torquay U	34	15	7	12	43	33	37

provide Gillingham manager Basil Hayward with a restless night. Luton entertain Gillingham on Saturday, and Mr Hayward went to watch. Afterwards he told me: "We beat Swindon at home and got hammered by Watford. Tonight Luton played better than I have seen either Swindon or Watford."

That must surely add to the Town's confidence.

Once again goalkeeper Davie had an impeccable evening, while full-backs Bannister and Dougan looked quite at ease. Their stopping was exemplary, if their distribution sometimes lacked direction.

Best forward

Skipper Terry Branston returned after illness and impressed with his power in the middle. He looked sharper than he had for a couple of weeks before his indisposition.

French was again the best forward, but Allen and Lewis both put in commendable effort. Sheffield had hard work against the lofty defence, but he did his bit by scoring the opening goal.

Winger Ronaldson had a splendid match for the visitors.

Now for Gillingham. Last night's match was the first of four at home. Luton cannot afford to slip up. They won't if they play like they did last night.

LUTON TOWN: Davie; Dougan, Bannister; Slough, Branston, Moore; French, Allen, Sheffield, Lewis, Rioch. Sub: Jardine.

BRISTOL ROVERS: Taylor (L); Jones (B), Parsons; Taylor (S), Lloyd, Williams (J); Ronaldson, Barney, Jones (W), Brown, Jarman. Sub: Stanton.

Referee: Mr G. W. Gill (Leicester).

Attendance: 14,506.