

Lucky Luton move into second spot ahead of Swindon

By ROGER MALONE

Bristol Rovers 0 Luton 0

LUTON'S point at Eastville last night takes them ahead of Swindon into second place in the Third Division. It also extends Luton's unbeaten run to 12 matches. But they are extremely lucky to be able to savour these statistics.

Bristol Rovers, one of the youngest teams in the country, have been too inexperienced to launch a promotion campaign this time—indeed they still need points to erase a faint chance of relegation—but they displayed interesting potential against Luton.

They impressed also against Everton in losing an F A Cup-tie with honour some weeks ago, and it was Luton's misfortune to be faced by another example of what Rovers can hope for in the future.

Luck is needed to win anything in football, and Luton enjoyed a liberal helping of this precious commodity in not losing by at least three goals.

Hard-pressed

After playing against a strong wind in a Rovers' dominated first-half, Luton must have been delighted to be level at the interval. But, with the wind their ally, Luton still found themselves hard-pressed.

In the first-half Luton posted Lewis and Sheffield upfield, pulling everybody else back, and throughout the second half these two remained lonely and starved as Rovers kept up the pressure.

Luton's defence, particularly goalkeeper Davie, did well to survive, but there was nothing they could do to prevent Rovers creating two clear chances—and half-a-dozen more difficult ones.

Rovers' strength stemmed from the dominance in defence of the two big youngsters, Lloyd and Stuart Taylor. In attack, all five forwards indulged in brisk, accurate passing movements.

Fine save

Wayne Jones and Ronaldson might have had two goals each, but Davie made one fine save from Jones, and Ronaldson twice ruined clever work by missing a couple of fine chances.

As if Davie did not have enough to worry about from orthodox sources, Taylor and Lloyd each used their considerable heights to go close with headers from corners.

Yet Luton could, conceivably, have won if Jardine had judged correctly the flight of Rioch's 11th-minute centre. Jardine, with the goal at his mercy, missed contact.

Bristol Rovers.—Taylor (L.); Jones (R.), Stanton, Taylor (S.), Lloyd, Petts, Ronaldson, Barney, Jones (W.), Brown, Jarman.

Luton Town.—Davie; Dougan, Bannister, Keen, Slough, Moore, Rioch, Allen, Sheffield (sub. McDermott 81 mins.) Lewis, Jardine.