

# Our goals keep Luton in the race

By ROGER DUCKWORTH

LUTON tightened their grip on the Third Division with a fine 4-0 win over Bristol Rovers in the top-of-the-table clash at Kenilworth Road this afternoon.

Matt Tees scored his first goal for the Town just a minute before leading scorer Malcolm Macdonald netted the third.

John Collins had given Luton a 1-0 half-time lead.

The home debut of centre-half Chris Nicholl and centre-forward Matt Tees were of special interest to Luton fans.

Both had played once for the Town before at Gillingham last week — but neither was eligible for the mid-week League Cup-tie against Millwall.

## Good show

Max Dougan was having his first League match of the season.

He had been unable to get into the side because of the form of another newcomer, John Ryan, but he replaced the former Fulham defender for the Millwall match and gave such a good show that he could not possibly have been left out of the side again this week.

Brian Lewis, last season's top scorer, was again named as substitute in favour of Sandy Davie, the other potential first-team goalkeeper who had shared the billing on the programme.

Robin Stubbs, who signed for Rovers this summer from Torquay for £12,000 led the visitors' attack.

He was playing today between the Jones boys Bobby and Mark Wayne. The third Jones — Bryn — was named substitute.

## Large crowd

After the Town's good performance against Millwall a good-sized crowd began to form earlier than usual today and the Town were hoping for the best league game of the season.

Bristol Rovers should have had a goal in the first minute, but Stubbs made a real hash of the easiest of chances in front of goal. He must have been too surprised at the ease with which the opportunity arose.

It began when Tony Read gave a bad throw out to the right touchline and the ball went into the Bobby Stand.

A quick throw and a high lob into the goalmouth by Graydon resulted in Robin Stubbs slipping the ball over the head of Nicholl, turning quickly and volleying wide from some eight yards when he had only Read to beat.

The visitors played some fine football in the early stages and looked a real danger. Bobby Jones twice sparked good moves, but the Jack Bannister had to come to the Town's rescue.

## Nippy

The Town hit back through French and Rovers' full-back Roberts was spoken to by the referee for tripping the Luton winger.

Then, in his characteristic style, it was the nippy Macdonald who went close to putting the Town ahead in the fourth minute.

French took a quick throw to Allen whose centre was met fair and square in the goalmouth by Macdonald's head but his effort went straight to the well-placed Sheppard.

Bristol had promised that they were more interested in attacking than defending and their early efforts this afternoon firmly backed this up. In midfield they played with confidence and flair, and near goal they showed one or two good ideas.

It was taking Luton some time to settle into a real pattern and they found the close marking by the Bristol defence a little disconcerting.

Some hard work on the right by Tees ended in Collins doing well with an overhead shot at goal, and Macdonald following up enthusiastically before the goalkeeper cleared.

In the 12th minute Luton went ahead with the strangest of goals.

Collins chased a long ball into the penalty area and in his tussle with the advancing goalkeeper the ball struck his

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LUTON TOWN

4

BRISTOL ROVERS

0

right foot and drove slowly and tantalisingly towards the goal.

Collins and half back Marsland raced toward the ball, and the Rovers player tripped as the enthusiastic COLLINS got under his feet.

As all this went on the ball trickled into the net, and referee Pugh was right in turning down the Bristol appeals that Collins had committed an offence, for his shot had already entered the net before the incident occurred.

## TEAMS

LUTON: Read; Dougan, Bannister; Keen, Nicholl, Slough; Collins, Macdonald, Tees, Allen, French. Sub: Lewis.

BRISTOL ROVERS: Sheppard; Roberts, Parsons; Marsland, Taylor, Munro; Graydon, Jones W; Stubbs, Jones R, Jarman. Sub: Jones B.

Referee: D. Pugh (Chester).

## GOAL SCORERS

COLLINS (Luton) 12 min  
TEES (Luton) 55 min  
MACDONALD (Luton) 56 min  
ALLEN (Luton) 88 min  
Attendance: 15,198

Two Bristol defenders argued violently with a linesman, but he would have none of it and walked away from their protests.

## Close

Four minutes later Collins went close to increasing Luton's lead.

After working with Allen, French slung across a centre and Collins hurried himself forward through two Rovers defenders to head hard and low at goal. Goalkeeper Sheppard made a good diving save.

Nicholl was working well in defence after being tripped in the first minute by Stubbs, and Slough was in form.

Bannister, who was always able to control the dangerous Graydon in the early Bristol raids, was also playing well.

The Bristol right winger did break away after beating off a challenge by Slough, but Read collected the high cross safely.

## Wasted

Jarman opened the Luton defence with a fine pass out to Bobby Jones on the left, but he wasted the chance by trying a shot from too far out.

Luton came straight back but the next move unfolded between Keen and Collins was wasted when Keen put the ball over the top.

Then French took a hand in the proceedings. He burst down the left wing, beating Roberts for speed and put across a centre which was fractionally out of Macdonald's reach.

The Town continued to press and Macdonald got a good header into a Collins cross and then Collins himself was just unable to catch a through ball from Keen which had split the defence wide open.

A free kick from the centre of the field put the Luton defence in trouble and Nicholl did a fine job in blocking a short-range shot from Jarman.

## Unlucky

Fortunes kept swinging and Rovers came back with a raid down the right, and Town goalkeeper Read had some lengthy treatment after a collision with Stubbs.

Tees was getting little change out of the tall Taylor, but he was unlucky on the half hour when he chased a pass from Macdonald and was just beaten by goalkeeper Sheppard.

Referee Pugh was keeping a stern hand on the match, and when Allen was fouled by Graydon he gave the Rovers wingers a real wiggling.

In the 37th minute Macdonald had more bad luck when he rose high above everybody

else in the goalmouth to head a Collins corner inches over the bar.

Most of the Luton danger was still coming from French. He had Roberts for speed every time, and after out-stripping the full-back his centre caused chaos in the Rovers goalmouth before Collins ended the move by mistiming a shot.

## Name taken

Roberts obviously understood what the score was and next time French went past him he badly fouled the winger and had his name taken by the referee.

Three minutes before half-time Macdonald won a corner following a long throw in by Keen, and Tees was unlucky in the air from the kick.

There was still life in the Bristol attack, too, and Stubbs, Bobby Jones and Jarman all had good efforts in the minutes before the interval.

Then Bobby Jones went really close after a run through the middle.

HT: Luton 1, Bristol Rovers 0

The Town made a lively start to the second half and a Keen move with Collins won a corner from which Macdonald again went close.

Then French broke away on his own and cut round the back of the defence before having his shot blocked. He might have made better of this chance. Allen was following up and got in a shot, but it lacked power.

## Foiled

Keen, Collins and French all took part in complicated moves as Luton went forward but it was always the last leg that foiled the Town.

Tees was still having trouble with the big Taylor and once or twice Keen was on the slow side.

Ten minutes after the break Tees broke away from the clutches of his mentor and celebrated his League debut at Luton with a fine goal.

A free kick out on the right was pushed on to Keith Allen who hit a low, hard cross into the goalmouth. Macdonald flicked it on and from point blank range TEES poked it towards goal.

It struck goalkeeper Sheppard and rebounded to the Luton centre forward's head, and all he had to do was to nod it into the net.

## Best

A minute later the Town followed with another goal that was the best so far. And the scorer was leading marksman Malcolm Macdonald.

Graham French, who was having a grand match, again beat Roberts on the left and swung an accurate cross into the middle. And there was MACDONALD timing his jump to perfection and smashing his header into the roof of the net.

His goal had given Tees the confidence he needed. In the 62nd minute he worked a reverse with Macdonald and positioned himself well in the middle to take the cross, which was put over by Collins.

The Town really began to turn it on and every member of the team was taking part in some slick football as they moved forward.

French was providing plenty of entertainment and Marsland was forced to trip him on one occasion. Both were hurt in the collision and had treatment.

With 15 minutes left Bristol were awarded a free kick directly in front of goal and just outside the box for a foul by Slough on Stubbs.

The referee insisted on Luton standing 10 yards away and Munro brought out a good diving save from Read.

The match came to a glorious conclusion with the finest bit of football of the afternoon with just two minutes left.

Collins tricked his way past three defenders and put across a centre at which Macdonald launched himself with a powerful header which was brilliantly tipped over by Sheppard.

From the corner Macdonald headed back across the goalmouth and there was ALLEN standing unmarked to flash the ball into the net.



Matt Tees rushes in but the Bristol goalkeeper has things well in control



Luton's new goal scoring star, Malcolm Macdonald, cleverly beats a Bristol defender this afternoon.