

All-out attack — three goals and two points

LUTON TOWN 3

WALSALL 0

EMBRACING a policy of all-out attack, the Town made no mistake about the collection of two absolutely vital points against Walsall at Kenilworth Road on Saturday.

For the 17,193 fans, less the handful of Walsall supporters, of course, it was a joyous night, almost completely free of anxiety about the result from the early stages.

On the debit side was the fact that young Alan Starling, playing in only his sixth first-team game, was carried off after 58 minutes with damaged knee ligaments.

Wisely, manager Alec Stock attempted no drastic re-shuffle to fill the gap, but sent on Keith Allen, the substitute, to don the green jersey.

This was a completely new experience for Allen, although that did not show in the confident way in which he handled the ball, to the great delight of the fans.

Well-covered

Not that anything of a very difficult nature came his way, because he was well covered by the defence and the only time he was in real trouble came near the end, when Evans thudded the ball against a post.

In addition to the mishap to Starling, Bannister developed a limp during the second half, due to a damaged muscle at the side of his knee, but he kept going gamely enough.

From the beginning, the pattern of the Town's attacking trend was plain and in the first five minutes, Collins nearly caught Parkes napping with a low shot, and Slough was just too high.

Not that the first goal was long delayed. It came after eight minutes, when French sent McDonald galloping down the left-wing and the centre-forward pulled across a low centre that the lively BUSBY ran on to and enthusiastically belted into the back of the net.

One for Collins

Busby was also concerned in the second goal, after 25 minutes, which meant the end of a long spell without scoring for COLLINS, who

brought his total for the season into double figures.

Again, French figured in the early work and Busby pushed the ball through to Collins, who deftly met it on the half turn.

Walsall, for whom it had been a particularly hectic week, fought doggedly, but had not the skill to match the Town in midfield, nor the thrust in front of goal.

Just once, when Slough cleared off the line a shot from Taylor, was the Town defence in trouble and it was no surprise when the third goal came two minutes from half-time.

Deservedly, it went to MacDONALD who has been working tremendously hard, and he produced a brilliant header from a centre by French to steer the ball well wide of Parkes.

Took no chance

To some extent, the injury to Starling overshadowed the second-half play, and the Town with such a commanding lead, were not disposed to take any chances.

Yet, when they did swing into attack, there was plenty of power about their raids, and MacDonald was unlucky not to increase his tally on more than one occasion.

There was no doubt that MacDonald, ably abetted and supported by Busby, was the star forward, but there was some useful work from Collins, and, although French was not so much in the picture as usual, the discerning could not fail to notice that he had a hand in all three goals.

Back to his midfield role again, Slough gave a most lively display, and he and Keen always had full control in the middle of the field.

With Branston exuding confidence, and Moore tackling with rare enthusiasm and not afraid to press forward in the first half, the defence took a tight grip on the moderate Walsall attack, and there were few causes for alarm.

LUTON TOWN.: Starling (Allen); Ryan, Bannister; Slough, Branston, Moore; Collins, Busby, MacDonald, Keen, French.

WALSALL: Parkes; Gregg, Evans; Harrison, Jones, Atthey; Taylor, Seal (Baker), Woodward, Trevis, Morris.

Referee: C H Nicholls, Plymouth.