

Viv Busby nets the first

294
11-4-70



AND THE TOWN GO MARCHING ON



VIV BUSBY, Luton Town's new starlet, set them on the road to victory in the home match against Walsall on Saturday night. Our top picture shows him ramming in the first goal. Above he shows his delight as he is congratulated by Malcolm Macdonald.

LUTON TOWN 3 WALSALL 0

TO MOST followers of the intricate situation at the top of Division Three, it was as predictable as next week that Luton would beat Walsall on Saturday night. It was the way in which they accomplished it that deserves the utmost credit.

They destroyed the game Midlanders with a first half surge of power-soccer that reaped three magnificent goals. In the second half they held out despite losing goalkeeper Alan Starling after 10 minutes, and having left back Jack Bannister lamed with the recurrence of an old knee injury.

On top of this skipper Mike Keen suffered a heavy clout, and Terry Branton had a leg laid open by a flashing set of studs.

Luton's devotion to duty and professionalism was a treat to see. Even with Keith Allen filling in in goal, it was clear for all to see that Luton were not aiming to concede one of those late goals that have cost them quite a lot this season.

Crowd helped

The ball was heaved out of defence without any pretence of skill. Skill comes second at times like this, and Luton remembered the old adage: Kick it anywhere — but get rid.

And Luton had the help of the crowd, who answered Friday's plea from manager Alec Stock to "Roar us into Division Two".

The way in which the crowd were behind the Town must have done chairman, Mr Tony Hunt, good. It must have made it worth while his leaving Canada at 5am in order to be back in time to see the match.

Luton's win brought their points receipts to nine out of the last possible 12. It continued their headlong flight towards the Second Division.

Starling will almost certainly be out of tomorrow night's match against Southport. In the last six matches the 19-year-old Luton lad has carved himself a career in football. He has repaid his manager for giving him the chance, and Luton have found another valuable player on their doorstep.

Viv Busby, who is looking more and more confident, scored Luton's first goal in the eighth minute. And it was a corker. Racing into the area he reached a low cross from Macdonald fractionally before goalkeeper Parkes, and rocketed it into the net.

In the 25th minute Collins hit the second. A short throw by French was floated over by Keen, and Macdonald headed down neatly to Collins, who shot low into the corner.

Luton were playing high-speed stuff, which Walsall could barely keep up with. Macdonald was too fast for veteran centre half Stan Jones, and with Slough outstanding in every part of the field, it was obvious that

By
ROGER
DUCKWORTH

nothing was going to stop Luton.

A couple of minutes before the breather French left Jones bemused, eased past him, and crossed with great accuracy for the effervescent Macdonald to head in his 27th goal of the season.

Inspired by Branton, the Luton defence was well in command. Ryan, fast and hard, tackled tigerishly, and Moore, who is enjoying a good run, showed that he is still the best winner of the ball in the club.

Bannister was troubled by his injury, but takes full marks for sticking bravely to the job in hand. Afterwards coach Jimmy Andrews said that he was just about to take Bannister off when Starling was hurt.

It happened in a most curious manner, and there was no other player involved. Taylor, who was always ready to shoot on sight, unleashed a low one from out on the left. It looked harmless, and Starling gathered it easily. But he collapsed when he tried to stand. After four minutes' treatment Allen had to take the jersey, and Starling, with an ovation ringing in his ears, was carried to the dressing room.

Cheers for Allen

From then on the experience of the Luton defence came to the fore, and even when Walsall tried to pepper poor Allen from all angles, the Luton sub found himself rarely exposed to danger.

Once Baker, who had replaced Seal when Starling left the field, outstripped the limping Bannister, but Allen won the cheers with a confident catch.

Allen's judgment seemed confident, but I thought he was pushing it a bit when he allowed a shot from Evans to bounce back off a post!

Up front Macdonald was in splendid form, and he must have tripled his value since he came to Luton for £17,500 at the start of the season. Collins had a good first half, but erred a couple of times in the second.

Keen again caught the eye with his skill and hard work, and Busby showed a cool head when in difficult situations — especially alone on the wing as Luton were being pushed a bit in the later stages.

French did not have all his own way, but he was tightly marked. I thought he might have released the ball a bit sooner sometimes — especially when a colleague — usually Keen — was in attendance.

For Walsall Taylor and Woodward always looked dangerous up front, while Atthey and Evans impressed at the back.

MATCH DETAILS

LUTON TOWN: Starling (Allen, 55mins); Ryan, Bannister; Slough, Branton, Moore; Collins, Busby, Macdonald, Keen, French.
WALSALL: Parkes; Greer, Evans; Harrison, Jones, Atthey; Taylor, Seal (Baker), Woodward, Freyis, Morris.
GOALS — Busby (8mins), Collins (23mins), Macdonald (45mins).
Referee — Mr C. H. Nicholls (Plymouth).
Attendance: 17,193.

QUOTE

KEITH ALLEN, the Luton forward who had to substitute goalkeeper Alan Starling, when he was injured in the second half of Saturday's match against Walsall:

"It wasn't funny, I can tell you. I kept thinking of the TV commentator at the Cup Final, who showed a close-up of Gary Sprake when play was at the other end, and said 'That's the loneliest man in the world.'"

"I have only once had to go in goal before — that was at Grimsby. That wasn't funny either. It's not the job I actually relish — but the lads did a great job in keeping them away from me."