

LUTON SHOW CITY HOW IT IS DONE!

Well-drilled outfit have edge on Terry's Tigers

HULL CITY... 0

LUTON TOWN... 2

[ATTENDANCE: 18,343 (£4,478)]

HULL CITY'S PROMOTION HOPES took a knock at Boothferry Park this afternoon when they were convincingly beaten by one of their closest rivals, Luton Town. The Tigers' attack were unable to create clear-cut openings against a solid and well-drilled defence and their defence came off second-best against a Luton side who played some neat purposeful football.

After 11 minutes, the Tigers helped Luton into the dominating position that they eventually won by presenting them with the opening goal. A weak pass-back by Don Beardsley was snapped up by Givens and McKechnie had no chance to save.

After 28 minutes, Macdonald got a second for Luton and the later stages, when Luton at last fell back to hang on to their lead, Macdonald was the only man left upfield, and he still managed to give City a big handful of trouble.

Almost 10 minutes from the end, a crowd of just over 18,000 had acknowledged Luton's superiority and were streaming out of the ground.

By BRIAN TAYLOR

EIGHTEEN-YEAR-OLD Steve Holbrook got the reward for some impressive reserve team performances by being drafted into the senior side for his debut.

The Tigers had Chris Chilton and Ian Butler back in their attack, while player-manager Terry Neill was also fit to take his place at centre-half.

Luton, just one point and one place behind City for this match-of-the-day Second Division meeting, relied on the side they have had on duty for the last eight games.

HULL CITY: McKechnie; Beardsley, de Vries; Wilkinson, Neill, Simpkin; Holbrook, Houghton, Chilton, Wagstaff, Butler. Sub.: Banks.

LUTON TOWN: Reed; John Ryan, Slough; Hoy, Nicholl, Moore; Jimmy Ryan, Court, Macdonald, Keen, Givens. Sub.: Busby.

REFEREE: D. Laing, Preston.

A crowd of about 18,000 saw the game open promisingly, both sides serving up some neat football. The game flowed from end to end with the Tigers slightly the more dangerous in the early stages. A low shot by Houghton went just wide of the post and then Reed had to dash out to scoop up the pass with which Simpkin tried to get Wagstaff through.

Court, Keen and Givens moved promisingly for Luton but, with both defences marking tightly, shooting chances were scarce.

A low centre by Beardsley flashed through a forest of legs in the Luton penalty area, deflecting for a corner. Wagstaff's flag-kick curled right across the goal and went dead after Chilton had just failed to get his head to it.

HOLBROOK SHOWS UP

Holbrook showed up well in the early stages, using the ball intelligently and covering up quickly when Luton attacked in the see-saw game.

De Vries scrambled an inswinging corner off the line, and shortly afterwards, Macdonald, the Second Division's leading scorer, got his first chance of a shot after a good run by Jimmy Ryan.

His quick drive on the turn flew high and wide, however.

In the 12th minute, though Luton took the lead with a goal by GIVENS—by kind permission of Don Beardsley.

There was absolutely no danger in the Luton attack from which the goal came. Beardsley had the ball well covered and under control, but pushed his pass back to McKechnie so weakly that GIVENS was able to nip in

and steer the ball past the keeper.

Holbrook then moved in quickly to try and finish off the City attack, but was hurt in the act of shooting.

CITY ANNOYED

Shortly afterwards he had to have more attention after a foul by Hoy, which angered the City players and which earned the Luton man a rebuke from referee Laing.

The cut-and-thrust went on with the Tigers finding Luton thickly packed and well organised in defence whenever they moved forward. Scoring chances remained few and far between but in the 24th minute one fell to Macdonald.

BRAVE DIVE

The Luton centre-forward had Neill and Wilkinson to beat when he chased for a long, through ball and, although he gave both of them a start, he overtook them and it was only a well-timed dash from goal and a brave dive by McKechnie which prevented a goal.

A couple of minutes later the Tigers came close to equalising. Simpkin made a great run down the left-wing and swung in a centre which Butler hit on the volley.

The shot was too strong for Reed to hold and the ball bounced loose in the penalty area, with Luton happy to concede a corner.

LUTON TWO UP

From the flag-kick, Houghton shot wide and, almost immediately, Luton went into a 2-0 lead. Once again, the Tigers' defence ought to have cleared the ball, but as it was Givens, out on the right, got a second chance to chip the ball across the goalmouth after his first attempt had been blocked. At this second attempt he was successful and MacDONALD was there to head the ball past McKechnie.

City hit back straight away, but Ian Butler fired a wide shot over the bar. Next, Holbrook tried his hand at shooting, but the shot was blocked for a corner from which Beardsley sliced a drive wide of the post.

A determined raid, at last found a chink in Luton's defence and, although Wagstaff looked handle as he tried to force the ball home, there was no free kick and the City striker stabbed the ball wide of the post.

Five minutes before the interval Luton should have had another goal.

John Ryan overlapped intelligently down the right-wing and

SCOREBOARD

GIVENS (Luton) 11min.

MACDONALD (Luton) 28min.

flashed across a hard centre which found Macdonald once again unmarked.

He got up well, but his rocket header flashed over the bar. Butler optimistically hammered in a volley from a Chilton centre but was well off target.

MORE COMPOSED

Some signs of desperation crept into the Tiger's play and Luton by half-time looked by far the more methodical and composed side.

H.T.: Hull City 0, Luton Town 2

Wilkinson stepped in quickly to check an early threat by Luton at the start of the second half and then Givens had a chance with a header from a centre by Macdonald. The winger was at an awkward angle, however, and put the ball wide. Macdonald broke smoothly and accelerated quickly past the City cover, put his angled drive was too high.

NO OPENINGS

Luton were a little less adventurous at the start of the second-half and Wilkinson was able to move forward and try a long-range drive which, however, was too high. The Tigers were moving forward all the time, but Luton were so well organised in defence that there were no openings for the Tigers' forwards.

At the same time, the City attack was not producing its best form. One better move in which the ball was swept briskly to and fro finally earned a corner when Reed could only push away

Butler's centre and Luton had to scramble the ball behind.

A Luton free-kick flashed between Neill and Macdonald and the ball bounced kindly for the Luton centre-forward, with McKechnie forced to dart out of goal and push the ball away as the Luton man tried to prod the ball home.

A free-kick at the other end on the left-hand edge of the penalty area had Luton in trouble as the ball squeezed through to Neill.

CHOPPED DOWN

Luton had to scramble the ball behind for a corner from which Houghton headed wide.

After 62min., City, and their fans, howled for a penalty when Wagstaff was chopped down almost on the 12yd. mark by Moore, following a neat move between Chilton and Holbrook. Referee Laing waved the appeals aside, however.

BANKS BROUGHT ON

The Tigers turned on some heavy pressure in the second half and stepped up the tempo of the game, but they found Luton's defence quite able to hold them. After 69min., City brought on Banks in place of Beardsley, who had had an unhappy afternoon.

BY THIS TIME LUTON WERE LOOKING MORE CONTENT TO HOLD ON TO THEIR LEAD AND WERE RELYING LARGELY ON THE QUICK BREAKS OF MACDONALD.

From one of them he rounded and out-paced Neill before shooting into the side netting. Just before this McKechnie had brought off a fine save from the Luton centre-forward.

DESPERATE CITY

For the Tigers, Wilkinson and Chilton both had shots blocked, but there was desperation stamped all over City's work as the game went into the last 15min.