

Lively Luton end that record run

LUTON TOWN came back from two goals behind to beat Birmingham City by the odd goal, and so finish City's longest unbeaten stretch since the last war—11 wins and three draws from the previous 14 matches.

The score fairly reflects the difference between the two sides. Luton deserved to win but never could feel really confident about the manner of victory.

Despite having much less of the play, Birmingham found themselves two goals up after 22 minutes.

They took an unexpected lead in the fifth minute. A long, high clearance from their defence caught Chris Nicholl slow on the turn, and Latchford pounded through to score with a mistimed shot past a confused looking Tony Read. There was a further shock for Luton, a smart goal started by a cute diagonal pass to space on the Birmingham right flank. Latchford moved out knowingly to collect, beat Moore cleverly along the byline and flashed over a head-high cross which Summerill nodded the ball decisively into Luton's net.

What was becoming obvious was that City's three strikers, Summerill, Francis and Latchford had a well-rehearsed understanding. They were quick and sharp to help one another make Birmingham's occasional raids threat.

NIPPY

What was more obvious was an appalling clumsiness through the middle of the City defence, and Luton's clever, nippy forwards began to take advantage of it.

MacDonald slipped Busby through with a neat flick from a long, high ball. Busby took the chance neatly and guided his shot past the advancing Kelly.

Seven minutes later, two City defenders missed a not too difficult corner kick in the air, and MacDonald, behind them, had ample time to steady his shot.

by DANNY BLANCHFLOWER

Luton Town - - - - 3

Birmingham City - - 2

He mis-hit it, but it was deflected goalwards off Busby's foot.

Birmingham restarted with a quick surge that caused Luton some anxiety, but Town went ahead within a few minutes.

Hynd fouled MacDonald about 20 yards out and Keen slipped a short pass to Slough from the free kick. Slough hit a tremendous shot past the helpless Kelly.

It was not the kind of match for a promising star to shine, but young Trevor Francis showed enough skill and speed of thought, in odd flashes, to justify his growing reputation.

But Luton's forwards took my eye. Jimmy Ryan had a very good day, and MacDonald, Busby, and Anderson all showed speed and craft on the ball.

LUTON.—Read; John Ryan, Slough, Givens, Nicholl, Moore, Jimmy Ryan, Busby, MacDonald, Keen, Anderson.
Sub: Goodeve.

BIRMINGHAM CITY.—Kelly; Martin, Page, Smith, Hynd, Robinson, Campbell, Francis, Latchford, Summerill, Taylor.
Sub: Bendrey.