

HEADACHES FOR LUTON — AND FANS

LUTON TOWN 2 CARDIFF CITY 2

LUTON TOWN got a headache on Saturday by banging their heads against the brickwall defence built by the Welshmen. But it was nothing compared with the headache their fans went home with after watching Luton throw away another home point.

Cardiff won the point they came for by packing their penalty area until it looked like Piccadilly Circus in the rush-hour. Luton dropped the other point by their inability to stretch the Cardiff defence by ingenuity.

Twice they went ahead. Twice they let Cardiff equalise within minutes. In the end, Luton looked fed up with the whole affair and an untidy match faded away.

Luton have drawn half their

By ROGER DUCKWORTH

matches this season with 22 goals from their 21 matches. They have had 25 scored against them. Deduce from that what you will.

Slack marking

But to me it looks a bit miserable. It could have been so much better with Luton deserving more than the point they collected on many occasions. On Saturday they did 90 per cent of the attacking but failed to underline their superiority in the most tangible way — with goals.

So they scored two. They also gave two away by slack marking and bad goalkeeping. Phillips was given a goal after Anderson had fought hard to put Luton ahead from a gem of a pass by Halom. Phillips was left unmarked on the edge of the box and beat Read with a low shot which was just out of the Luton keeper's reach.

But I thought Read should have stopped their second. That was the important one, for it cancelled out Luton's late lead given them by Givens from a penalty.

Clark, who had a fine game, cut across Nicholl to win the ball in the air, and his effort bounced into the net with Read diving late.

Luton were so on top that they won 14 corners to Cardiff's two, but somewhere they lacked lantern-jawed determination to finish the job.

They ran Cardiff ragged for half an hour with Anderson promising to have a fine game. But he faded with the others, and finally most of Luton's ambition came from Halom who chased everything with commendable zest in search of a winner and a couple of goals that he so desperately needs.

Hindson flitted about in a meaningful fashion, but most of his crosses were cut off by Cardiff's tall defence. The visitors looked ragged when Luton played the ball on the ground. But when Hindson and John Ryan started exploiting this, Luton's forwards seemed to have lost their touch.

Court had a fine match in midfield where his energy won him oceans of possession, and Keen gave another



worthy display of intelligence and endurance.

Edge

Givens had a splendid first half and looked as if he was Luton's answer to Cardiff's packed defence. But I think he lost a little edge after smashing a tremendous shot against the crossbar just before half-time.

He may have lost a bit of edge but not enthusiasm. And he made up for this by calmly converting the penalty after he was tripped by Derrett.

Clark gave John Ryan some problems and it was after he had robbed the Luton full-

back and won a corner that Cardiff scored their first goal.

Slough showed a fine line in interception and perception, and gave an all-round urgent performance, while I thought Moore did well in the middle of the back row.

There was a feeling of disappointment in Luton's camp afterwards but not in Cardiff's.

Manager Jimmy Scouler defended his side's sardine tactics in the penalty box. "We get quite good at that with playing in Europe," he told me. "They all do it there."

And with a straight face he added that the penalty

decision was harsh. He must have been joking.

I would have liked to have seen substitute Jimmy Ryan given a chance to gain confidence with a run-out, but circumstances were against this. He could have gone on with 15 minutes left, but then Luton went ahead from the penalty and it would have been wrong to change the side then.

Even so, the time could be coming for changes, and I would not be surprised to see Shanks back in the defence and Ryan in the attack before very long.

With another home match on Saturday, against Orient,

this could be an opportune moment to shake it up a little.

Norwich	21	12	8	1	32	15	32
Millwall	21	10	9	2	34	25	29
QPR	21	10	7	4	31	16	27
Preston	21	9	6	6	33	24	24
Sunderland	21	7	10	4	29	28	24
Middlesbro	21	11	2	8	28	28	24
Birmingham	21	8	11	4	26	20	23
Burnley	21	9	4	8	37	28	22
Bristol C	21	8	6	7	34	28	22
Carlisle	21	11	2	9	30	28	22
Portsmouth	21	7	7	7	34	31	21
Sheff Wed	21	7	7	7	27	25	21
LUTON	21	4	11	6	22	25	19
Charlton	21	8	3	10	32	38	19
Swindon	21	6	7	8	15	18	19
Fulham	21	8	2	11	23	39	18
Blackpool	21	7	4	10	26	25	18
Oxford	20	5	8	8	14	18	18
Orient	21	6	5	10	26	39	17
Hull	21	6	3	12	21	31	14
Cardiff	20	4	5	11	29	39	13
WATFORD	21	4	5	12	18	35	13

LUTON winger Peter Anderson (left) turns in triumph to acknowledge the roar of the crowd after shooting Town into the lead against Cardiff after 25 minutes. Cardiff defenders can only look on helplessly and Don Givens (right) salutes the goal.

MATCH DETAILS

LUTON TOWN: Read; John Ryan, Slough; Keen, Nicholl, Moore; Anderson, Court, Halom, Givens, Hindson. Sub: Jimmy Ryan.

CARDIFF CITY: Irwin; Carver, Bell; Phillips, Morgan, Derrett; (Villars, Woodruff 49mins), Clark, Couch, Worboys, Gibson.

Referee: Mr Ken Burns (Stourbridge)

Attendance: 10,606.

Goals: Anderson (Luton, 25mins), Phillips (Cardiff, 34mins), Givens (pen, Luton, 75mins), Clark (Cardiff, 80mins)