

ASTON SINKS

MIKE BEESLEY at the City Ground

JOHN ASTON, the £30,000 bargain buy from Manchester United, put Luton Town into the lead after 27 minutes this afternoon and threatened to rob Nottingham Forest of their unbeaten League record.

Forest's smallest crowd of the season showed its displeasure by slow-handclapping, jeering, and calling for the resignation of manager Matt Gillies, as Forest struggled to make an impact on the game.

In another undistinguished Forest performance, John Robertson went close to scoring with a shot from 25 yards which was turned on to the post by the Luton goalkeeper, but generally the Reds had few chances to hit back.

FOREST
Barron
Hindley
Gemmell
Serella
Cottam
Fraser
McIntosh
Lyll
McKenzie
Robertson
O'Neill

LUTON TOWN
Barber
Shanks
Thomson
Anderson
Faulkner
Garner
Ryan
Fern
Busby
Halom
Aston

Substitutes:
Slough
Referee:
R. L. Johnson, Lowestoft.
Linesmen: A. Hamil (red flag),
H. Worman (yellow flag).

FOREST



JOHN ASTON — 27th minute goal.

ward took the ball round Barron things looked black for Forest, but Busby failed to keep it in play and wasted his chance.

McKenzie broke well on the left, cleverly beating Shanks before cutting in along the goal-line before squaring the ball into the middle where McIntosh shot first time to produce a full-length save from Barber.

Forest were having trouble stringing their passes together

but one move involving McIntosh and O'Neill gave McKenzie the chance to shoot from 20 yards only to see Barber save easily.

FINE TACKLE

McKenzie still looked the biggest menace to Luton, and when Lyall floated a free kick into the visitors' penalty area it was McKenzie who outjumped

BBC's Match of the Day programme tonight will show Manchester United v Coventry and Leicester City v Everton.

ATV's Match of the Day tomorrow will feature Stoke City v Leeds.

Faulkner to power a header inches over the bar.

Forest were having a great deal of trouble containing the Luton wingers, and it took another well-judged tackle by Cottam to keep Aston out as he cut in from the left.

The goal which Luton had always looked capable of producing finally came after 27 minutes. Ryan engineered the

ATTENDANCE: 9,495

chance on the right by beating Gemmell and crossing the ball to the far post.

Hindley and Cottam both went up with Halom, but all three missed the ball which dropped at the feet of the unmarked ASTON, who calmly picked his spot to beat Barron from 10 yards out.

The Reds tried to force a quick equaliser with Fraser moving down the right and although his shot was blocked by Anderson, McIntosh followed up to shoot first time high over the bar.

Luton almost snatched a second goal after 33 minutes when another cross by Ryan was headed into the goalmouth by Halom and Busby nipped in smartly to flick a header just over the bar.

Luton won a corner on the left and Ryan's centre completely eluded the Forest defenders who stood helpless as

Continued



John Faulkner (left), the Luton Town defender, robs Duncan McKenzie, the Forest forward, during the match at the City Ground this afternoon.

Halom raced in to head just wide of the upright.

Forest's first real scoring chance came after 37 minutes when Robertson decided to go it alone and made good ground down the middle before shooting from 25 yards.

Barber appeared to be unsighted and only just got down at the last possible moment to finger-tip the ball against the post and rob the Scot of a goal.

Then it was Barron's turn to come to Forest's rescue when he cut out a shot from Aston, and managed to hang on to the ball as Anderson tried to force it over the line.

HALF-TIME:

NOTTM. FOREST 0
LUTON TOWN 1

Forest tried to step up the pace of the match at the start of the second half, but their efforts to break down the Luton defence had little effect and it was left to Robertson to try another 25-yarder which went well wide.

A casual back pass by Thomson almost cost Luton dearly for it meant Barber had to advance to the edge of his area to boot the ball away from O'Neill, who had made a good interception.

The Reds were still finding it difficult to build up their moves, and far too many passes were going astray to give them a real chance of upsetting the solid Luton defence.

ALMOST

Forest almost paid the penalty for not playing to the referee's whistle when they saw a linesman flag for offside against Aston, for the winger was allowed to play on and Barron did well to smother his shot near the post.

Nothing was going right for Forest, and with the crowd restless and jeering their frequent lapses, Luton seemed well on top.

Busby floated over a cross which Barron punched away off Halom's head, but the ball went straight to Anderson who saw his shot from 20 yards go well over the bar.

BLOCKED

With the disgruntled fans jeering them and slow-handclapping, Forest continued to fight for an equaliser, but the closest they came was when McKenzie moved in from the right only to have his shot blocked at the foot of the post, and then Barber saved well from Hindley.

Luton were not pushing so many players forward now but they still looked dangerous in attack and Fern shot just wide after a good solo run.

Luton always seemed to have time to play themselves out of trouble and Ryan combined well with Anderson to set up another chance for Halom, who fired over the bar from 20 yards.

Anderson moved up the left and found Aston with a square pass and the winger cut inside before shooting, forcing Barron to go full length to save.

WELL WIDE

Aston was well wide with another first time effort, but Barron had to fling himself full-length to keep out a free kick which the winger drove through the Reds' wall.

Luton were content now to pull back eight men whenever Forest gained possession, but they were always quick to support their two strikers whenever they broke out of defence and Forest could not afford to relax.

The referee stopped the game to ask police officers to watch for someone in the crowd who was blowing a whistle and causing confusion to the players.

Forest had a great chance to equalise after 84 minutes when a cross by McIntosh was headed away by Faulkner to Fraser on the edge of the penalty area, but with all the goal to aim at Fraser blasted his effort well wide.

As the final protest at Forest's poor display, hundreds of their fans walked out of the ground well before the final whistle.

RESULT:

NOTTM. FOREST 0
LUTON TOWN 1