

PUZZLE OF AWAY WINS

Player may have answer to Town's fantastic run

BRISTOL CITY 0, LUTON TOWN 1 72/73

TOWN'S fantastic run of away successes reached new heights at Ashton Gate on Saturday when they registered their fifth League victory in seven appearances on opponents' grounds this season.

It is remarkable that Town players and their followers are going away expecting to win, and can look more sure of themselves than they do at Kenilworth Road.

Everyone is looking for reasons for this, and one possible answer was advanced on the train journey back from Bristol by Town midfielder player Peter Anderson.

He suggests that Town's style may be cramped on their Kenilworth Road ground. He said: "Our pitch is narrow, and I for one feel that everybody is on top of me when we are playing at home."

Whatever the secret is that has brought ten away points, this latest success was gained by the grip the Town had on the midfield in the first half.

It was rumoured that an official from another club would be at Bristol to have a look at Gordon Hindson, and with this possibility in mind, Town manager Harry Haslam kept his line-up a secret, even from the players, until they arrived in the dressing room.

Then he revealed that Hindson would play in midfield alongside Peter Anderson and Alan Slough, and for the first time this season Rodney Fern had to stand down.

Hindson took full advantage of the situation and showed that he can be a great driving force in midfield, and with Anderson and Slough working happily together in close co-operation on the other flank, Town managed to keep control until the last 20 minutes, when they fell back to ensure their points were held, allowing City to mount a series of attacks.

Likely

This was the only time City looked likely to save the situation, and they might well have demonstrated their regular trick of snatching a point at the last gasp, had it not been for the splendid form of Town goalkeeper Keith Barber.

Barber made three fantastic saves to keep Bristol at bay, and he never put a foot wrong throughout the match. His reaction was razor sharp and he distributed the ball wisely and accurately.

There was evidence that the lessons which manager Harry Haslam was driving home to the players last week after the disappointing performance against Hull are bearing fruit, and the mana-

ger said: "Today was a big improvement, but I am not satisfied with everything yet, and we will be going to work on it."

Luton sparked into action from the word go with Anderson almost setting up a goal in the opening minutes when he put over a good ball to Jimmy Ryan, who had a shot parried, Cashley in the City goal recovered just in time to fall on the ball as Halom raced in.

There was only one threat from Bristol before the Town scored their match-winning goal in the 12th minute. This came when Barber raced out in timely fashion to disposes Galley, who had raced past John Ryan in a snap raid.

Pressure

There was a terrible misunderstanding in the Bristol defence — it came from a corner which was well placed by Jim Ryan, and for some reason all the City defenders stood off **JOHN FAULKNER**, who was unchallenged as he headed the ball into the net.

The Bristol defence looked anything but happy under the sustained pressure that followed from the sharper,

By **ERIC NORRIS**



DEFENDERS ON TOP...

faster-moving Town forwards.

Cashley had difficulty in cutting out a dangerous centre by Jim Ryan. Then there was a determined burst by Hindson, who sent Jimmy Ryan through again, and Cashley made another brave save, but was injured in the process and had to have treatment before he could continue.

City were still dangerous in sharp breaks, and in the 25th minute Gow broke through on his own with only Barber to beat, but again Barber was in superb and daring form and saved at his feet.

The only blemish on the Town's performance were bookings for Peter Anderson and John Ryan for making remarks to the referee.

City were stringing their attacks together better after the interval, but their finish-

Luton's attack often had the City defence at panic stations in the first half at Ashton Gate on Saturday, but defenders came out on top in this aerial free-for-all in the goalmouth as they outnumber the Town men by three to one.

ing was nowhere near as crisp as that of the Town.

Jimmy Ryan and John Ryan displayed good combination in an inter-passing movement that put Town back on the attack. John put over a good cross that beat Cashley but went wide of the post with Halom just failing to get a touch.

Then John Ryan came close to scoring again, this time after the spadework had been done by the hard-grafting Anderson, but his rising drive was just over the top.

Substitute

It was only after City had introduced their substitute Fear for Emanuel in the 65th minute that City really started to get the better of the Town in midfield. Then Luton adopted the same tactics as they did at Sunder-

land and funnelled back to blunt the Bristol advances.

But it was the Town who looked like increasing their lead, and good work by Anderson and Aston led to the latter getting the ball to Jimmy Ryan, who beat Cashley. Burton did well to save by heading over the top.

With only three minutes left Bartley, who had looked the most dangerous of the City attackers, almost got the equaliser, but Barber made a great flying save.

Barber made another tremendous save from a header by Galley in the closing minutes, and the Town were home and dry.

After the game, even Bristol City manager Alan Dicks had a word of praise for Barber's performance. "He had a fine game, he did what he was there to do, and he really earned his corn," he said.



JOHN FAULKNER — the matchwinner

LINE-UP

BRISTOL CITY: Cashley, Wilson, Sweeney, Emanuel, Bruton, Merrick, Ritchie, Spiring, Galley, Gow, Bartley. Substitute: Fear.

LUTON TOWN: Barber, John Ryan, Thomson, Anderson, Faulkner, Garner, Jim Ryan, Slough, Halom, Hindson, Aston. Substitute: Fern.

Referee: R. B. Lee, Cheadle.

Attendance: 13,562.