

Luton fail to get message

Luton 1 Bristol City 3: by PHILIP OSBORN

72/73

LUTON MANAGER Harry Haslam's plan to inject more power into his fading attack was foiled by a technical fault. With Luton losing 2—1 Haslam decided to introduce Derek Hales 25 minutes from time, but he couldn't get his message through to coach Roy McCrohan. "The phone from the directors' box to the touchline was playing up. I could hear Roy, but he couldn't hear me. I must have been trying for well over 10 minutes," explained Haslam.

"By the time Hales was eventually brought on for Rodney Fern, Bristol had swept to a 3—1 lead—and we were sunk.

"Our attack had gone and I thought that Derek might be the boy to pep it up. But I realised he'd need time to settle in," said Haslam. "He just didn't have long enough when the message eventually got through. He might have made all the difference."

But Haslam conceded that the crucial factor in Luton's surprising second-half slump was the fact that "our defence completely collapsed." And he added "I have warned the lads that there could be changes for the game at Fulham on Tuesday."

Luton almost took the lead in the 12th-minute when Hindson sent a fierce drive round the defensive wall and Ray Cashley did well to reach it. The Bristol keeper was in splendid action again when he dived to block a John Aston shot.

PROBLEM

Although Collier and David Rodgers were impressive in Bristol's defence Aston's ferocious crosses were a perpetual problem. And the winger opened the way for Luton's 34th-minute opener with a well judged corner. The ball dropped just right for Alan Garner to hook in.

Bristol sparked into furious action after the break to startle Luton's lowest gate of the season 7,102. Rodgers nodded down a Fear corner for Gerry Gow to jab a 47th-minute equaliser. With Tom Ritchie and Gow at last asserting themselves in mid-field Luton's defence floundered. Gould caught them square with a diagonal ball for Gillies to volley City into the lead from the corner of the area in the 55th-minute.

And in the 68th-minute Gould underlined a fine performance by beating the off-side trap to send Fear through for the third goal.

LUTON TOWN.—Horn; Shanks, Thomson, Ryan, Garner, Moore, Fern, Anderson, Busby, Hindson, Aston. Sub: Hales.

BRISTOL CITY.—Cashley; Sweeney, Drysdale, Emanuel, Rodgers, Collier, Fear, Ritchie, Gillies, Gow, Gould. Sub: Woods.