



Two brilliant saves by Luton keep Pompey at bay

Left: Don Shanks hurls himself across the goalmouth to head out a sharp effort from Ron Davies (No. nine)

Pictures by TERRY RICHARDS

Right: Goalkeeper Graham Horn keeps his old club out by pulling off a great save to a Bobby Kellard free-kick



Tom Finney is congratulated by John Faulkner after equalising with Luton's third goal

HASLAM HAPPY AT ROKER DATE

By ROGER DUCKWORTH
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LUTON go to Sunderland on Saturday to face the FA Cup winners and the Roker Roar. And manager Harry Haslam is delighted. For after Saturday's near-upset he feels his players will respond to the big occasion better than to a rather easier task.

"We played badly today," he said after Saturday's mouth-drier. "We didn't nail it in midfield and there was a lot to be desired up front. The lads know all about it."

"They know they have a lot on their hands next week, and I am sure they will do something about it."

Luton were behind twice on Saturday and eventually came out all square with a goal from goal-a-game Tom Finney.

But the limitations of Finney's experience were exposed against this hard, professional side.

He was brilliant early on, and skinned full-back Wilson three times. But thereafter he failed to alter his game, and ran into trouble. He also disappeared for spells when he might have helped out in deep positions.

Strong point

In spite of this he showed he has the potential and that he is highly explosive in the box.

His striking colleague Barry Butlin is not having the best of times, and how he could have done with a goal on Saturday. He tried hard enough, but little went right. He was also beaten quite a lot in the air — and that used to be his strong point.

Luton have five days to hone their attack. To put back the glitter.

But let us also remember that the Town was facing one of the best sides they have yet encountered in the Second

Division. The results have gone against Pompey so far, but they are too good to remain near the bottom for long.

Manager John Mortimore said afterwards that Luton's first goal by Bobby Thomson was the first good one that had been scored against his team this season.

He must also have been delighted with the penalty presented to him by Luton's Alan Garner, who flapped out his right hand to handle in the box.

It was a panic reflex. The Luton centre-back thought he was being challenged. But there was no opponent close enough to touch him. He could have kicked the ball out of the ground.

After Luton's initial burst had been weathered, Pompey went ahead with a fine goal from Bobby Kellard. He showed all his years of experience by curling a hard shot away from Horn through a crowded penalty area.

That was in the 17th minute.

Luton had to wait until the 33rd for skipper Thomson to equalise with a picturesque volley. And a couple of minutes later Garner headed a splendid goal from a Jim Ryan corner to calm the Luton nerves.

But early in the second half he perpetrated his penalty blunder, and former Luton favourite Brian Lewis beat Horn — but only just, the Luton keeper managing to get a hand to the ball.

When Ron Davies beat Faulkner for about the first time to head Portsmouth back into the lead, it looked all over for the Town. And it would have been had Shanks not headed another Davies effort off the line with an incredible dive.

His superb save must have given Luton hope, for they began playing good football again. Jimmy Ryan, Luton's best player, and Butlin worked the situation for Finney to stick in his 75th minute equaliser.

Anderson and John Ryan fought well in midfield, especially when going forward, and Aston had plenty of ideas on the left wing.

I thought Faulkner did a good job on the dangerous Davies, particularly in the air where Davies is still in world class.

And Shanks and Thomson both bore the responsibility of taking on Peter Marinello on whichever wing he decided to operate. The former Arsenal man, who cost Pompey a cool £100,000, became frustrated, and was involved in a scuffle with Jimmy Ryan.

The referee was not the most popular man. He allowed the players of both sides to get away with far too much, and nobody likes to see footballers squaring up to each other like rowdy schoolboys.

He booked Thomson for pulling back Marinello and Stephenson for a foul on Jim Ryan.

Pompey keeper Ron Tilsed played for the last 20 minutes with a broken arm. The extent of his injury was discovered when he was taken to the Luton and Dunstable Hospital for X-rays after the match.

Tilsed collected his injury diving in a crowded goalmouth.

Portsmouth recall goalkeeper Milkins for tomorrow's game at Carlisle. Tilsed may be out of the game for six months.

MATCH DETAILS

LUTON TOWN: Horn, Shanks, Thomson, Anderson, Faulkner, Goodeve, Jim Ryan, John Ryan, Butlin, Finney, Aston. Sub: Cruse.

PORTSMOUTH: Tilsed, Roberts, Wilson, Piper, Stephenson, Hand, Marinello, Kellard, Davies, Lewis, Hiron. Sub: Reynolds.

REFEREE: Mr Bill Hall (Preston)

ATTENDANCE: 11,552



Ex-Luton man Brian Lewis (left) and Peter Anderson fight it out in a long chase