

GENERATOR GAME HALTS POMPEY

Lights go out on grim battle

By REG BETTS

73/74

Pompey's venture into the generator game came unstuck at Fratton Park today. The lights flickered and finally went out in the 71st minute. Efforts were being made to plug the lights into the mains so that the closely-fought match with Luton Town could be completed.

Midfield star Norman Piper reported fit when Pompey had their pre-match lunch at Hayling Island. He missed Wednesday's F.A. Cup replay at Swindon with a hamstring injury.

Utility man Brian Lewis went back to the substitute's bench.

Portsmouth: Milkins, Roberts, Collins, Piper, Went, Manley, Marinello, Kellard, Davies, Reynolds, Mellows. Sub.: Lewis.

Luton Town: Horn, Ryan (John), Thomson, Shanks, Faulkner, Garner, Ryan (Jim), Finney, Anderson, West, Aston. Sub.: Cruse.

Referee: Mr. Roger Kirkpatrick (Leicester).

Horn, the Luton goalkeeper, got a quick touch when Collins curled a centre through to him.

Then Faulkner fouled Davies, and the Pompey centre-forward was, in turn, penalized for a challenge on the Luton goalkeeper when Roberts centred accurately from the right.

Mr. Kirkpatrick, soccer's most striking figure in referee's clothing, called Kellard to him and administered a lecture for a foul on West.

Piper applauded a tremendous pass from Kellard which rifled through the Luton defence, carrying just a fraction too much pace, and Piper's cross curled over the top.

The powerful figure of Went headed away a dangerous looking through ball, and two Luton forwards were stranded offside when Garner slipped the ball back into the penalty area.

So near . . .

In the tenth minute Davies touched a pass to Reynolds and the chunky Cornishman beat Faulkner, took the ball on to his left foot, and Horn finger-tipped his shot away for a corner.

Luton counter-attacked fiercely and Finney's shot dipped over the crossbar.

Although Luton came with a reputation for all-out attack, it was Pompey who showed the greater co-ordination and a five-man move led to Collins forcing a corner from Kellard's centre.

Marinello was causing a lot of trouble on the right flank, and when he was chopped down by Thomson, Piper moved a fraction offside as Reynolds nodded down the free-kick.

In the 21st minute, the astute Manley spotted Anderson weaving a passage past two defenders and he quickly slipped the ball away to safety.

Fine support

Pompey kept pushing forward. Davies steered an immaculate pass out to Marinello, raced through for the accurate cross, and, diving in with Reynolds, saw his header bounce on top of the crossbar.

This was a splendid move, drawing applause from a crowd who were giving Pompey fine support.

Finney got past Roberts and thrashed in a shot which hit Milkins and flew over the top for a corner.

There was a moment of anxiety for the Fratton fans when a clearance by Manley hit Went and left Anderson clear just inside his own half.

The Luton centre-forward made tracks for goal, hotly pursued by Roberts and Milkins came out to make a sharp interception.

Horn clutched a strong shot from Reynolds and Mr. Kirkpatrick told Faulkner to calm down when Garner fell injured.

Luton players gathered anxiously around Garner, but he soon recovered, and Mr. Kirkpatrick gave a dropped ball 25yd. from the Luton goal.

Half-time:
PORTSMOUTH 0
LUTON TOWN 0

Mr. Kirkpatrick talked earnestly to the two captains before the start of the second half, but the subject of the discussion remained a mystery.

Collins floated in a free kick, Davies headed across the face of the goal, straight into Horn's safe hands.

But the Luton keeper had to somersault to concede a corner as Pompey kept up early pressure. A free-kick by Kellard flashed past diving Thomson into Horn's arms. Just a touch by the Luton defender could have led to an own goal.

Luton's first serious shot for a long time was a first-time effort by Anderson, from an Aston cross, deflected by a defender for a corner.

Piper's miss

Now Pompey looked indecisive at the back as Luton, gaining confidence rapidly, attacked down the flanks. Jim Ryan and Aston aiming crosses for Anderson, who was closely marked by Went.

Another fine run and centre by Marinello and a touch by Reynolds set up a golden chance for Piper, who held his head in anguish as his shot flew wide.

This move, producing one of the game's few clear-cut openings, should have produced the breakthrough goal.

Racing into space, Mellows powered a shot against Horn's chest and Faulkner lashed the rebound away for another in the steady stream of corners.

The Fratton floodlights flickered disconcertingly, but this did not worry Milkins who made the save of the match, diving full length to clutch a searing shot from Finney.

In the 63rd minute Mr. Kirkpatrick stopped play and ran across to the half-way line, obviously worried about the floodlights. But after a short stoppage, he decided to carry on.

Manley presented the ball to Finney in midfield. Luton's Irish striker sent a pass to unmarked Aston, and Manley made up for his mistake by racing back to block the winger's shot.

In the 71st minute, the lights went out completely and Mr. Kirkpatrick had no option but to call the players off.

Immediately there was the sorry sight of scores of young fans trampling over the pitch.

But after a warning over the loudspeaker system, the intruders retreated to the terraces.

Unhappy-looking players filed off to the dressing rooms leaving the three officials in earnest discussion on the pitch.

When play had been stopped for 12 minutes, Mr. Kirkpatrick climbed up to the announcer's box to speak to the crowd.

He explained that there had been a fault in the generator, but they were trying to switch to the mains.

Attendance: 18,647



Ron Davies goes in with a hard challenge on Luton goalkeeper Graham Horn at Fratton Park this afternoon. For the outcome, see picture top right . . .



Horn is floored by Davies but manages to prevent the ball from crossing the line.