

SPOT ON... AS TOWN WIN AT LONG LAST

LUTON have done it at last! Today they won their first Division One match this season — at the tenth attempt.

With the score 1-1 at half-time, the Kenilworth Road crowd must have been preparing themselves for another disappointment. But a goal by Adrian Alston put them ahead, and Jimmy Ryan wrapped it up with a penalty.

With the shock of Butlin's move reverberating round the terraces, Luton started today's match with a completely different set-up.

Jimmy Husband came back at centre-forward after his injury and Peter Anderson, who has played in midfield for so long, moved into the attack.

This meant that Jim Ryan played in midfield with West and Hindson, and Alan Garner returned to the fold as substitute.

And the game was only four minutes old when Garner had to warm up on the touchline after Bobby Thomson had received an ankle injury.

Things did not look too good for Luton, as the defence had already slipped up once when a bad back pass by John Ryan was collected by Laidlaw, and Barber had to race out of his goal to collect the ball at the feet of the Carlisle winger.

THE DUCKWORTH MATCH VERDICT

AT LONG last, Luton today got that little bit of luck that manager Harry Haslam has been praying for from the start of the season.

It came in the 76th minute when a shot by Husband hit the hand of Carlisle defender Parker and referee John Homewood pointed to the spot.

The Luton crowd could hardly believe it. The Town were tensely holding on to a 2-1 lead and had already had one penalty appeal turned down when Alston went flying in the box.

And today was the day of all days when Luton needed to pick up their first win of the season. They had sold centre-forward Barry Butlin overnight and their run of depressing results added to this transfer news kept the gate to a miserable 13,000.

But the 13th minute was far from unlucky for Luton — for it brought their first goal when Anderson chased a through ball and beat Ross.

Laidlaw, who had a great game, equalised in the 37th minute and early in the second half Alston dribbled through to put Luton back ahead.

The penalty was all Luton needed to make the result safe and make that early relegation threat seem just that little more distant.

Luton Town 3 Carlisle Utd 1
By ROGER DUCKWORTH

A couple of minutes later, Ryan returned the compliment when he collected a bad goal-kick from Barber shielded the ball well, and got it back for the goalkeeper to clear safely.

Obviously the Luton fans were not sure about the Butlin situation, and while Thomson was receiving treatment, the Oak Road choir chanted: "Barry Butlin, Barry Butlin".

In the 10th minute, Luton had another let-off after a period of pressure on the Oak Road goal. And again it was the dangerous Laidlaw who almost scored.

A high ball into the middle was headed on, and he chased past Faulkner and tried to lob the ball over Barber. Barber half-stopped the effort, and Shanks ran round behind him to clear.

Somewhat against the run of play, Luton took a 13th minute lead from a move started by Jimmy Ryan. Alston neatly nudged a pass through the square Carlisle defence for ANDERSON to run on to and hit low past Ross.

What a boost this was for Luton and for Anderson, playing his first match as a central striker — in spite of the No 4 on his back.

Boost

Anderson was so delighted he ran past Ross, picked the ball out of the net, and gleefully kicked it hard and high on to the railway lines behind the main stand.

In the 16th minute, Luton nearly got another. Anderson started the move with an enthusiastic run on the right, and Alston darted in on the near post to shoot narrowly wide from his cross.

A couple of minutes later, Laidlaw had his third goal attempt when he headed a free kick from O'Neill over the top.

A period of consolidation followed for Luton. West twice shot wide, and Anderson

put in a header from an offside position. Then, with the attack chasing hard after a long through-ball from Faulkner, Alston eventually got in a little flick shot which went wide of the left-hand post.

Most of the first-half was played in light drizzle, and the greasy ball skidded all over the place as the players tried to play constructive football.

An attempted clearance by John Ryan cannoned off West for a Carlisle corner, but Faulkner cleared. And at the other end, John Ryan caused some mild amusement with a shot from about 35 yards which went about the same height over the goal. But I don't suppose he thought it funny.

Restless

As the minutes ticked away without Luton being able to add to their score, the crowd began to grow restless.

The much-needed goal might have come in the 36th minute when Hindson made a decisive break from deep in his own half and sent Alston away on the left. But he ran into trouble in the goalmouth — and from the clearance Carlisle equalised.

McIlmoyle flicked a header on to LAIDLAW in the goalmouth, and the dangerous Carlisle striker scored with a clever overhead kick.

The goal was Luton's punishment for some slack marking at the back, and I felt that Barber might have committed himself earlier rather than staying on his line. He was hopelessly stranded as the shot beat him.

After a Faulkner clearance had been charged down by Laidlaw, John Ryan missed his tackle, and Laidlaw sent Martin away on the right. His effort, like so many of Luton's, was high and wide.

Then Parker looked as if he might have tripped Hindson just to the left of the penalty

MATCH DETAILS

LUTON: Barber, Shanks, Thomson, Anderson, Faulkner, John Ryan, Hindson, Jimmy Ryan, Husband, West, Alston. Sub: Garner.

CARLISLE: Ross, Carr, Gorman, O'Neill, Green, Parker, Martin, Train, McIlmoyle, Balderstone, Laidlaw. Sub: Barry.

REFEREE: Mr J. Homewood (Sunbury-on-Thames).

GOALS: Anderson (Luton) 13th minute

Laidlaw (Carlisle) 37th minute

Alston (Luton) 54th minute

Jimmy Ryan (Luton) penalty 76th minute

ATTENDANCE: 12,987

area, but referee Homewood waved play on.

Anderson was being given a hard time in the air by the tall Carlisle centre-half Green, who won most of the crosses.

Another good chase by Laidlaw beat Luton's offside trap and Barber had to race yards out of his box to stop the winger's progress.

The first-half ended with Jimmy Ryan laid out deep in the Carlisle half after stopping a hard clearance in the midriff.
HT: 1-1.

The first decent effort of the second half came in the 47th minute when Husband cleverly shielded a good pass from Jimmy Ryan, then sprinted on to the ball to fire in a hard left-footer which Ross caught as he dived to his right.

Then Shanks put in a determined run through the middle but tried to beat a man too many and lost the ball in a forest of legs.

Desperate

Laidlaw was still looking dangerous, and he chased a neat pass from Martin and fired in a shot which gave Barber plenty of time to dive and save.

A touch of desperation began to creep into Luton's game, and Faulkner was forced to embark on a long run which sent him wide before he lost the ball.

Six minutes into the half, Alston was unlucky when he chased a through ball into the

box and fired a hard shot just wide. He claimed he had been pulled back by Green, and Carlisle goalkeeper Ross came out to break up an argument between his two central defenders.

The goal that Luton so badly needed came from ALSTON in the 54th minute. An attempted pass by Jim Ryan was deflected back to the big Luton striker, and he wormed his way through the Carlisle defence with a tremendous dribble before shooting past Ross.

Appeal

The goal put the fight back into the Luton attack. Husband went on a gritty charge through the middle but his long-distance shot gave Ross little trouble. Then West charged through after a pass from Husband but his shot also lacked power, and he might have done better to pass out to Hindson.

Strong raids on both flanks by the two Ryans might have brought Luton further goals. Husband was unlucky from the second, when a cross from Jimmy Ryan forced him into an overhead shot which was only just wide.

In the 76th minute, Luton were awarded a penalty for hand-ball by Parker from a shot by Husband. JIMMY RYAN scored from it.

And a couple of minutes later, Faulkner almost surprised Ross with a terrific drive from 30 yards which the Carlisle goalkeeper only just managed to stop.



Adrian Alston's attack on the Carlisle goal is deflected by a Carlisle player.