

TOSHACK GIVES THE KOP WHAT IT WANTS

Liverpool 2 Luton Town 0
By ROGER DUCKWORTH

THE Kop asked for it and John Toshack gave them it — Luton's defeat.

Bright spot of the game for the Hatters was when Peter Anderson had the ball in Liverpool's net, only to see it disallowed for being offside.

As announced yesterday Luton manager Harry Haslam brought back Jimmy Husband for a return to Merseyside — he used to play down the road at Everton — and he left out centre-forward Adrian Alston who has had to spend the week in Lancashire because of family illness.

But for three youngsters it was the biggest moment of their lives. Left-back Steve Buckley, sweeper Paul Fletcher and midfielder man Andy King who was substitute, got their first chance to play in

front of the fantastic Liverpool crowd.

Long before the kick-off the famous Kop was solid, and it's a marvellous sight to see all the red and white scarves held aloft as the massed fans sway in unison singing, "We'll Never Walk Alone."

Liverpool dropped their England full back Alex Lindsay and in his place came young former Northampton player Phil Neal.

Liverpool swept into attack straight from the kick off. McDermott sent Keegan free on the right and John Ryan and Fletcher both leaped and one of them got a head to the cross to concede a corner. The whole thing took about 20 seconds.

But Luton cleared the flag kick and Horn banged the ball upfield with a free kick.

Toshack, a Liverpool favourite, got a great cheer when he first got the ball and he put Cormack through with a splendid pass.

Fletcher tackled quickly and tried to get a high lob back to Horn who went for the ball bravely under threat from Keegan, and it was Keegan who was injured.

Fletcher was right in the thick of things from the start and his close marking on Keegan brought him a word of caution from the referee.

In the fifth minute there was an amazing incident in the Luton goalmouth. The ball ran free and Keegan left the job of putting the ball in the empty net to Toshack.

Toshack dived forward to head at goal but somehow Horn, who had been way out of his ground, dived across his goal to make a most incredible save.

After Husband had gone close with a low shot for Luton, Keegan and Cormack got together again on the left and again Horn did well to save at Toshack's feet.

After Jimmy Ryan had been robbed by a sharp tackle, Liverpool again attacked from the left, but Toshack's cross went into the crowd behind the Luton goal.

Luton began to put on some pressure, and persistence by West robbed Smith. From the cross Jimmy Ryan had a shot blocked and for a moment it looked as if Luton might score.

In the 15th minute Anderson put the ball in the Liverpool net but he was offside, the flag halting his run of jubilation in its infancy. Luton would have done better had West, who supplied the pass, shot rather than slid the ball forward.

After Buckley had done well with a diving header to clear from the goalmouth Keegan jinked his way through, but he fed the ball to Toshack who was offside long before Horn made another courageous save at his feet.

Then Callaghan was allowed to run through and shoot and after making a diving save, Horn indicated to his defence, in no uncertain terms, that he didn't think much of the cover he was getting.

After Faulkner had failed to clear properly from a difficult situation the ball was lobbed back into the Luton goalmouth and Heighway put it over the bar after an en-

MATCH DETAILS

LIVERPOOL: Clemence, Smith, Neal, Thompson, Cormack, Hughes, Keegan, McDermott, Heighway, Toshack, Callaghan. Sub: Boersma.

LUTON TOWN: Horn, John Ryan, Buckley, Anderson, Faulkner, Paul Fletcher, Jimmy Ryan, Husband, Spiring, West, Aston. Sub: King. Referee: Mr K. Burns (Worcester).

TOSHACK (Liverpool) in 47 minutes

HEIGHWAY (Liverpool) in 84 minutes

ATTENDANCE: 35,091.

thusiastic tackle by John Ryan.

Liverpool could not find their best form in the penalty area, and even when Hughes thumped a twice-taken free-kick, he put it wide with Toshack out of touch as he tried to divert the ball with an outstretched foot.

Aston, West and Husband took the ball right upfield for Luton, but just when things were looking hopeful, Cormack dived back to head the ball to Clemence.

Liverpool came straight back and Horn was forced to tip a header from Toshack over the crossbar.

With a minute to go to half-time, Jimmy Ryan sent Aston clear on the left and a splendid Luton move ended with Cormack bashing the ball high into the Kop for a corner which Liverpool cleared.

HT: 0-0

The second half was only two minutes old when Liverpool answered the call from the Kop and scored a goal.

The ball came from Keegan on the left and Cormack, who was having an outstanding game for Liverpool, beat the Luton defence in the air to nod the ball on. It think it would have crossed the line anyway, but Toshack swept in on the far post to knock the ball over the line and once again Luton were trailing.

At the other end Husband tried hard and Luton won a corner, but there still did not seem to be the bite that was necessary and Luton began to look in a more desperate plight than ever.

A clever run across the box by Anderson, after he had taken the ball from Husband, ended with him setting up a shot for West which was direct and powerful — but not good enough to beat England keeper Clemence who made a fine save.

Liverpool retaliated swiftly and Heighway smashed in a tremendous shot which called upon the quick reaction of Horn to tip it over for a corner.

An exciting run across the front of the Luton defence by Heighway was much appreciated by the crowd, but he was not allowed to get in a shot although his last minute centre from the byline caused Luton hearts to stop.

In the 58th minute Husband had bad luck with a header when he dived at a Jimmy Ryan cross after a move started by Aston.

Luton tried desperately to get back into the game, but after Anderson had worked an opening, Jimmy Ryan unluckily ran the ball over the byline before he was able to cross it.

Luton remained disorganised and gave the ball away easily. They played too many aimless passes from defence and there was just nobody there to chase them.

Liverpool wrapped it up six minutes from the end when Heighway scored from about ten yards

The verdict...

EVEN below their best, Liverpool were too good for Luton. We had the everpresent problem of lack of power in attack and over generosity in midfield.

Again the redeeming feature for the Town was an ice-cool display in defence by young Paul Fletcher who has had the hardest possible baptism into league soccer by having to play away at Chelsea and Anfield in his first two games.

After an early flurry when Horn won a personal vendetta with big Toshack, the first half was pretty tame.



Anderson put the ball into the net, but was well offside. Luton might have gone ahead had West had a go himself rather than pushing the ball forward.

Liverpool's lead came two minutes or so after the interval when Toshack, making his return, pushed the ball over the line from close range.

And six minutes from the end Heighway sewed it up with a low shot through a packed defence.

Luton must surely accept that this team is not good enough for the First Division having raised only nine points with the first half of the programme completed.

John Ryan did a good job at right-back, but Luton gave the ball away far too easily from midfield and there were too many long and hopeful clearances from defence with nobody on hand to collect them.