

# BOLTON MAULED TOWN IN FIRST HALF

75/76

BRIAN CLOUGH, manager of Nottingham Forest, who visit the Town on Saturday, has said some daft things in his time. And his prophecy that the Town can win promotion was made to look decidedly sick when Bolton Wanderers taught them a lesson at Burnden Park on Tuesday night.

The Town almost gave up without a fight, and by the time they had pulled themselves together, it was too late. They gave Bolton a three goals start, and made the Wanderers good promotion bets.

Failings throughout the Town team, however, probably made Bolton look better than they really are.

It was the Town's second



● Town's scoring chances were limited, but Ron Futchner went close.

## Report by: Brian Swain

consecutive defeat, and left manager Harry Haslam exasperated. "We didn't get going at all in the first half, and some of the players let their heads droop after the bad start," he said.

The bad start took only three minutes to arrive. John Faulkner was bypassed by a long clearance, but the ball was collected easily enough by Paul Futchner, and there seemed no great danger until he failed to hit his attempted back pass hard enough.

He made a present of the ball to Whatmore, and with Barber already on his way out to collect Futchner's pass, Gary Jones had a simple goal as Whatmore's cross went over.

With the crowd behind them to a man, Bolton swept forward as the Town's midfield and defence almost vanished without trace.

The second goal came after 23 mins when Brian Chambers gave the ball away in midfield. Whatmore ran on for 20 yards, and no one challenged him. He worked a one-two with Reid, and Reid's final cross found midfield man John Byron striding through

the middle to score from 12 yards.

Bolton's former Liverpool winger, Peter Thompson was having a field day against John Ryan, and the Town took a battering.

Bolton scored again after 36 mins when once more there was a lack of challenge in midfield as Allardyce, a back four man, broke through down the centre, passed to Thompson on the wing, and carried on forward to head a great goal from Thompson's cross.

Jimmy Ryan, back in the side because Jim Husband has a hamstring injury, almost presented Bolton with a fourth goal when he lost possession on the edge of the Town penalty area, and Thompson cracked a 20 yard drive against the post.

The Town had not had a single shot at goal in the first half but at least things improved after the interval.

John Ryan tightened up on Thompson, and the marking improved considerably. But by then it was too late.

Andy King, a huge disappointment in this match, managed a 25-yard drive which forced Siddall to a full length save, but Ron Futchner, working in lonely solitude down the middle found little scope against Bolton's big defenders.

He escaped them 15 mins from time after good approach work by King and Chambers, but hit the post when he might have scored.

Chambers was guilty of a much worse miss when the last chance of the match cropped up.

Bolton thought he was off-side, but Chambers was allowed to go through on his own, and then shot straight at Siddall.

Manager Haslam thought that the Town's first-half showing was as bad, if not worse, than the display at Norwich. "We didn't stay close enough to opponents," he said. "But at least we showed in the second half that we can do the job."



RON FUTCHER is beaten in a heading duel by powerful Bolton centre-half Sam Allardyce at Burnden Park. Waiting hopefully are Town skipper Alan West (left) and Andy King (right).

## Match Details

**Bolton Wanderers 3, Luton Town 0**  
Half-time: 3-0

TOWN: Barber; John Ryan, Buckley, Faulkner, Paul Futchner; Chambers, King, West; Jim Ryan, Ron Futchner, Aston. Substitute: Price (not used).

BOLTON WANDERERS: Siddall; Ritson, Dunne, Paul Jones, Allardyce; Greaves, Byrom (Nicholson after 62 minutes), Reid; Whatmore, Gary Jones, Thompson.

GOALS: Gary Jones 3 minutes, gift from Paul Futchner; Byrom 23 minutes, gift from Town midfield; Allardyce 36 minutes, well worked.

REFEREE: Jack Taylor, Wolverhampton: Was World class, but is slipping.

ATTENDANCE: 21,358, Bolton's second highest of the season.

ENTERTAINMENT: Bolton supporters loved it. But it was agony for Town fans who made the trip.

TOWN'S LEAGUE POSITION TODAY: Eighth, six points behind lowest promotion spot.