

NEW BOYS MAKE IT A SHINING SUCCESS

Report by Brian Swain, Sports Editor

WITH THREE changes forced on them by a flu bug, the Town showed both sides of their abilities as they threw off the weak challenge of the home side at York. For 75 minutes, York were exposed as the poor side they are, hot favourites for relegation, and with the worst defence in the Second Division.

They were so bad that the Town were strolling to their third double of the season without unduly stretching themselves, until York suddenly raised their game for a late burst, and in the end the Town had Keith Barber to thank for keeping the points.

Before then, two youngsters had set up the victory. Teenagers Paul Price and Lil Fuccillo were given their debuts as replacements for flu-hit John Faulkner and Jim Husband, and they responded by slotting into the team as neatly as the last piece drops into a jigsaw.

Fuccillo, son of Italian parents, crowned his display with a memorable goal which turned out to be the winner, while Price, despite some limitations in the air, had a sound and dependable game until he and the rest of the defence started to look dodgy in the last quarter of an hour.

The third change brought back Jim Ryan as replacement for John Aston, who also had flu. The net result of the virus's interruption of the Town's team planning turned out to be a blessing in disguise, especially in view of the fact that Ron Fletcher is now due for a three-match suspension for collecting 21 disciplinary points for six bookings.

The whole team looked more impressive than in their last three games, and were given the confidence-boosters of a goal in the first five minutes.

It started with a clearance by Price which was picked up in midfield by Andy King and flicked on to Brian Chambers. Both had better games than they had done in recent matches, and their inter-passing movement swept through York's lumbering left flank and ended with Chambers carefully placing a side-footed shot into the

Match Details

YORK CITY 2, LUTON TOWN 3
Half-time: 1-2

TOWN: Barber; John Ryan, Buckley, Price, Paul Fletcher; Chambers, King, West; Fuccillo, Ron Fletcher, Jim Ryan. Sub: Thomson, not used.

YORK CITY: Crawford; Stone, Woodward, James, Swallow; Topping, Holmes (Hosker, 57 minutes), Cave; Pollard, Seal, McMordie.

THE GOALS: Brian Chambers for the Town, 5 minutes, after working a one-two with Andy King; Ron Fletcher, 26 minutes, from cross by Lil Fuccillo; Holmes, penalty, for York, 35 minutes, after John Ryan saved on the line from Topping; Fuccillo, 53 minutes, solo goal to make it a memorable debut; Pollard for York, 75 minutes, after McMordie drew Paul Fletcher out to the flank and crossed.

REFEREE: Ken Walmsley, Fleetwood: York officials thought he had a good game, but Town followers weren't so keen on him.

ATTENDANCE: 3,132: worst of the day in the division, and only one in the Third, where York will surely be playing next season, was lower.

ENTERTAINMENT: Good value for money, although the Town nearly threw it all away in the last ten minutes.

BOTHER BOYS: Topping of York booked for dissent; Chambers booked for second time in three games, for kicking ball away to stop quick free kick being taken.

TOWN'S LEAGUE POSITION NOW: Still seventh, four points below nearest promotion spot.

net from the inside right position, just inside the penalty area.

Alan West, playing on the right flank for a change, set off another move in which Fuccillo and Jim Ryan took part, and King concluded it with a diving header which went narrowly past the post.

York's defence was a manager's nightmare, and Jim Ryan robbed Woodward and crossed, but Ron Fletcher was unable to find enough time to take the chance.

But after 26 minutes, the defence obligingly stood still even longer to watch the Town go into a two-goal lead. Paul Fletcher broke out of defence, and flighted a beautiful through pass toward the Town's left wing, just over the heads of the York defenders.

Fuccillo had timed his run accurately collected the ball near the touch-line and then beat Swallow as he rushed across to cover. No-one filled in Swallow's place in the penalty box, and Fuccillo passed to Ron Fletcher. He had time, and the necessary presence of mind, to control the ball and hammer it into goal long before he was challenged.

York, bottom but one in the league table, were playing just as badly as they did at Kenilworth Road when the Town beat them 4-0, and John Ryan almost added another goal for the Town with a 25-yard pile-driver which Crawford pushed round the post.

But ten minutes before



DEBUT boy Paul Price, who broke his leg twice and fought his way back to full recovery each time, gets a tackle on York City's Chris Topping.

half-time, York pulled a goal back with a penalty. Barber, jumping with a bunch of players for a cross, failed to hold the ball, and Topping took deliberate aim at the corner of the net.

John Ryan was in the way, and the ball made contact with the top of his arm, flew on to the bar and was cleared. Ryan said later: "The ball hit me on the shoulder. It wasn't hands: I couldn't get out of the way of it."

Referee Ken Walmsley, who was in a perfect position, thought otherwise, and ruled that it was a deliberate act, and Holmes scored from the spot.

Holmes's pleasure, however, vanished seven minutes after the interval, because as he tried to hold the ball in midfield, Fuccillo nipped in, pinched the ball and ran ten yards to just inside the box before smacking a low shot into the corner of the net for a goal to remember.

At that stage, I wouldn't have been surprised to see the Town go on to score five or six goals, because York had died and were ready to be taken to the cleaners.

Instead, the Town sat back to hold onto the points and York were given new life when McMordie

broke down the Town's left, and drew Paul Fletcher out of position before beating him with a centre.

Seal miskicked, but the Town's defence was in such a dither that Pollard was able to get in the attackers' second attempt, and scored from close range to make it 3-2 to the Town.

Two minutes later, West sent an accurate 30-yard pass upfield for Jim Ryan, accepted, the return after running to the edge of the penalty area, and then cracked a rocket drive goalwards.

It hit the bar while goalkeeper Crawford was still wondering what was going on. Ron Fletcher controlled the rebound with his hand before booting the ball high over the target.

York almost made the Town pay dearly for that, because after 85 minutes Barber had his first real save of the match. He made it well, falling onto a low shot from Pollard and a minute later Barber made an even better save, pushing a Pollard drive round the post.

York's supporters, on the evidence of the last five minutes, complained that they were worth at least a point. They weren't—it was just that the Town came dangerously close to giving them one.

each are Buckley, from a penalty. Alston, Spiring, Seasman, John Ryan, West, Aston and Faulkner.

Another interesting goals figure from Saturday's games was that seven ex-Town players scored ten goals between them: Givens got two for QPR, Busby hit two for Fulham, Alston two for Cardiff and Rioch scored for Derby, Macdonald for Newcastle, Butlin for Nottingham Forest and Fern for Chesterfield.

Peter Spiring, who has just joined Hereford United on loan, was not on the weekend's scoring list.

Division II Review

THE TOWN are still within reach of promotion, says manager Harry Haslam after totting up the points won and lost in Saturday's games at the top of the Second Division.

The big questions are these: have Sunderland blown up? And can the Town pull themselves into the top three by their own efforts against higher teams they have yet to play: Sunderland, Bristol City, Notts County and Southampton?

"We can get there through our own efforts," said the Manager. "And let this be clear: we definitely want promotion. The First Division is where Luton Town want to be, no matter how much of a struggle the Club has to stay in business."

Sunderland, for so long on their own at the top, faltered again when two goals by Viv Busby for Fulham beat them at Craven Cottage.

Sunderland are the Town's visitors in a fortnight, and their away form is hardly championship stuff: they have three wins, three draws and seven defeats on their away record so far, and even Bob Stokoe's confidence is looking fragile.

THE TOP OF THE TABLE										
	P	W	D	L	F	A	P			
Bolton	27	15	8	4	45	24	38			
Bristol City	28	13	10	5	44	24	36			
Sunderland	27	16	4	7	41	24	39			
Notts Co	27	14	6	7	39	24	34			
West Brom	28	12	10	6	30	25	34			
South'mpton	27	14	5	8	42	33	33			
LUTON T	28	13	6	9	41	32	32			

Bolton Wanderers are the team who now have to take the pressure of being league leaders. They moved two points clear at the top by winning 1-0 against bottom club Portsmouth, who have still won only once on their own pitch. But Pompey made Bolton fight, and it needed an own-goal by Paul Went to give Wanderers the points.

Bristol City, now in second place over Sunderland on goal average, shared the points in the Match of the Day encounter with Southampton.

If the box is to be believed, Southampton were lucky to return home with a point. Their goal was only the eighth home goal City have conceded this season. The gate of 23,316 was the day's highest in the Second Division.

Notts County stayed in the running by winning 3-1 at Plymouth, while West Brom beat Bristol Rovers 3-0 at The Hawthorns.

Oldham, who entertain the Town on Saturday week, "dropped a home point in a 3-3 draw with Carlisle, and are now a point behind the Town."

RON FUTCHER IS LEADING SCORER

RON FUTCHER'S goal at York restored his position as the Town's leading scorer this season. It was his ninth goal, including one in the FA Cup against Blackburn and one in the League Cup at Darlington.

Andy King and Jim Husband have each scored eight times, and the only other Town player to have scored more than once is Brian Chambers, whose goal at York was his fifth this season.

Peter Anderson had also scored five before his transfer to Royal Antwerp FC in December.

Lil Fuccillo was the second young Town player to mark his debut with a goal this season: Andy King also did it, in the home game against Hull City.

Fuccillo was the 14th Town player to hit the net this season. The tally so far is 41 goals in the league and three in cup-ties.

Players who have scored once



DEBUT boy Pasquale Fuccillo, better known as Lil, who hit the goal that turned out to be the Town's winner at York.