

PHIL'S KNOCKOUT SHOW LIFTS LUTON

PHIL BOERSMA repaid another slice of his £37,000 fee by scoring both goals to send Luton into an FA Cup fourth round tie at Millwall on January 28.

Luton may not savour the thought of the cold atmosphere, but the spirit they showed to end Oldham's ten-match unbeaten run in last night's replay suggests Harry Haslam's patched-up side can look forward to a place in the fifth round.

Without the injured Alan West and Paul Futchner and cup-tied Brian Stein, Luton, playing their sixth match in 16 days, took their own unbeaten record to eight games since David Pleat succeeded Roy McCrohan as chief coach.

Luton won simply because they wanted to play football despite a heavy ground made difficult by sleet and snow. They played it close and the marginal difference in the scoreline didn't reflect the Town's overall superiority.

At the back central defenders, John Faulkner and Graham Jones were in commanding form while up front Boersma had his best game since joining Luton from Middlesbrough.

Suggestions that his first goal, after 13 minutes, was a fluke could be discounted because of the ferocity with which he hit the ball.

Feeble

He smashed a terrific shot from 20 yards at Oldham keeper John Platt, who allowed the ball to slip through his fingers and into the net.

When he retrieved it, the ball was deflated and, despite Oldham's feeble protests, referee Ron Challis — who had another indifferent game — allowed the goal to stand.

But there was no doubt about the validity of Luton's second goal three minutes after half-time. Godfrey



■ Boersma (left) slips the ball past Platt for Luton's winning goal three minutes after half-time

Oldham Athletic 1, Luton Town 2

Replay report by ERIC HARRIS

Ingram, making his full debut, won possession in midfield and split Oldham's defence with a perfect pass.

Boersma took the ball in his stride, sidestepped a challenge from centre half Paul Edwards and calmly slipped the ball into the bottom of the net to beat Platt, who made a desperate attempt to snatch the ball from his foot as he ran out.

It was a superb goal from which Oldham never recovered despite a couple of near misses towards the end.

Hectic

They had equalised in the 28th minute after a bad mistake from keeper Milija Aleksic.

He failed to hold Ian Wood's shot as he went down to save

and, from the rebound, Alan Young followed up to score.

However, it was only Aleksic's brilliance in a hectic opening spell which kept Oldham out. When Young's header hit the bar the keeper made a good save from Edwards, who won the rebound.

He also made fine saves from Les Chapman and Carl Valentine as Oldham enjoyed a brief spell of superiority in the first half. And, just before half-time, Price hacked Steve Taylor's shot off the line.

But after Boersma's second goal, Luton took complete control although it took them 68 minutes to force their first corner.

Unlucky

As Oldham hit back, Aleksic was forced into another good save when Vic Halom put Taylor through and, in the last few minutes, the same player shot a fraction wide.

Ron Futchner and Ingram were employed upfront in a 4-4-2 formation with admirable backing from Boersma and Lilly Fuccillo. In the second

half, Fuccillo did a good job on Valentine when he played wide to mark him out of the game.

Futchner worked his way into some good positions and was unlucky not to score on a couple of occasions. Ingram still has much to learn, but made his mark by creating Luton's winning goal, and a later pass which Futchner just failed to reach.

But apart from the sound contributions made by Boersma, Jones and Faulkner, it was Luton's midfield graft and tenacity which also did much to demolish Oldham — one of the most improved sides in the Second Division.

Luton manager Harry Haslam and coach David Pleat were naturally delighted.

"Considering we have reached the limit of our reserve cover, I think it was an excellent result," said Haslam.

"Pleased? I'm over the moon," said Pleat. "We really got down to the task and I was proud of every player."

Ron Futchner and Chapman were booked when the Oldham player retaliated after a foul.

Boersma ended all the speculation over his first goal when he explained: "A seam in the ball burst when I hit it, but I don't think it was fully deflated when the keeper fumbled it."

MATCH DETAILS

OLDHAM: Platt, Wood, Holt, Gardner, Edwards, Hurst, Valentine, Taylor, Halom, Chapman, Young (Hoolickin).

LUTON: Aleksic, Price, Carr, Hill, Faulkner, Jones, Husband, Ingram, Futchner (R), Fuccillo, Boersma. Sub: McNichol.

REF: Mr R. Challis (Tonbridge).

ATTENDANCE: 13,802.

GOALS: Boersma (13 and 48). Young (28).

BOOKINGS: Futchner (foul on Chapman), Chapman (retaliation).

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