

STEIN'S DOUBLE TO WIGAN PIER

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Fans have long wait for cup goals

PATIENCE WAS the keynote for players and supporters alike at Kenilworth Road on Tuesday night as two late goals by Brian Stein put them out of their misery against Football League novices Wigan Athletic.

More effective than attractive, Wigan brought little ambition to this Football League Cup-tie, and for more than an hour they frustrated a Town side which managed to push eight men into possible scoring positions.

The road to Wigan Pier was beginning to stretch uninvitingly towards a replay until Stein made the breakthrough in the 63rd minute. He added a second four minutes from time to make the score-line look more creditable than some aspects of the Town's performance.

Perhaps a team which wins 2-0 ought not to be criticised, and on the night the Town certainly earned their victory. But Wigan, still without a win in the Football League, won't be the last side to come to Kenilworth Road and concentrate all energies on a defensive game.

It made for a frustrating game so far as Town fans were concerned. There was room to work out movements from midfield, but all too often attempts to find a way to goal ended in frustration.

The effort was there, but at times there was a shortage of that little extra class that can break down teams which have little more to offer than defensive fighting spirit and determination. Admirable qualities though they are, Wigan had little more to offer.

Their ambition seemed to be to hold on for a 0-0 draw, with the possibility of a goal on the break always beckoning as the Town were drawn forward in a siege of the Wigan goal.

The Town made all the running, but their very mobility brought problems as Wigan packed their penalty box. Goalkeeper John Brown looked as



● **HEADING FOR THE NEXT ROUND:** Brian Stein, second from the left, watches his header beat goalkeeper Brown for the Town's second goal against Wigan.

Wigan details

LUTON TOWN 2, WIGAN 0

Half-time: 0-0

BRIAN SWAIN'S VERDICT: ★★★

TOWN: Aleksic; Stephens, Aizlewood, Turner, Price; Donaghy, West, Fucillo; Stein, Hatton, Moss. Sub: Hill, not used.

WIGAN ATHLETIC: Brown; Gore, Smart, Ward, Gillibrand; Seddon, Corrigan, Wright, Purdie; Houghton, Wilkie, Sub: (Davids, 84 mins).

THE GOALS: Brian Stein 63 minutes, low drive after long throw-in by Price helped on by Turner; Stein, 86 minutes, header from corner by Moss.

OTHER SCORING EFFORTS: Town nine saved, four off target, one hit bar; Wigan four saved, six off target.

ATTENDANCE: 6,618. Perhaps Watford should have provided the opposition.

REFEREE: John Hunting, Leicester. Some decisions were difficult to understand, but on the whole kept the game flowing well.

ENTERTAINMENT: Too frantic and anxious for a long time, with Wigan trying to stifle the game until Brian Stein broke the deadlock.

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though he needed all that cover, and when he was beaten, by Bob Hatton's header, Kevin Smart cleared off the line.

The only danger to the Town's defence was that they might have lost concentration as they found time and space to move into midfield to join attacks. The speed of Ian Purdie and Frank Corrigan on the wings posed occasional threats, but poor finishing by John Wilkie and Peter Houghton ruined the two best chances Wigan created.

Mal Donaghy was the pick of a Town midfield

which had to fight for space as it approached the penalty area. He had two efforts saved, and hit the bar with another after Stein's first goal had forced Wigan to open up a little.

The goal stemmed from a long throw-in by Paul Price. Chris Turner challenged for it in the box, and as the ball ran loose Stein managed to steer a low drive through the ranks of Wigan defenders into the corner of the net.

Alan West deserved better with the night's hardest drive, a 30-yard screamer which whistled inches over the bar, but Stein ensured victory by scoring again four minutes from time.

David Moss and Bob Hatton both ran themselves into the ground to keep up the pressure on the Wigan goal, and it was an accurate corner from Moss which enabled Stein to head his second goal.

League babes were happy with their battling display

THOUGH they said goodbye to their chances of further League Cup glory and just failed in their ambitions to take Luton back for a crowd-pulling replay at Wigan, the newcomers to the Football League were happy with their performance.

Manager Ian McNeill was positively beaming after the game when he forecast that their display at Kenilworth Road could be the forerunner of a successful first season in the Fourth Division.

"We have had a hard start, but I thought we played very well tonight," he said. "Luton have lots of league experience and are a good side, but Tommy Gore marked David Moss closely. We defended well and had one or two chances of goals ourselves."

"I was pleased with Ian Seddon, in his first game for us, and thought Frank Corrigan did very well and Ian Purdie had a fine game."

"We are at home to Newport on Saturday, and it we keep up this form I think we will do well," he said.

He was supported in his view by David Pleat who said: "Wigan will hold their own in the Fourth Division when they get properly organised. They had one or two breaks, and we could have been in trouble."

Wigan have had hard games in the league, particularly against Grimsby and Reading, but McNeill said: "There is not a great deal of difference between the Northern Premier League and the Fourth Division."

"There are some good teams at the top of the Northern Premier who would be at home in the league."

Summing up his side's performance against the Town he said: "I thought we played attractively and everybody was pleased. I don't think there could be any complaints about the tactics tonight."



● **DEFENCE IN DEPTH:** David Moss, extreme left, whacks in a shot after a free kick. Wigan cleared, having pulled nine players back to protect their goal.