

Losing
league
ground

WHILE they were losing in the FA Cup at Newcastle, the Town were also slipping in the Second Division promotion race.

They dropped down one place, to eighth as Sheffield Wednesday overtook them by making full use of one of their games in hand.

They won 2-0 at Cambridge. Defensive slips gave the Wednesday two goals in the first 16 minutes and Cambridge also missed a late penalty, when Spriggs saw his shot saved.

In the day's only other Second Division game Bolton did the Town a favour, with a 3-1 home win over Derby, who entertain the Town on Saturday.

A goal up in two minutes, Derby were hit by two first-half replies by Alan Gowling and were killed off when they were caught on the break three minutes from time.

Top places in the Second Division:

	P	W	D	L	F	A	P
West Ham	27	16	7	4	45	23	39
Swansea	27	11	10	6	41	30	32
Notts Co.	26	10	12	4	29	25	32
Chelsea	27	11	9	7	38	25	31
Derby	27	11	9	7	41	36	31
Sheff. Wed.	25	12	6	7	34	27	30
Blackburn	26	10	10	6	28	21	30
LUTON T.	27	11	7	9	39	39	29
Grimshy	27	9	11	7	28	24	29
Cambridge	26	13	3	10	32	33	29

REPORT BY



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Match Details

NEWCASTLE UTD 2, LUTON TOWN 1
Half-time: 1-0

TOWN: Findlay; Stephens, Price, Donaghy, Aizlewood; Hill, Grealish, West; Stein, Ingram, Moss. Sub: Fucillo, not used.

NEWCASTLE: Carr; Carney, Halliday, Boam, Johnson; Martin, Trewick, Wharton; Shinton, Clarke, Waddie. Sub: Shoulder, not used.

THE GOALS: Ray Clarke for Newcastle, 6 minutes, free header from cross by Peter Johnson; Mick Martin for Newcastle, 60 minutes, header from Chris Waddle's cross after Town were caught on the break; Godfrey Ingram for the Town, 64 minutes, lovely curling shot from edge of the box from pass by Brian Stein.

OTHER GOAL ATTEMPTS: Town one blocked, six off target, one hit a post; Newcastle three saved, eight wide, one hit the bar.

ATTENDANCE: 29,202—easily Newcastle's best of the season, and the home team enjoyed the lift the crowd gave them.

REFEREE: Trevor Morris, Leeds—a credit to football, and had a smashing game.

ENTERTAINMENT: A rousing cup-tie, particularly for the first hour when Newcastle looked easy winners. Better for Town supporters in the last 20 minutes but it was then too little, too late.

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Town Match Verdict ★★



CUP FIGHT
TOO LATE
TO SAVE IT

IN DANGER of being over-run for a long time, the Town at least salvaged a little pride before going out of the FA Cup at St James's Park. But although they came close to snatching a draw in a hectic late burst, manager David Pleat confessed that he could have no complaints about the result.

Newcastle deserved their victory, yet they were thankful to hear the final whistle because the Town had gone close to snatching a draw with an 85th-minute shot by Ricky Hill which hit the post.

For the first hour, Newcastle had looked well in control. They were playing with fire and enthusiasm, while the Town were a couple of gears below peak performance. They rubbed out some of the unhappy memories in the last 30 minutes, but it was a case of too little, too late.

Tradition in the air

You could almost feel cup tradition in the air as Newcastle's biggest crowd of the season played their part in making it a cup-tie, with something special at stake.

We reached half-time only one goal down, and I counted that as success. I even hoped for a complete recovery, because the Town had been far from their best, while the locals were beaming and telling each other Newcastle hadn't played so well for years.

They had scored in their first attack. Ray Clarke, replacing cup-tied Mick Harford, was given space for a free header from Peter Johnson's left wing cross, and carefully steered the ball past Jake Findlay.

The Town's normal controlled style was not allowed to show itself as Newcastle played at top speed, winning control of midfield and attacking down the flanks.

Kirk Stephens took a long time to get to grips with Chris Waddle and the defence looked decidedly uneasy at times. Waddle hammered a 20-yard shot on to and over the bar, Ken Wharton headed wide when he should have scored, and Mick Martin headed over a lightly guarded net after Findlay went for a far post cross and was stranded because he missed it.

By contrast, Kevin Carr in the Newcastle goal was given so much protection that he was never in trouble. Newcastle pulled back quickly when danger threatened, and although they conceded seven first-half corners compared with just two at the other end, nothing looked like disturbing their confidence.

I chatted with Jackie Milburn at half-time, and his worry, as a committed Newcastle man, was that his favourites had scored only once when they should have been three or four up, and that football has a cruel habit of punishing teams for that sort of failure.

Town attacks were kept at long range, while Clarke headed another Newcastle chance wide to make me wonder whether it was the right decision to leave Mike Saxby out.

The same doubt arose in the 60th minute when the Town's need for a goal caught them stretched. An attack broke down, Boam hammered a clearance towards the left wing and Waddle took the ball down to the by-line, beat Stephens and crossed for Martin to accept Newcastle's second headed goal of the game.

Newcastle seemed to think they had earned a breather, and at last the Town started to look more positive in attack.

They pulled a goal back in the 64th minute through the instinctive flair of Godfrey Ingram. Stein knocked on a long clearance, and with Newcastle expecting a cross, or perhaps a short pass across the area, Ingram curled a shot from the inside right position, 20 yards from goal, around Carr and into the far corner of the net.

"It was a perfect shot," said Carr later. "I saw it all the way but there was nothing I could do to stop it."

Findlay pulled off a brilliant save to keep out another header by Clarke, then did it again when Clarke shot carefully, but weakly, from about five yards.

Newcastle began to think in terms of survival, and the Town had much the better of the last 20 minutes.

With five minutes to go, and with Tony Greatish at last looking the best midfielder in the game, Hill's thundering shot from an opening made by Grealish and Stein hit the post and rebounded to safety.

Newcastle manager Arthur Cox said: "I suppose Luton could have got a draw right at the end. But we deserved to win—the score-line flattered Luton."

I'm afraid he was right.

● **START OF THE RECOVERY:** Above—Brian Stein, centre, and Godfrey Ingram, on the right, prepare to celebrate Ingram's goal that put the Town back into the game at St James's Park, four minutes after Newcastle had gone two up.

● **BELOW:** Ingram is in mid-air as he hits the shot past two defenders from the edge of the Newcastle penalty area.



● **OH NO!** The expression on Alan West's face says it all as another attack ends with goalkeeper Kevin Carr cutting out a pass, with Godfrey Ingram unable to do anything about it.