DAVID PLEAT

Still a lot to do

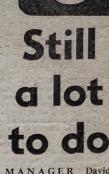
MANAGER David Pleat admits that the Town still have "an awful lot to do" if they are to win promotion this season. The victory at Nottingham pushed them up two places in the table, to ninth.

They are still three points away from third place and promotion needs a good run by the Town, and a string of failures by teams above them.

Sheffield Wednesday are still third after a 0-0 home draw with Derby, but Chelsea got back into the top four when they scored their first victor? and their first goal for these games with a 2-0 home success, yeer Bolton.

Shrewsbury, held 2-2 at home by Oldham, look favourites for the third relegation place, with Old-ham in fourth from bottom place two points ahead of Shrewsbury.

West Ham Notts Co Sheff Wed Chelsea Grimsby Blackburn Derby Swansea Luton Tn



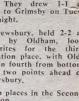
West Ham moved ten points clear at the top when David Cross's 29th goal of the season gave them a 1-0 win at New-eastle.

Blackburn joined Chelsea and Derby, a point below Sheffield Wednesday, with a 1-I draw at QPR.

The day's shock resulf was at the other end of the table: bottom club Bristol Rovers won 3-1 at Cambridge. It was only their third win in 33 games, and their first away from home.

But they are still doomed, and Bristol City, who come to Kenilworth Road on Saturday, also look stranded. They drew 1-1 at home to Grimsby on Tuesday night.

Top places in the Second Division,





• DECIDER: Brian Stein beats Kilcline to the ball to volley the Town's winner at Meadow Lane.

LE PAYS OFF

Report by **Brian Swain**

> **Pictures** by Mark Richards

Town two points at the expense of promotion favourites Notts County at Meadow Lane. But the real work to keep the Town's lingering hopes alive in the scramble for the First Division had been

done in the previous five days at Kenilworth Road.

Manager David Pleat devised a complete change of tactics for the Town, and the gamble paid off as the team made the new system work to

particular for a structure that the central perfection.

County, normally so adept at defending in depth and pinching goals on the break, were bamboozled by a Town style which gave several players different lobs to do at different times, and the home side was left clue-

The greatest delight for the big Luton following was that they could see the strange pattern working a treat, and enjoy the sight of their team putting the opposition defence on the rack. NOTTS COUNTY 0, LUTON TOWN 1
Half-time: 0-1 Half-time: 0-1

TOWN: Findlay; Stephens, Saxby, Price, Donaghy; Antic, Hill, Grealish; Stein, White, Moss, Sub; Aizlewood, not needed.

NOTTS: COUNTY: Avramovic; Benjamin, Kilcline, Richards, O'Brien; Kelly, Masson, Hunt, Hooks, McCulloch, Christie (Harouk), 26 mins).

THE GOAL: Brian Stein, 20-yard volley from clever pass by David Moss as the Town eaught County on the break in the 37th minute.

OTHER GOAL ATTEMPTS: Town 13 saved and seven off target; County three saved and seven wide. Corners: 6-1 to County.

ATTENDANCE: 8,075, better than the Meadow Lane average thanks to a good following from Luton, REFEREE: John Hough, MacCesfield, Certainly no homer and so quick with the book that he pulled a muscle and had to change places with a linesman in the 78th minute.

BOOKINGS: Mike Saxby for a foul, Tony Grealish for hands, Mal Donaghy for a foul.

ENTERTAINMENT: Very good, with the Town in quiet control in the first half thanks to David Pleat's inspired tactical changes, and close to a goal spree in the second with sub-standard finishing and good goal-keeping making the scoreline an unrealistic reflection of play.

rack.

The only disappointment was that there were not more goals to show for it. Stein and Steve White might both have had hattricks, and Raddy Avramovic was forced to play a much more hectic role in events than Jake Findlay.

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The Town dropped Godfrey Ingram and Lil Fuccillo
and recalled White and
Raddy Antic. Mike Saxby
and Paul Price took care
of County's two front
runners and very often fullbacks Kirk Stephens and
Mal Donaghy were playing
in the middle and looking
for breaks. Antic operated
sometimes as a sweeper
and sometimes as a sweeper
and sometimes as a midfield man going forward,
and got through a tremendous amount of work.

The attacking system

FIRST WITH THE NEWS: David Pleat's plans to produce something completely different were disclosed in Brian Swain's Sports View last week. And the new tactics, with a sweeper and David Moss playing deep behind two front runners worked to perfection. "The players worked hard on it in training," said the manager. "It was a bit of a gamble, but we knew we had to produce something special to beat Norts County. It was win or bust and the team was magnificent in making it work." ereated specially for this game completed County's bewilderment. For the first half David Moss played deep, in a role once made famous by Don Revie, with Stein and White operating as twin centre-forwards.

The luckless Tristan Benjamin spent 45 minutes wondering whether to go out of position and follow Moss, or mark space for the ever-likely danger posed when Donaghy, Antic, Ricky Hill or Tony Grealish broke through in support of attacks,

support of attacks.

By half-time, with the Town a goal up, County must have been badly in need of words of wisdom from manager Jimmy Sirrell. But if they thought they had worked out the measures to combat the Town's methods, County were thrown into more confusion after the break when the Town went back to the more conventional

SEEKING TACTICS TO

style, with Moss a leftwinger again.

And with County forced to be more adventurous in the search for an equaliser, the Town took control and made huge gaps in the Notts half of the field.

The Town's goal was well worth victory. For more than half an hour there had been little direct threat to either goal, although David Hunt should have got a header on target after a break down County's right.

In the 37th minute Saxby was adjudged to have tripped McCulloch. I didn't think he did. If he did, I feared it was a penalty, but Mr John Hough, later to give up the whistle with a pulled muscle, gave a free kick on the edge of the box.

The shot was blocked by

box.

The shot was blocked by the wall, and from the rebound Findlay made a simple save. From his
clearance Moss got control

and twice by Stein.

But if the front runners failed to some extent by not hitting two or three more goals, they earned credit for the skill and speed with which they made the openings despite some uncompromising tackling. The problem, of course, is that if you want to be First Division goalscorers you need a greater success rate from fewer strikes at goal.

