Sports News 1

Verdict on the Town's week ★★★

Up one place thanks to Swansea's win over Derby

DESPITE only managing a goalless draw at Wrexham, the Town remained in the promotion hunt and actually moved up a place in the Second Division on Tuesday night.

They were helped in their cause by Swansea who beat Derby at the Baseball Ground through a goal by Jeremy Charles enabling the Town to move into sixth place with a superior goal-difference to the County.

They are now two points adrift of third placed Grimsby with the same number of games played as all the five teams ahead of them.

Queens Park Rangers had their promotion hopes shattered on Tuesday when they crashed 4-0 to Orient at Brisbane Road where Billy Jennings scored twice and John Chiedozie got the other goal.

Blackburn and Notts County could only draw at Ewood Park on Saturday while Chelsea lost at Newcastle and Sheffield Wednesday went down at Orient. Leaders West Ham were held to a 1-1 draw by Bolton.

Top places in the Second Division:

	Played	Goal diff	Pts
West Ham	35	37	53
Notts County	35	7	44
Grimsby	35	11	41
Blackburn	35	10	41
Swansea	35	12	39
Luton	35	9	39
Derby	36	3	39

SKILLS WERE THERE BUT NOT THE PUNCH

TWO SPECTACULAR shots by Raddy Antic which hit the bar highlighted the best and worst of a Town performance at Wrexham. When they got going in the second half they had all the major skills and invention on view, yet it needed a midfield man to put any sort of threat on the home side's goal.

The draw was probably a fair result, but the Town never once tested Wrexham goalkeeper Dai Davies, while Findlay had to make a couple of important saves at the other end to ensure the Town of a point that turned out to be enough to keep them in the promotion hunt.

But once again they didn't look First Division quality and at times there were signs of tension against very moderate opposition.

Fighting to escape from the relegation zone, Wrexham hustled and bustled with plenty of energy and little finesse, and it was not hard to see why they have gone nine home games without a league win. Town boss David Pleat was happy enough to keep his side's run going to inch higher in the table. The fourth clean sheet in five games makes it clear that the defence is well settled, but the travelling band of Town supporters looked in vain for a little sparkle and penetration from the Town's front line.

Mike Saxby was outstanding in the Town's back row, while veteran Joey Jones held together a Wrexham rearguard which often survived by the skin of its teeth as the Town threatened to take charge in the second half.

The first half was poor entertainment, with Antic playing deep in defence. Tony Grealish returned in midfield but for a long time the Town seemed nervous of moving forward in strength.

Neither side managed a worthwhile scoring attempt before the break, but the Town looked much more impressive after the interval, when Antic moved up into midfield and Ricky Hill made more runs at the Wrexham defence.

But David Moss was unable to exert consistent pressure, although a couple of crosses were a foot or so away from causing damage.

Hill and Brian Stein were unlucky with moves which worried Wrexham, but the ball ran unkindly, and with Steve White unable to make much impression, Wrexham managed to resist fitful Town pressure.

The Town played open football and tried to attack, but there was little width to most moves—the only time we saw anyone on the right wing was when Kirk Stephens broke.

He worked hard all night and so did Mal Donaghy, but the price of being adventurous was nearly paid. Wrexham made use of space when defenders were out of position a couple of times, but weren't good enough to make their openings count.

Godfrey Ingram replaced White for the last 19 minutes with no noticeable effect, and it was left to Antic to earn appreciation for his skills with two tremendous shots from well out of the penalty area.

The first was a 30-yarder after he had spotted Davies off his line. The ball smacked against the face of the bar and was cleared. That was in the 60th minute and seven minutes later Antic hit another from similar range. This time the ball clipped the top of the bar and went over.

No-one else showed signs of matching that sort of ability and the Town's biggest scares evaporated for two different reasons: Findlay saved from Mick Vinter and Steve Buxton, and the best chance of the whole 90 minutes was wasted.

With four minutes to go the goalkeeper and Paul Price got mixed up as a cross from Buxton looped into the area. Vinter was in place for a clear header, unmarked and barely five yards from goal. He missed the ball completely, and several thousand Welshmen howled in derision and frustration, and then began leaving the ground.

REPORTS BY BRIAN SWAIN

PICTURES BY NIGEL WIGGLESWORTH

Match Details

WREXHAM 0, LUTON TOWN 0

TOWN: Findlay; Stephens, Saxby, Price, Donaghy; Antic, Hill, Grealish; Stein, White (Ingram, 71 mins), Moss.

WREXHAM: Davies; Hill, Joey Jones, Cegielski, Dwyer; Carroduz, Fox, Arkwright; Vinter, Buxton, Steve Jones (Williams, 63 mins).

STRIKES AT GOAL: Town one saved, five off target, two hit the bar; Wrexham six saved, five wide. Corners: 3-1 to the Town.

ATTENDANCE: 4,157, Wrexham's lowest of the season.

ENTERTAINMENT: Very poor first half, but both sides shaped better after the break and even the home fans applauded the skills of Raddy Antic, the only man on the field who looked as though he might break the deadlock.

REFEREE: Ron Chadwick, Darwen, Lancs — particularly good at playing the advantage rule, and helped to keep the game flowing.