

'YOU LOOKED LIKE FIRST DIVISION'

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Geoff Hurst...

PUTTING A RUN OF good results together when it matters most, the Town set themselves up for a genuine tilt at promotion with their third win on the trot at Stamford Bridge on Monday. They gave manager David Pleat the perfect tonic as he went home to pack for a week's stay in hospital for a minor operation.

If anyone looked sick in London, it was Chelsea boss Geoff Hurst, who has seen his collection of expensive stars slide right out of promotion contention after being near the top just before Christmas. "We just aren't good enough at the moment," he confessed.

And he wouldn't be surprised to see the Town pick up a promotion prize which seemed to have slipped away a couple of weeks ago.

"They're one of the best footballing sides in the Second Division," he said. "They weren't at their best against us, but they deserved to win. I like to see good football rewarded, and the kind that Luton play deserves to take them into the First Division".

The Town still have a lot to do as they wind up the season with Saturday's home match with Oldham and away games at Swansea on Monday and Bolton on Saturday week. And it has to be said that Chelsea, lacking confidence and short of any sort of brain in attack never really stretched them.

Even the first goal was down to eccentric goalkeeper Petar Borota, who took the field looking like a refugee from Billy Smart's circus — white socks, blue tracksuit trousers and shorts, and a bright red jersey.

His kit was the nearest any Chelsea player got to being dazzling. They managed to create only one clear chance, wasted in the fifth minute when Jake Findley was able to make a simple save from Colin Lee.

Mike Saxby was the man of the match in a defensive formation which left Chelsea completely baffled — Raddy Antic stayed behind Saxby and Paul Price for the whole 90 minutes and the Chelsea attack fizzled out, with Lee noticeable only for some bad-tempered aggression which eventually brought him an overdue booking.

Ricky Hill and Tony Grealish were more than a match for three opponents in midfield, and Kirk Stephens again made himself available for surges down the right.

If the Town did not look as good as they can be, Chelsea's wretched display was significant.

All the good chances came at the other end, with Moss hitting the side netting from one opening by Stephens, and then putting the Town ahead in the 26th minute with a goal which had Hurst exasperated with his goalkeeper.

The move started with Findlay punting a clearance to Moss. He knocked it inside to Brian St. John, took the return pass on the left-wing and moved in to shoot from near the angle of the penalty area, in the inside-left position. The ball bounced once as it skipped past Borota's late dive into the far corner.

Stephens put a couple of shots just wide and Antic curled a low free-kick agonisingly close before a superb goal killed off Chelsea in the 77th minute. Saxby won a tackle near the half-way line and slotted a perfect pass forward. Chelsea had given Hill yards of space, and he took the ball ten yards forward before driving his shot past Borota from just outside the penalty area.

"A lovely goal," agreed Hurst, who has every right to pass judgement on such matters. "It was just a pity that a goalkeeping mistake gave Luton their first. We didn't really look like pulling one back, did we?"



● **WRONG WAY:** Tom McAllister goes to his left and David Moss shoots to the right to score the penalty goal that put Rovers down into the Third Division, and kept the Town's promotion hopes alive.

**REPORTS BY
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Match Details

CHELSEA 0, LUTON TOWN 2

Half-time: 0-1

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

CHELSEA: Borota; Pates, Nutton, Locke, Rofe; Bumstead, Chivers, Hutchings; Fillery, Lee, Mayes (Rhoades-Brown, 68 mins).

THE GOALS: David Moss, 26 minutes, 20-yard shot under Borota's body; Ricky Hill, 77 mins, beautifully taken after running into space to collect a through-pass by Mike Saxby.

OTHER GOAL ATTEMPTS: Town three saved and nine wide; Chelsea six saved and six off target. Corners: 5-2 to Chelsea.

REFEREE: Alan Robinson, Waterlooville—might have been more firm with some of the rough stuff, but the cautions were all deserved—Mal Donaghy for a pointless handball in midfield and Dennis Rofe and Colin Lee for fouls.

ATTENDANCE: 12,868—below Chelsea's break-even figure, but boosted by a good following from Luton. **ENTERTAINMENT:** Workmanlike rather than sparkling, with Chelsea not good enough to force the Town to play at peak performance.