

Splashing out to kill a hoodoo

81/82

WREXHAM 0, LUTON TOWN 2

HAVING SAID before kick-off that League points were more important than a cup run, Luton manager David Pleat was given the perfect response by his team on Saturday.

They splashed out with a surprising amount of style on a pitch so wet that it seemed the game might not be completed.

In cold driving rain, tackles and passes were a lottery, but Wrexham were always second best in skill and control.

The Welshmen could not match the Town's astonishing enthusiasm for the task in hand, and two cracking goals wrapped up the points before half time to give Mr Pleat the pleasure of watching his first Town win in Wales since he became boss four years ago.

It would be unfair to pick out individuals as the stars of a Town performance which was an all-round team effort, but Clive Goodyear deserves special mention.

He came in for his first match of the season because Mark Aizlewood was injured, and played superbly.

By winning the ball consistently and making better use of it the Town ensured that Wrexham made the most mistakes. Players in all departments got into the right positions to support colleagues and give the man with the ball two or three options.

They almost went ahead in the 20th minute when Kirk Stephens set up an attack down the right and David Moss hit a volley which crashed against the bar. Brian Stein did well to reach the rebound first, but put the ball wide.

The opening goal, in the 28th minute, was a gem in build-up and finish alike.

Moss, Steve White, Stephens and Joey Jones were all involved as the Town built an attack from midfield. Jones blocked Moss as the winger tried to get in a shot, but the ball broke to Donaghy and from just outside the area he hit a crisp first-time drive into the top corner of the net.

A few seconds before half-time another break from midfield carved Wrexham open, and this time White was put in possession in front of goal and just outside the penalty box. The water splashed knee-high as he controlled the ball, drifted past an attempted tackle, and hammered his tenth goal of the season before any other defender could get near him.

Lil Fuccillo had another storming game in midfield, and his relentless driving power almost brought him a hat-trick, with one good shot saved and two more slightly wide of the target.

LUTON TOWN: Findlay; Stephens, Saxby, Goodyear, Donaghy; Hill, Horton, Fuccillo; Stein, White, Moss. Sub: Bunn, not needed.

WREXHAM: Niedzwiecki; Jones, Dowman, Cegielski, Bater; Ronson, Carrodus, McNeil, Fox; Edwards, Vinter (65 mins).

GOALS: Mal Donaghy, 20-yard drive, 28 mins; Steve White, 20-yard shot, 44 mins. Other goal attempts: Town five saved, four wide, one hit the bar, Wrexham four saved and two wide. Corners: 7-4 to the Town.

ENTERTAINMENT: Surprisingly good on a very wet pitch.

REFEREE: Howard King, Merthyr Tydfil, South Wales.

ATTENDANCE: 4,069.

BOOKING: Mal Donaghy for using his hands to cut out a through-pass.

WELCOME STATISTIC: The Town's first win in Wales, at the ninth attempt, since Mr Pleat became manager.