



TAKE THAT! David Moss fires in a fierce effort at the Charlton goal



BRIAN STEIN prepares to confront a Charlton defender

Mud stalemate okay by Pleat

By ERIC HARRIS

MATCH DETAILS

CHARLTON: Johns; Naylor, Ferns, Gritt, Elliott, Phillips, Ambrose, Walsh, Hales, Berry, Robinson. Sub: Smith.

LUTON: Findlay; Stephens, Aizlewood, Antic, Goodyear, Donaghy, Hill, Stein, White, Fuccillo, Moss. Sub: Johnson.

REFEREE: A. Glasson (Wiltshire). **ATTENDANCE:** 7,013. **BOOKINGS:** Aizlewood (hands), Findlay (foul on Robinson).

Kenilworth Road this Saturday.

Pleat and Mullery delivered enthusiastic praise for the 22 players who battled against clogging mud in the centre of the park for the entire 90 minutes.

It was a well-earned accolade for both teams, who competed strongly in difficult conditions and the lack of goals was compensated for by some neat approach work.

As far as Pleat was concerned, he was warmed by a fine performance from Clive Goodyear, still standing in for the injured Mike Saxby, and a robust display by Yugoslavian Raddy Antic.

Goodyear has settled in well and Saxby must surely be glancing over his shoulder at the progress the youngster has made since arriving as a regular senior player. Antic's contribution was equally encouraging and his performance in midfield adequately compensated for the absence of skipper Brian Horton.

Luton's man-of-the-match, however, was another midfield performer, Ricky Hill, whose power on the run was always a cause of anxiety for Charlton's harassed defenders, and his performance will have been noted with interest by England manager Ron Greenwood, who was among the crowd.

But there were several anxious moments for the Town when Charlton broke quickly. Fortunately, all the Londoners' efforts were repelled skilfully and with the minimum of fuss although Mullery was well aware of his team's failings in front of goal.

For their part, Luton also failed to test Charlton keeper Nicky Johns sufficiently enough to suggest they were worthy of victory, although there was never any doubt they were the better side.

If possession of the ball had been turned into points, the Town would have been nine points

clear at the top, but they failed to turn that superiority into goals.

Luton knew they faced a tricky obstacle after only three minutes when Findlay was forced to make a good low save from Paul Walsh's shot.

But the Hatters retaliated with their first serious threat five minutes later when Johns managed to get down to Steve White's low shot after the striker capitalised on Antic's quick free kick.

The hint that the Town were capable of repeating the form which has taken the Second Division by storm was evident within two minutes when a super build-up ended with White just failing to connect with David Moss's low cross.

And so it went on... Hill shot just wide after Charlton made the mistake of allowing him too much space... Brian Stein was only a fraction off target... Antic's left foot drive flew agonisingly wide, and Johns made a full length save from Moss.

But it wasn't all Luton's half by any means. After Findlay's early save from Walsh, former Town player Derek Hales missed a gilt-edged chance of putting Charlton in front when he completely mis-read a cross engineered by Steve Gritt and Martin Robinson.



BRIAN STEIN again, this time bursting past Terry Naylor