

SPORTS  
NEWS 1

Town Match Verdict ★★

## 'THEY'RE NOT ALL

## THIS GOOD!

—Mariner's ray  
of hope after  
FA Cup defeat

THE BEST team in the country gave Luton Town a harsh warning this week that life in the First Division next season will be tough. Without being disgraced, the Town were well beaten by an Ipswich side that frightens teams in the First Division, let alone the Second.

Top of the League and chasing a unique treble of championship and both Wembley cup finals, Ipswich spent half the game holding the Town's exuberance in check, before producing the killer streak after the break.

The three-goal margin may have been slightly flattering to the visitors, because after going one-down in the 62nd minute the Town decided to take a gamble.

They took off full-back Mark Aizlewood and put on Raddy Antic, prepared to take risks at the back in the hope of snatching something up front against an Ipswich defence that had rarely been troubled.

In a cup-tie the margin of defeat makes little difference, but against a team with so much all-round quality as Ipswich the gamble was very much an outside bet, even if Mark Aizlewood had not played as well as he can.

Former Town player John Faulkner, back in this country and looking for a coaching job after four seasons in the USA, thought that some of Town's play was naive. But he rates the current side a better one than the promotion team in which he played eight years ago.

## DECISIVE

The substitution gamble had no time to make an impression, because within a minute of Antic's entrance Ipswich had scored their second, and decisive, goal.

The Town players were

Report by Brian Swain  
Pictures: Mark Richards

beaten by the physical power and speed of thought and instinctive team play that marked out Ipswich as the best side we have seen at Kenilworth Road in many years.

They were content to defend expertly and confine most of the play to midfield in the first half, and neither goalkeeper was much troubled in that period. But Ipswich might have found life more difficult if a shot by Ricky Hill had found its target in the 22nd minute—he raced past two defenders with the ball and hit the bar from 20 yards, with Paul Cooper beaten.

Clive Goodyear made a good job of staying tight on Paul Mariner, and Eric Gates found few holes to exploit in his role as floating attacker behind Mariner and Alan Brazil, Brian Horton played him well until the late gamble gave Gates more room.

## COVERING

Ipswich organised themselves so that there was always an extra man covering when David Moss received the ball, and in the centre Russell Osman and Terry Butcher all but blotted out Brian Stein and Steve White.

Butcher had to go to hospital with blood streaming from his nose after a first-half collision with Stein's boot, but had done

his job by the time he was substituted in the 74th minute.

Ipswich were then two up and looking full of class and confidence.

## LOOKED GOOD

Paul Mariner summed up the general Ipswich view of the Town's performance. "They looked a good side in the first half," he said, "but they didn't often look like scoring. Their pressure on our goal came in short bursts."

"We felt at half-time that we could cope with the problems Luton set, and once we had gone in front we knew we were never going to lose."

"But there were plenty of good things about Luton's game, and they needn't be frightened of going into the First Division. They won't meet teams like us every week!"

## SUPER SAVE

Mariner himself ought to have been on the score-sheet. He blazed a half-volley wide from a good position early in the second half, then saw Jake Findlay make the save of the match to flip a 25-yard shot away from the top corner of the net.

Every Town player deserves full credit for sticking to an almost impossible task in a second half when Ipswich showed

how they had already won eight games in a row.

The problem is that if you can keep John Wark and Gates quiet, and stop Mariner from scoring, there is still half a team capable of making openings and goals.

The all-important opener came in the 62nd minute when a long clearance by Cooper was headed on by Mariner, and Brazil, quicker even than Mal Donaghy on this occasion, burst through and hammered the ball past Findlay.

Cooper was lucky shortly afterwards when a shot by White hit him and rolled along the line before being cleared, but the second goal was breathtaking in its build-up.

## NO CHALLENGE

Mick Mills, 33, and playing his 700th game, started the move from the right-back position. The ball was transferred through a series of accurate passes across the width as well as the length of the pitch.

Mills, upfield on the left, slung a pass to the far right, and while Good-year was watching Mariner right-back George Burley got free unchallenged on the overlap and crossed the ball for Gates to score.

Three minutes from time, with the Town trying to press forward with no cover in defence, Gates helped himself to his second goal from an opening created by Brazil and Mills.



● FOILED: Ipswich goalkeeper Paul Cooper takes off to make a catch and thwart Steve White.

## Match Details

LUTON TOWN 0, IPSWICH TOWN 3  
Half-time: 0—0

TOWN: Findlay; Stephens, Goodyear, Donaghy, Aizlewood (Antic, 79 mins); Hill, Horton, Fuccillo; Stein, White, Moss.

IPSWICH: Cooper; Burley, Osman, Butcher (O'Callaghan, 74 mins), McCall; Mills, Muhren, Wark, Gates; Brazil, Mariner.

THE GOALS: Alan Brazil, 62 mins, after Mariner headed on a long clearance by Cooper; Eric Gates, 71 mins, after brilliant passing move the length of the field; Gates again, 87 mins, after Jake Findlay beat out his first attempt.

OTHER STRIKES AT GOAL: Town four saved, six wide and one hit the bar; Ipswich five saved and eight wide. Corners: 4—1 to Ipswich.

ATTENDANCE: 20,188—highest since Arsenal's visit in the First Division in March 1975, and boosted by more than 8,000 fans from Ipswich.

REFEREE: Clive Thomas, Porthcawl—not as flamboyant as he used to be, but still effective, although I didn't agree with all his decisions.

ENTERTAINMENT: A match to remember, with the quality of football going a long way to overcome the disappointment over the result.

Watford  
close up

LUTON Town's promotion hopes received another boost while they were busy with the FA Cup—Oldham, second in the Division Two table, missed the chance to close the gap to a 'single point' by losing 0-1 at Derby.

The Town are four points above them with a much better goal difference, and with four games in hand.

Manager Colin Addison was then sacked, and Watford, after beating West Ham in the cup, collected their first league win since November at Vicarage Road on Tuesday night by thrashing Derby 6-1.

|            | P  | W  | D | L | F  | A  | P  |
|------------|----|----|---|---|----|----|----|
| Luton Town | 20 | 14 | 3 | 3 | 44 | 20 | 45 |
| Oldham     | 24 | 11 | 8 | 5 | 34 | 25 | 41 |
| Watford    | 21 | 11 | 5 | 5 | 37 | 25 | 38 |
| Blackburn  | 24 | 9  | 8 | 7 | 29 | 24 | 35 |
| QPR        | 21 | 10 | 4 | 7 | 28 | 20 | 34 |
| Sheff Wed  | 20 | 10 | 4 | 6 | 26 | 25 | 34 |
| Barnsley   | 20 | 10 | 3 | 7 | 33 | 22 | 33 |
| Chelsea    | 21 | 9  | 6 | 6 | 30 | 20 | 33 |
| Charlton   | 24 | 8  | 7 | 9 | 30 | 33 | 31 |



● LET-OFF: Steve White, grounded on the left, sees his shot half-saved by Paul Cooper as the Town pressed for an equaliser. Russell Osman, part-hidden by the goalkeeper, raced back to clear.