

SENDING-OFF MAKES ALL THE DIFFERENCE

THE rare pleasure of a place in the fifth round of the FA Cup for the first time since he became manager was quickly put into perspective by Luton Town boss David Pleat.

Home success over Second Division Huddersfield, who were reduced to ten men before the Town could break through, took second place in his thoughts on Saturday night to the need to strengthen the team for the First Division survival battle.

He made it clear that the conclusion of transfer talks with Crystal Palace to recruit Welsh international midfielder Peter Nicholas was the day's most significant event at Kenilworth Road.

Like David Preece he will be a spectator when the Town try to reach the last eight in the cup at the expense of Watford.

Huddersfield, from the far fringe of the Second Division promotion battle, went home feeling sick at a referee's decision which turned the course of the game, but knowing that in the end the Town let them off lightly.

They gave as good as they got for the first half hour, might well have taken the lead, then subsided after right back Brian Laws lost his cool for 60 seconds and got sent off.

Both sides had made and missed chances before that with the visitors going closest to a goal when Daral Pugh dribbled through the heart of the Town defence and squared a pass for Graham Cooper, on the edge of the box.

Unmarked and with time to think, he should have scored, but cracked a shot against the post.

That was in the 26th minute, and seven minutes later Laws went off to give the Town the sort of lucky break any cup run needs.

He body-checked Ray Daniel in midfield to earn a booking, then tripped Mitchell Thomas a minute later. "I felt a bit sorry for the lad," said Town coach Trevor Hartley after the

Town should see off Huddersfield

SILVERSTONE Huddersfield will provide Luton Town's FA Cup tie opposition at Kenilworth Road on Saturday.

Sports Editor
BRIAN SWAIN
at Huddersfield
discusses
Luton Town's
cup opponents
for Saturday

When Huddersfield were sent to the second division last season, they were sent to the second division. This was a mistake. They were sent to the second division. This was a mistake. They were sent to the second division. This was a mistake.

Blues next time lucky?

● AND THEY DID! Brian Swain's bold prediction in our sister paper, the Luton Leader, after he had watched Huddersfield play Wolves in the third round replay last week.

Report by Brian Swain Pictures: Mark Richards

dismissal of Laws put the Town on top.

From the free kick by Garry Parker Mal Donaghy headed his fourth cup goal of the season and the mystery after that was how

Huddersfield managed to avoid a real drubbing.

They had to pull Pugh out of the attack to replace Laws, and with leading scorer Dale Tempest already out through injury Hudders-

field were able to offer only defiance and rugged determination.

Steve Foster kept danger man Mark Lillis quiet, and with their team organisation disrupted Huddersfield should have been hammered.

The Town's four-man midfield, with Wayne Turner tackling and passing consistently well and Ricky Hill pressing forward with the

ball dangerously, exerted confident control.

Hill sparked the second goal, going down the right and crossing for Mick Harford to get in a diving header which was blocked. Brian Stein snapped up the rebound for his tenth goal of the season.

Just before that Harford had side-footed a glorious chance wide after a neat reverse pass by Turner and a near-post cross by Stein.

Daniel also went close, after Stein's dummy put him clear on Thomas's through-pass. Daniel dribbled through, rounded the keeper, then saw the shot cleared off the line by David Burke.

Another chance went begging when Harford's deliberate header across goal from Daniel's cross dropped nicely for Stein, but he shot wide.

Certainly the finishing should have been a lot more positive. But victory was no less sweet for that—it was the third in a row including the friendly in Iceland.

The Town players had every reason to be delighted, even if it was 11 men against ten. Arsenal would have settled for the same instead of defeat at York!

Match Details

LUTON TOWN 2 HUDDERSFIELD 0

HALF-TIME: 1-0 84/85 (FAC)

TOWN: Sealey; Breacker, Foster, Donaghy, Thomas; Hill, Parker (Nwajobi, 75 mins), Turner, Daniel; Stein, Harford.

HUDDERSFIELD: Cox; Laws, Stouff, Allardyce, Burke; Cooper (Winter, 72 mins), Doyle, Wilson; Pugh, Lillis, Cowling.

THE GOALS: Mal Donaghy header from Garry Parker's free kick, 34 mins; Brian Stein, close range after Mick Harford's header had been blocked, 56 mins.

OTHER STRIKES: Town 12 saved and eight wide; Huddersfield seven saved, two wide, one hit a post. Corners: 6-3 to Huddersfield.

TURNING POINTS: Graham Cooper hit a post for Huddersfield in the 26th minute; Huddersfield right back Brian Laws was sent off in the 34th minute. It had been an even match until then.

REFEREE: Alf Buksh, Harrow—Huddersfield thought he could have been more consistent with his cautions, and had acted harshly when he sent off Laws for a second bookable offence.

ATTENDANCE: 8,712, lowest of the day's FA Cup programme.

HAPPY FACT: The Town are in the fifth round for the first time in 11 years, and for the first time in David Pleat's management career.

BOOKINGS: Brian Laws for a foul on Ray Daniel, then sent off a minute later for a trip on Mitchell Thomas. Cautions, for fouls, for Phil Wilson and Steve Doyle of Huddersfield and Thomas and Wayne Turner of the Town.

ENTERTAINMENT: Most of the home pleasure came from the result, with the Town always good enough to beat ten men in a cup-tie that was ragged and scrappy at times.



● CLINCHER: Brian Stein turns away after scoring the second goal, with Mick Harford, whose header was blocked, still grounded.