

Sports News



● GROUNDED: David Preece takes the low road towards goal.

AWAY ON THE PUNCHES BUT SHORT OF THE KNOCK-OUT PUNCH

JIM Ryan believes West Ham will be a more positive side at Upton Park tonight than they were at Kenilworth Road on Saturday. And he figures that the Town can go one better in the FA Cup fourth round replay.

On Saturday the Town had more than enough of the play to have won at the first attempt.

But after the Hammers nicked the lead in their only attack of the first half the Town and their fans were doubly relieved in the second — firstly when Kingsley

The FA Cup — Brian Swain reports

Black equalised with 20 minutes to go, and then in the final seconds when it needed a goal-line clearance to deny Frank McAvennie a late winner.

DREAM

West Ham manager Billy Bonds claimed that his tactics were based on playing the way the Town do on their synthetic surface.

The Town boss thinks

his team's system is well suited to grass, and that Luton at Wembley in May is not an impossible dream.

The problem once more, however, was that the Town played like a boxer without a punch. For most of the game they looked easy points winners if they could prevent the opposition landing a knock-out of their own.

West Ham kept their guard in place, looking

for an occasional counter-punch, so stalemate was probably assured.

And the Hammers might discover that things will be much more difficult for them when they find a big crowd demanding that they go for it tonight.

David Preece returned to the Town side after flu, at the expense of Jason Rees, and there was not a lot wrong with the Town's general pat-

tern of play. But at half-time, so stalemate was probably assured. When it showed the Hammers a goal to be good.

REBOUND

In the first 45 minutes West Ham produced two shots on target, in minutes before the break.

The first was regrettably short by Stuart Slater. Alec Chamberlain at-



● MISSED: Hammers goalkeeper Ludo Miklosko in trouble against John Dreyer's leap from a corner, with Tim Breacker unable to help.

The season so far

THE TOWN'S results, scorers, attendances and league table position:	
August	
25 C. Palace (h) 1-1 (Dowie)	9,583
28 Arsenal (a) 1-2 (Elstrup)	32,723
September	
1 Southampton (a) 2-1 (Elstrup 2)	14,878
4 Man United (h) 0-1	12,576
8 Leeds Utd (h) 1-0 (Black)	10,185
15 QPR (a) 1-4 (Hughes)	10,196
22 Coventry (h) 1-0 (Dowie)	8,336
29 Norwich (a) 3-1 (Elstrup 3)	12,794
October	
20 Sunderland (a) 0-2	20,025
27 Everton (h) 1-1 (Elstrup)	10,047
November	
3 Derby (a) 1-2 (Black)	15,008
10 Liverpool (a) 0-4	35,207
17 Man City (h) 2-2 (Dowie, Dreyer pen)	9,564
24 A. Villa (h) 2-0 (Black, Elstrup)	10,071
December	
1 M. Forest (a) 2-2 (Elstrup 2)	16,498
8 Arsenal (h) 1-1 (Dreyer pen)	12,506
16 C. Palace (a) 1-0 (Dowie)	15,195
22 Spurs (a) 1-2 (Dowie)	27,007
26 Sheff Utd (h) 0-1	10,004
29 Chelsea (h) 2-0 (Dowie, Black)	11,050
1991	
January	
1 Wimbledon (a) 0-2	4,521
12 Southampton (h) 3-4 (Elstrup, James, Dreyer pen)	9,021
19 Leeds (a) 1-2 (Elstrup)	27,010
LEAGUE APPEARANCES, including as sub in brackets: Ever-presents, 23 each: Chamberlain, Dreyer, Elstrup, Preece and Black 22; Dowie 18 (3); Harvey 18 (2); Hughes 17; Beaumont 15 (3); Williams 14 (1); McDonough 13 (4); Johnson 13 (2); Rees 9 (6); James 8 (3); Farrell 4 (6); Pembroke 3; Nogan 4; Breacker 3. Number of players used, 23 games: 18. Last season's total, 27.	
LEAGUE GOALS: Elstrup 12, Dowie and Black 4, Dreyer 1, Hughes 1, James 1, OG 1 (Comdy, Chelsea).	
THE FA CUP	
January	
5 Sheff Utd (a) 3-1 (Farrell, Elstrup 2)	12,807
26 W. Ham (h) 1-1 (Black)	12,807
APPEARANCES: Two each by Chamberlain, James, Dreyer, Harvey, Pembroke, McDonough, Preece, Elstrup, Farrell, Black. One each by Williams and Beaumont. One as sub: Rees and Dowie.	
GOALS: Elstrup 2, Farrell and Black 1.	
THE RUMBELAWS CUP	
September	
25 Bradford (h) 1-1 (Harvey)	12,807
October	
10 Bradford (a) 1-1 (Black) — lost on pens	12,807
APPEARANCES: Chamberlain 2, Dreyer 2, Beaumont 1, Hughes 2, Preece 2, Black 2, Dowie 2, Harvey 2, Williams 1, Johnson 1.	
GOALS: Harvey and Black one each.	
THE ZENITH DATA SYSTEMS CUP	
December	
19 W. Ham (h) 5-1 (Farrell 2, Rees, Elstrup, Black 3)	
APPEARANCES: One each by Chamberlain, James, Harvey, Williams, McDonough, Dreyer, Elstrup, Preece, Pembroke, Black. One each as sub: Beaumont and Nogan.	

Town match verdict ★ ★ ★



Action pictures: Josh Levy

well to save, but from the rebound George Park hit the second Hammers shot of the game and it panged into the net off a body or two and a post.

The Town had pushed forward comfortably as West Ham conceded the midfield but defended a couple of yards outside their penalty area.

So the Town rarely got to close range, and the long-range efforts were easily dealt with as West Ham showed that they were not going to fall for a 5-1 Zenith Cup repeat.

to ward off a booking. Mr. Groves waved play on, and ruled that there had been no foul.

BOOKED

The first booking was for Steve Williams in the 34th minute. He was late with a tackle on West Ham skipper and man of the match Ian Bishop, and retaliation brought a yellow card for the visitor as well.

Bishop said later he regretted his reaction — he thought if he had got on with it and accepted a free kick neither he nor Williams would have seen the yellow card.

James and Darren McDonough were also cautioned, yet it was never a violent game, even if West Ham do now have a touch more steel about them than they used to have.

Until West Ham scored against the run of play it had seemed only a matter of time before the Town would break through.

But Sean Farrell and Lars Elstrup missed half-chances, and the Dane was out of luck when a corner by Williams left the West Ham defence in chaos — the shot was on target but hit one of many defenders.

HOPING

As the Town pushed forward West Ham settled.

Match Details

LUTON TOWN 1 WEST HAM UTD 1

Half-time: 0-1

BOTH managers thought that the draw was the fair result, with West Ham's Billy Bonds delighted with his side's disciplined defensive display.

Jim Ryan thought the Town should have more of their possession, but was grateful that they escaped in the closing minutes when the Hammers came uncomfortably close to scoring a late winner.

LESSONS

Mr. Bonds, having watched his team smashed in the Zenith Cup, was a puzzle but they balanced out.

REVENGE

Ren Groves, Weston Super Mare — some decisions were a puzzle but they balanced out.

BOOKED: Steve Williams and Ian Bishop for a late tackle and retaliation; James and Larry for a foul on Trevor Morley.

STARS: Darren McDonough for a foul on Trevor Morley.

ENTERTAINMENT: A typical cup tie said Jim Ryan — very tough, pretty quick and in the end Town fans happy to see some measure of justice done with Kingsley Black's equaliser.

CHANGE

The crucial change was made by Mr. Ryan ten minutes into the second half. He pulled off Farrell and sent on Ian Dowie, and his aerial power was an immediate problem for a defence which had won everything in the air until then.

I thought they were probably fed a little too much which was to their liking when Farrell was on.

The best thing about the Town's second half work was that they stuck to their game with some determination, even if Williams was rarely allowed to flourish in a cup-tie atmosphere.

A lot of the football was at high speed, too hectic to be effective, but it was a measured response which brought the Town level.

ANGLE

Williams curled in the free kick. John Dreyer headed it on towards the far post, and Black shot his seventh goal of the season from a sharp angle.

Dowie looked like getting the winner when Pembroke sent Black clear for a good cross, but the header was too high.

Preece limped out with a strained hamstring with four minutes to go and sub Jason Rees was the match-saver in the final minute.

West Ham looked the better attacking side for the last five minutes, and Chamberlain had to be sure and sharp to save from Morley.

STRETCH

And the last goal-mouth action almost gave McAvennie the winner.

The Town failed to deal with a corner and the West Ham sub beat Chamberlain, only for Rees to stretch his 65-inch body and head off the line.

On the run of play the Town should have won, but they came of how close they were to losing Mr. Ryan could afford to smile and settle for the second bite.



● HEADS UP: John Dreyer sets a skipper's example backing up a Town attack.

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'Result was fair to both teams'

Managers' viewpoints

"They also defended very well. They came to battle through a cup-tie."

"But we are happy with the draw, and I think the result was just about right."

TYPICAL

Mr. Ryan said he and his players knew that the Zenith Cup game bore no relevance to the FA Cup match.

"This was exactly what we expected — a very hard, typical cup-tie."

"Most of the first half was played in West Ham's half of the field. In the end it was a danger when that happens that you will be caught on the break. And West Ham have good counter-attacking players."

WORRIED

"You get worried when it takes so long to get an equaliser, but the team has to keep at it, and the equaliser."

"I don't complain too much about the result. It's the last few minutes please contain your local newspapers ring us on LUTON 411622."

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