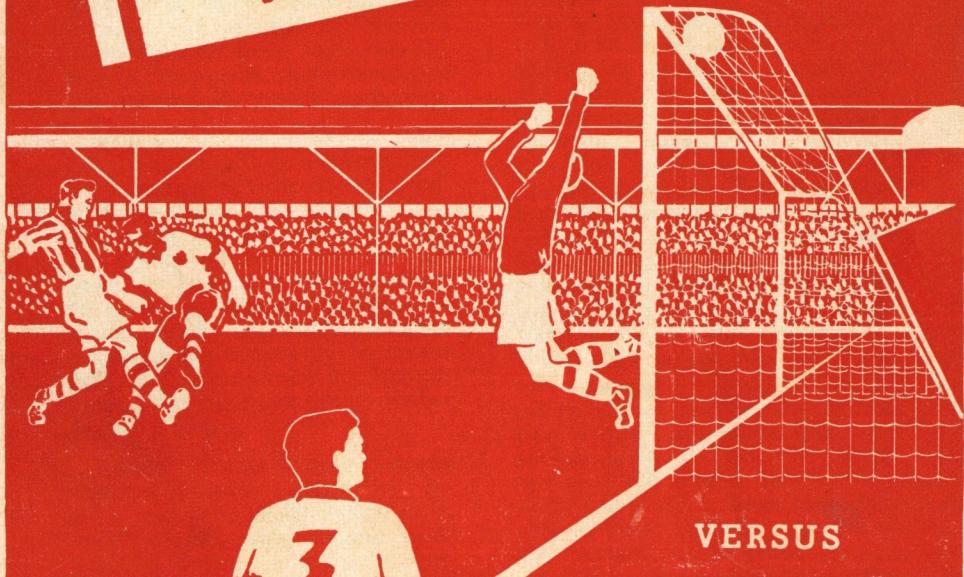


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Manager : Frank Taylor
Secretary : W. C. Williams

Telegrams: "Football, Stoke-on-Trent."

Saturday, 26th September, 1953

Kick-off 3-15 p.m.

Spotlight

IT is not untimely, now that Stoke City have completed their programme of early-season mid-week matches and proceed to "normal business," to take stock of the team's record and performances in the opening six weeks' campaign.

In these six testing weeks Stoke have challenged a representative cross section of their Second Division opponents. The pattern which has so far emerged gives no cause for undue optimism on the one hand, or pessimism on the other. It presents Stoke as an average team; quite unpredictable from match-to-match, and by no means models of soccer consistency, except, perhaps, in their mounting number of drawn games.

Eleven points from eleven matches is obviously not the progress rate to place Stoke in a healthy, challenging League position. A solitary home and away win is also not good going by any reckoning, while our goal record of 18 against 21 makes very sombre reading.

A decisive pulling-up of the Stoke City socks is clearly indicated, especially so far as home match results are concerned. This process, it is to be hoped, will be aided and abetted by the signing of inside left John King, of Crewe Alexandra. By securing his transfer, Stoke's Directors have given practical proof of their aim to build up playing resources whenever and from wherever that is possible.

I am told officially that this new Stoke policy will be applied to strengthening other team positions, and that the centre forward requirement remains a No. 1 priority.

On more recent showings, however, it cannot be said that Stoke are being sold short by their attack. Goal-scoring has advanced very satisfactorily. With this better measure, unhappily, has come a nullifying goals' leakage through a City defence, so often regarded as the mainstay of the team.

What is now needed is for attack and defence to touch top note harmony together.

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Our Opponents

Luton Town, whom we welcome this afternoon, are a club with a long and eventful football history.

They were the first professional club to be formed in the South of England—in the year 1891. In 1894 they were foundation members of the Southern League, and in 1897 they were elected to the Football League in Division II.

In 1900 Luton returned to the Southern League, remaining there until 1920, when they joined the newly-formed League Three (South). In 1936-37 "The Hatters" won promotion to the Second Division.

A proud Luton record is that of the feat of Joe Payne in scoring ten goals against Bristol Rovers in 1936.

Pen pictures of the Luton players are appended:—

R. Baynham (goalkeeper).—Signed from Worcester City in November, 1951. Gained a

regular place in the League side mid-way through last season.

S. Dunne (right back).—Born Wicklow, Eire. Secured from Shelbourne in May, 1950. Gained two Eire caps last season.

T. Aherne (left back).—Signed from Belfast Celtic in March, 1949. Has played for his country, Eire, in every International in the past three seasons.

W. Shanks (right half).—Born in Malta. In his seventh season with the Club. Was signed as an outside right but was successfully converted to a wing half. A tireless worker.

R. Morton (centre half).—A local boy who signed professional forms in February, 1946. Was freely tipped for International honours last season through his brilliant displays at right half. Has taken over the centre half berth, through injury to Owen the regular centre half.

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C. Watkins (left half).—Came to Luton from Glasgow Rangers in 1948. Played with success at inside forward for a large part of last season, but is now back to his best position at half back. Is a qualified physiotherapist.

R. Davies (outside right).—A native of South Africa. Came to this country to try his luck with Clyde, from whom he was signed by Luton in May, 1951.

G. Cummins (inside right).—Another Irishman. Secured by the Town during the close season at a five-figure fee, from Everton. A brilliant ball player and big things are expected of him.

J. Scott (centre forward).—Demobbed from the Royal Air Force late last season. Has recently played with great success at centre forward. The Club consider they did a good stroke of business when he was signed from Spennymoor United three seasons ago.

J. Pye (centre forward).—Came to prominence with Notts. County before being transferred to Wolves. Whilst with them he was capped for England v. Belgium in 1945-6 and v. Eire in 1950. Had a lot to do with the Town's promotion bid last year, when he equalled the Club's goal-scoring record.

J. Downie (inside left).—Secured from Manchester United for a large fee during the close season. A brilliant ball player who also knows the way to goal, having scored seven of the 16 goals scored this season.

A. Mitchell (outside left).—Former Stoke City player. Secured from Northampton Town two seasons ago, during which time he has never failed to score from the penalty spot. A strong raider with a powerful shot with either foot.

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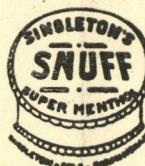
MARTIN (6)

MALKIN (7) BOWYER (8)

FINNEY (9)

KING (10) OSCROFT (11)

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SECOND DIVISION

FIXTURE LISTS 1953-54

CENTRAL LEAGUE

Date	Club	Goals	
		F	A
Aug. 19	Brentford	H	1 1
," 22	Fulham	A	1 0
," 24	Derby County	H	2 2
," 29	West Ham United	H	1 1
Sep. 2	Derby County	A	1 1
," 5	Leeds United	A	1 1
," 7	Leicester City	A	0 4
," 12	Birmingham City	H	3 2
," 14	Leicester City	H	2 2
," 19	Nottingham Forest	A	4 5
," 21	Rotherham United	A	2 2
," 26	Luton Town	H	
Oct. 3	Plymouth Argyle	A	
," 10	Blackburn Rovers	H	
," 17	Doncaster Rovers	A	
," 24	Bury	H	
," 31	Oldham Athletic	A	
Nov. 7	Everton	H	
," 14	Hull City	A	
," 21	(1) Notts. County	H	
," 28	Lincoln City	A	
Dec. 5	Bristol Rovers	H	
," 12	(2) Brentford	A	
," 19	Fulham	H	
," 26	Swansea Town	A	
," 28	Swansea Town	H	
Jan. 2	West Ham United	A	
," 9	(3)	H	
," 16	Leeds United	H	
," 23	Birmingham City	A	
," 30	(4)		
Feb. 6	Nottingham Forest	H	
," 13	Luton Town	A	
," 20	(5) Plymouth Argyle	H	
," 27	Blackburn Rovers	A	
Mar. 6	Doncaster Rovers	H	
," 13	(6) Bury	A	
," 20	Oldham Athletic	H	
," 27	Notts. County	A	
April 3	Lincoln City	H	
," 10	Everton	A	
," 17	Hull City	H	
," 19	Rotherham United	H	
," 24	Bristol Rovers	A	

Date	Club	Goals	
		F	A
Aug. 22	Leeds United	H	0 3
," 26	Sheffield Wednesday	A	1 1
," 29	West Bromwich Albion	A	0 5
," 31	Sheffield Wednesday	H	2 0
Sept. 5	Liverpool	H	1 4
," 7	Chesterfield	H	0 2
," 12	Newcastle United	A	1 3
," 14	Chesterfield	A	0 2
," 19	Manchester United	H	3 2
," 26	Bolton Wanderers	A	
," 28	Preston North End	H	
Oct. 3	Derby County	H	
," 10	Blackburn Rovers	A	
," 17	Blackpool	H	
," 24	Barnsley	A	
," 31	Sheffield United	H	
Nov. 7	Huddersfield Town	A	
," 14	Aston Villa	H	
," 21	Everton	A	
," 28	Wolverhampton W.	H	
Dec. 5	Manchester City	A	
," 12	Bury	H	
," 19	Leeds United	A	
," 25	Burnley	H	
," 26	Burnley	A	
Jan. 2	West Bromwich Albion	H	
," 9			
," 16	Liverpool	A	
," 23	Newcastle United	H	
," 30			
Feb. 6	Manchester United	A	
," 13	Bolton Wanderers	H	
," 20	Derby County	A	
," 27	Blackburn Rovers	H	
Mar. 6	Blackpool	A	
," 13	Barnsley	H	
," 20	Sheffield United	A	
," 27	Huddersfield Town	H	
April 3	Aston Villa	A	
," 10	Everton	H	
," 17	Wolverhampton W.	A	
," 19	Preston North End	A	
," 24	Manchester City	H	
May 1	Bury	A	

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