

There's only one decent Lester... (But it's sure better than having none!)

BY ALAN FISHER

Right from our stuttering start to the season the lack of a creative force able to link midfield and attack has been apparent. Many people held on desperately to the hope that Jack Lester would provide this spark on his return from injury. Indeed, the signs were good when he returned in goal-scoring form for the reserves – and his recuperation was used as another excuse to be over-critical of boss Megson, who had the crazy idea of insisting that Jack actually be ready before making his first team comeback.

Now, of course, Jack is back and in four short games he's won a penalty, scored two, got a goal from open play and done a lot in between. Even the most wildly optimistic people who thought Jack would solve all our woes couldn't have written a better script. Okay, perhaps he'd have got two goals at Swansea and scored the winner against Blackpool, but after the Barnsley debacle, it is amazing to have taken eight points from a possible 12. The fact that we felt disappointed to have dropped four says a lot about our dramatic turnaround.

Lester has undoubtedly been the catalyst of this change of fortune – a Jack-inspired scrappy win versus Rotherham must have infused both Lester and the squad with confidence. This confidence magnified versus Bristol City, who, even after taking the lead, didn't look able to contain a rampant Forest.

We could have won that game by a lot more than three goals to one. The Reds were passing well and looked confident and like they were enjoying themselves – Lester's confidence, creativity and hard work was influencing his colleagues, particularly Johnson and Commons, and we looked like a team that was enjoyable to watch for the first time in ages.

So what is it about Lester? Well, he's hard-working, with a bit of pace and skill, and isn't scared to run at defenders in the box. An honest player who the fans appreciate; indeed, after the shameful scenes after the Barnsley game, it seems that Jack has also helped bring out the best in the Forest fans who've been solidly behind the side since he inspired our comeback.

Of course, honest he may be, but let's not forget it was his *third* attempt at winning a

penalty against Rotherham before he got one! He also has an eye for taking advantage of situations as they occur. But this is by no means a criticism; we need that kind of streetwise knack to enhance our luck in this league.

The problem we have now is making sure the rest of the squad continue to improve – we can't pin all our hopes on one player, especially a player who we know is prone to injury or loss of form.

Of course, so awaited was the return of Jack that it buoyed the fans just knowing he was there; the atmosphere was better and the crowd were behind the team – perhaps that, rather than the presence of the number 14, was what gave our squad a little more confidence to play a little

better, to try to pass it on the floor a bit more. Maybe we have more of an impact than we give ourselves credit – and

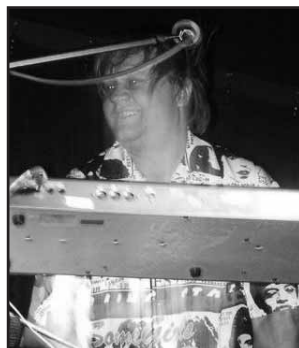
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indeed, perhaps sometimes our collective behaviour has a bad effect too. It's worth bearing in mind before unleashing a tirade of boos or abuse after a bad performance.

Reds get Googled



#3 Wes Morgan



Reds get Googlism ed

Wes Morgan is working on a container

Wes Morgan is Haiti coordinator for NDI

Wes Morgan is a local pastor and church consultant who has helped churches envision their future and then find ways to bring that vision to life

Wes Morgan is an engineer with more than 15 years' experience in public networks