

CUT IT OUT!



A PENKNIFE LIKE THIS WAS THROWN INTO THE SOUTHEND GOALMOUTH.

67/68

IT MUST have been gratifying for all concerned with Luton Town Football Club when the Town beat Southend 3-1 last night before 13,332 spectators — their best gate for a long, long time.

What was far from gratifying was the act of the lunatic who threw an open penknife into the Southend goalmouth as Luton scored their second goal.

The Evening Post speaks for all connected with the club when we tell louts who can even think of throwing knives at

players to stay away from Kenilworth Road.

Heaven knows, there is enough violence without bringing it into the football scene in Luton.

One of the most exciting features of any League match is the atmosphere — the cheers and counter-cheers. Players thrive on noise. Silence means apathy. But violence, quite unprovoked in this case, means one step nearer Continental grounds, where a huge steel mesh separates the crowd from the players.

In his very first column in the Evening Post, Luton manager Allan Brown wrote: "The Luton fans are among the best behaved in the country. . . by and large Luton crowds have a very good reputation. The trend towards violence on other grounds really disturbs me. When toilet rolls are substituted by darts, tin cans and bottles it beomes really frightening."

The vast majority of Luton fans will, we know, do all they can to stamp out this most vicious form of football

vandalism, whether it is perpetrated by a Town 'supporter' or a visitor.

The younger element in the Luton crowd have picked up some good gimmicks from other grounds in the country; gimmicks like the chants and songs that were born at Anfield Road, Liverpool, and Old Trafford, Manchester. Good, clean fun it is, too.

Let's leave it at that.

Let's leave the knife-throwing to professionals. . . in circuses.

FIGHTING TOWN TRIUMPH

LUTON TOWN 3
SOUTHEND 1

BY ROGER DUCKWORTH

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Aldershot	7	5	2	0	15	3	12
Crewe	8	5	2	1	19	9	12
Southend	8	5	2	1	14	8	12
Chesterfield	8	4	3	1	13	7	11
LUTON T.	8	4	3	1	13	9	11
Halifax	8	3	4	1	7	4	10
Newport	8	3	4	1	13	9	10

LUTON TOWN last night became the first side to beat Southend United in the Fourth Division this season. Luton's win was sweet revenge for their 3-0 reverse at Southend earlier this month — their only defeat of the season.

Before their biggest crowd for two years — 13,332 — Luton played hard-running, quick-tackling Southend at their own game. As a result it was an extremely energetic, rugged display by both sides which, if lacking in pure football, gave the fans plenty to shout about.

Earlier in the day Luton signed £11,000 Ian Buxton from Derby and he went straight into the side at inside-right. By the end Buxton, who looks a complete footballer, can be forgiven if he was baffled by the pace and changing direction of the game.

It completely lacked pattern, and each side was quick out of defence and fast into the attack.

To say that Buxton was thrown in at the deep end is

putting it mildly. Southend will, I imagine, be the best side Luton meet in the League this season, and it is easy to see why they were second in the table before last night's game.

Same pattern

The seashiders are fast and accomplished as well as diligent. They played to exactly the same pattern as they did at Roots Hall, with their mobile forwards inter-changing and making good use of two fine wingers — Jackie Ferguson and John McKinven.

Every credit must be given to Luton full-backs Tom Hare and Fred Jardine, who had to pull all the stops out in the first-half to shackle these two. Jardine received an ankle injury and was replaced by Billy McDermott after half-time. McDermott, too, had his hands full and worked hard — but he sometimes made more work for himself by some poor passing.

Man of the match was Luton's John Moore. Time after time he coolly averted the danger and then in the 22nd minute showed some clever anticipation when he followed up Rioch's hard free-kick to score as the goalkeeper fumbled Rioch's hard shot.

Five minutes earlier Buxton warmed himself to the Luton hearts when he netted in fine style, only to be given offside. He often showed his obvious class and was usually in the right place at the right time.

The speed of the game is reflected by the fact that three minutes later Southend also had the ball in the net. But they too were ruled offside. A minute afterwards Rioch broke

through in one of his fast, raking runs and was tripped by May. It was from the free-kick that Moore scored.

Luton survived a lot of pressure to nurse their narrow half-time lead.

Always ready to shoot, Luton were quick to spot Roberts's weakness in failing to hold the hard ones. Dougan and Allen both went close before the break and afterwards Rioch was only inches wide from a neat Allen pass.

It was always a tough game. Early in the second-half Southend's Ashworth was booked by the referee after appearing to punch Rioch.

It was as if the pitch was grasped by a giant pair of hands and tilted from end to end, so fast did play switch from goalmouth to goalmouth. Ferguson for Southend and Allen and McDermott for Luton all had hard luck. Luton were unable to beat Southend's offside trap consistently and were whistled up countless times.

In the 70th minute Ferguson headed Southen on to terms with a well-deserved goal. It followed a disputed throw-in and an accurate cross from the left wing.

But the game was still like a pendulum, and two minutes later skipper Terry Branston was rewarded for his hard work when he headed a goal out of a terrific goalmouth skirmish following a Whittaker corner.

It was immediately after this that the disgusting penknife incident occurred. Before the players kicked off again the referee was called over to the

Southend goal by Roberts, and handed a knife.

He took it to the touchline where he spoke to Luton manager Allan Brown, and then had a warning broadcast to the effect that he would abandon the game if anything else was thrown.

Both goals continued to have narrow scrapes until French made certain of thigs for Luton in the 80th minute. Dougan initiated the move and Rioch ducked intelligently under an Allen pass, sending the defence the wrong way. French took the ball in his stride and thumped it past Roberts.

Both Dougan and Branston put in a tremendous amount of work in defence while Bruce Rioch was the star of the forward line.

He got plenty of support from Allen and Buxton, who was given a tremendous welcome by Luton's goal-hungry fans. Both Luton wingers had a quiet night though both showed well in patches — French with his goal and Whittaker with several good crosses on the run, one of which shaved the top of the crossbar.

In goal Tony Read played his usual steady game, though he committed himself once or twice. He also made some fine saves, and was again strong in the air.

LUTON: Read; Hare, Jardine (McDermott); Dougan, Branston, Moore; French; Buxton, Allen, Rioch, Whittaker.
SOUTHEND: Roberts; Bentley, Birks; Ashworth, May, Stevenson; Ferguson, Chisnall (Beasley), Smillie, McMillan, McKinven.
ATTENDANCE 13,332.
Referee: N. C. Burtenshaw (Gr Yarmouth)



Ian Buxton, Luton's new signing from Derby made a satisfactory debut. He did not score — but this was a near thing. The goalkeeper was beaten, but the referee ruled "offside."