

Division Three, here we come!

By ROGER DUCKWORTH

HALIFAX 0 LUTON TOWN 1

LUTON clinched the Fourth Division championship with a fine 1-0 win at Halifax this afternoon.

Before the match, Halifax chairman Mr Alan Maden asked Luton's manager Allan Brown if the Hatters would do a lap of honour if they won. Allan's answer: "Let's win it first."

With left winger Ray Whittaker down with tonsillitis, Luton switched Graham French across to the left and brought in Mickey Brown on the right.

Halifax made several changes, with forward Wallace moving to full back and Morris replacing Ryden at centre forward and Ryden going to inside left.

Halifax began with a raid on the right, but first Jardine and then Rioch broke up Flower's threat.

Rioch forced some unexpected work work out of goalkeeper Read when he tried a long back pass which was well wide and which Read had to race along the by-line to catch.

Chance

Read's clearance was a good one from which Buxton chased through and executed a neat back heel, but it was just wide of Allen, and Luton's brief chance was gone.

Buxton's cross from the right was just too high for Allen, but French, cutting in from the left, might have made better use of his chance as he caught the ball on the first bounce.

Luton followed up with another promising raid, and this time it was Rioch who sold a beautiful dummy to Wallace before crossing hard with his left foot. Allen got his head to it but lacked power and Halifax cleared.

The Luton forwards were running impressively, and

TEAMS

HALIFAX: Smith (A); Russell, Wallace; Pickering, Holt, Hampton; Flower, Massie, Morris, Ryden, McCarthy. Sub: Woller.

LUTON: Read; Dougan, Jardine; Slough, Branston, Moore; Brown, Buxton, Allen, Rioch, French. Sub: McDerment.

Referee: Mr R. Capey (Crewe).

Attendance 5,091

GOAL

RIOCH (Luton) 82 mins

VERDICT

THAT Luton did not bother to do their promised lap of honour is purely and simply because by the time the Luton team had retired to the dressing room most of the small crowd had drifted away home.

But Luton's joy was by no means lessened because they missed their moment of glory. Manager Allan Brown said: "This is a triumph for hard work and team spirit."

The rest of today will soon be forgotten. There was not a lot to gladden the hearts of soccer fans who pay their money to see attacking soccer.

there was a neat move between Allen, Buxton and French which broke down when French fouled Pickering in the goalmouth.

Following a couple of free kicks on the right Micky Brown was unlucky when his, sharp centre was plucked off the goal line by Smith, who had moved too far out, leaving an inviting gap which Brown was quick to spot.

Over bar

Less than a minute later Rioch was not so accurate when he collected a pass from Brown and hit it first time high over the cross bar on to the speedway track surrounding the pitch.

A long free kick from the centre by Branston was a fraction too high for Allen.

A quick pass by Ryden through the defensive wall was too ambitious for Flower, who was caught yards offside.

Ryden found himself in a good position, but was smartly tackled by Slough, who was fouled by the inside left before he could clear.

In one of the best moves of the match so far, Flower cut through on the outside of Jardine, beat him neatly, and flashed the ball across the face of the goal. Wallace was only inches out with his jump, and Ryden, who was racing in, was just unable to get his head to the centre.

Close

Rioch went close in the 25th minute with a free kick from well outside the box following a foul on Allen.

After a short run on the right Micky Brown was pulled back by Russell, and after Brown's chipped free kick had been half cleared Rioch went very close with a first-time shot.

One of the best shots of the first half came on the half hour when Flower cut inside, found himself with plenty of room, took the ball on, and tried a

EIGHTY-TWO minutes of defensive deadlock ended when Rioch hammered a short free kick from French into the net from 20 yards.

Until then there had been very little in it, and Luton at one time looked as if they were going to be satisfied with one point that would ensure promotion.

Played under a hazy sun, the Luton players released all their tension in a war dance of delight when Rioch gave them that long-awaited lead.

For Luton, Allen had a brief chance, but his swivelled shot was put round for a corner.

hard left foot shot which was too straight to cause Read much trouble.

A Dougan free kick into the goalmouth was headed by Buxton but it lacked power and Smith caught it easily.

A chance fell to Allen in front of goal, and his shot on the turn was turned round for a corner, which Branston headed wide.

HT: Halifax 0 Luton 0

Halifax should have gone ahead soon after the interval when Flower, their first-half danger man, had a terrific shot palmed down by Read, and Jardine had to act quickly to clear for a corner.

It was Flower again who started off a dangerous move for Halifax, beating two men in mid-field. He put Morris away, but the centre forward, under the shadow of Branston, overran the ball.

Luton appeared to be settling for the one point for promotion, but Dougan showed great determination in racing back to rob McCarthy.

Brown was tripped by Russell on his way to goal, and a strong free kick by Rioch was just wide of the post.

Slough livened the somewhat slow-moving proceedings when he darted through the middle and tried a shot, but it was straight at Smith.

Best move

A bad pass by French was intercepted by Morris, but Ryden, whom he put away on the right, showed little spark at the Bore-Warner from a workmate's overalls in a

Seven cigarettes cost 39-year-old Leslie Henrik a £25 fine at Luton court yesterday.

Hungarian-born Henrik, of Sunridge Avenue, Luton, is charged with taking the cigarettes from a workmate's overalls in a

"I just can't remember anything after going to the Labour Club until I woke up in hospital. I'll pay for the damage though," he said.

In a statement, Henrik said that he had been drinking at the Broadway Hotel and the Labour Club.