

RIOCH CORKER OPENS BUBBLY

THAT LONG LEAD in points set up by Luton at the top of Division 4 is manager Allan Brown's answer to critics of his no-risks policy that dulled this champagne victory.

Bruce Rioch, Luton's leading scorer, hit almost as many shots as the rest of both sides' forwards put together.

But Rioch's free-kick winner has won Luton promotion for the first time since their slide from the First Division.

Allan Brown passed round the champagne on the home-ward trip. But with Halifax storming back after the break, it had looked as though the bottle would remain corked.

But Luton were always relaxed and cool under pressure and Branston and Moore were outstanding in defence.

Halifax, always good in mid-field, were short of power up front.

Striker Morris, in only his second full game for Halifax, was easily kept quiet.

Alan Ball Senior, the Halifax manager, will have to find more skill for his match plans.

Ball's orders for a defensive first half were no help in getting a little more sparkle into the game.

An angled shot from Allen was Luton's only close-range threat in the first half. They were forced to shoot from long range against Halifax's tightly knit defence.

Halifax opened up in the second-half and within seconds Read had to palm away a fierce shot from Flower.

Halifax	0
Luton	1

The Luton defence had some worrying moments but the Halifax moves mostly broke down through the final pass going astray.

Luton found it easy to make quick breaks from defence. It was from one of them that French was brought down 20 yards out by Massie.

French tapped the free-kick sideways to Rioch, whose shot was still rising as it hit the back of the net.

HALIFAX: Smith 6; Russell 6, Pickering 6, Holt 6, *HAMPTON 7; Wallace 5, Massie 6, Ryden 5; Flower 6, Morris 6, McCarthy 6.

LUTON TOWN: Read 6; Dougan 6, Slough 5, Branston 7, Jardine 6; Moore 7, Brown 6; Buxton 7, Allen 6, *RIOCH 8, French 6.

Referee: R. Capay (Grews) 6.