

Luton's promotion chances hit

Blackburn 1, Luton 0:

By JIM BEECROFT

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LUTON, complacent in second place, were shocked by a new-look Blackburn, who thoroughly deserved their first home win for nearly three months.

It was a game that gave Rovers fresh hope of a dramatic escape from their desperate plight, and raised doubts about Luton's staying power as promotion hunters.

The winner came after seventy-one minutes from Alex Russell, who slammed the ball into the roof of the net from three yards when he rushed in to meet a neat chip from Eamonn Rogers.

Rogers had raced 40 yards to the by-line, harassed all the way by defenders,

before sending over a beautifully-judged ball to give Russell his chance.

It was a fair reward for a fine performance and it would have been rank injustice if Luton's desperate bid for an equaliser in the last quarter of an hour had succeeded.

Allan Hunter cleared off the line and keeper Rogers saved headers from Malcolm MacDonald and Chris Nicholl, plus a shot from Dave Court.

But Rovers held out to inflict Town's first away defeat for four months. MacDonald, the League's leading goal-scorer, and skipper Mike Keen, were both unusually subdued.