

Busby the brilliant

Luton 3, Birmingham 2: By GEORGE CRANFIELD

P"PROMOTION is on", said Luton boss Alec Stock after his young-hopefuls had cut the season's glamour boys, Birmingham, down to size.

Birmingham, with twenty-five points from fourteen matches in an unbeaten run since early December, rocked Luton with two goals inside twenty-two minutes.

But they hit back through two goals from inside right Viv Busby to equalise before half-time.

And left back Alan Slough—"one of my greatest players" said Stock—grabbed a tremendous winner with a terrific thirty-yard free kick three minutes after the break.

Said the now-confident Stock afterwards: "Promotion could have all blown up against Birmingham. When they raced two ahead, I thought we had lost out.

"But my team hit back magnificently. Now we can go up, and we hold the promotion key. It will be decided on our own pitch when we meet front runners Leicester and Cardiff for vital promotion points."

Birmingham's successful run, and their much publicised 16-year-old goal-scoring forward Trevor Francis, brought Luton's best gate of the season—25,172.

But young Francis met his match in solid wing-half John Moore, and it was left to centre forward busy Bob Latchford and Phil Summerill to blast in the goals that had Luton and boss Stock worried.

Then 21-year-old Busby took over.

In the thirty-sixth minute Busby burst past Roger Hynd and Malcolm Page,

and on to a Malcolm Macdonald through pass to crack the ball past the advancing Mike Kelly.

And it was Busby again, stabbing in the equaliser two minutes before the interval, when Birmingham's defenders were caught in a dreadful mix-up from a Jimmy Ryan free-kick.

The killer crunch came when Hynd brought down Macdonald in the forty-eighth minute.

There seemed no bother, and there should have been none, as skipper Mike Keen tapped the ball to Slough way out.

With every Luton player covered, Slough slammed a fierce thirty-yarder, and Kelly could only watch as the winner zoomed far out of his reach into the right hand corner of the net.