

Halom gives the Town an Easter present

THREE points from a possible four over Easter put Luton back into the middle of the Second Division. But they gave their fans a fright against Sheffield on Saturday. They were rescued by a hat-trick in the last 14 minutes by Vic Halom.

Until then Luton had been having a nightmare of a match. They gave away a goal after 12 minutes, and from then on until the 76th minute everything constructive they tried turned sour.

It was almost embarrassing. The more they tried the worse it got.

Skipper Mike Keen tried to ignore the taunts from the crowd as he persevered with endeavouring to play intelligent football.

But he did not have a very good game, and the fans wouldn't let him forget it.

Neither did Viv Busby, and Luton's attack found it hard going, with Anderson looking the liveliest player for most of the match.

It began to look as if Luton would never score. But with about 20 minutes to go they found some composure, and Keen began to construct intelligently from the right touchline.

Engineer

His colleagues twigged what he was doing, and gradually Luton began to prise open the Sheffield defence. With Keen and Court supplying the crosses, Halom, Busby and Anderson began to harrass the inexperienced Trevor Pearson in the Wednesday goal.

Until then Pearson, an engineer borrowed from local football because of injuries to Grummitt and Springett, had pulled off some fine saves.

By ROGER DUCKWORTH

Luton Town 3 Sheffield Wednesday 1

But once Luton's three strikers started to give him a bit of a knocking about, he got the jitters.

Anderson put another ball into the goalmouth after a piece of good football, and Halom harried the keeper into releasing the ball at his feet. He promptly banged it into the top of the net.

Ten minutes later Givens nodded on Court's good corner, and Halom diverted it past Pearson with his head.

And two minutes later Busby opened the Wednesday

defence with the pass of the match, and Halom raced through to belt a tremendous shot past the unfortunate goalkeeper who has let in seven goals in his two performances.

Struggling

Luton had produced some thoughtful football in the first few minutes, but they were shattered in the 12th when John Ryan made a rare mistake in front of goal by trying to dribble clear of the big Joicey instead of passing back to Barber.

The Sheffield centre-forward took the ball off the

fumbling Ryan and banged it past Barber.

From then on Luton were struggling. And they were in further trouble when Alan Slough collected a thigh injury. He tried to carry on, but he received a bloodied and swollen nose in a collision with Sunley, and that persuaded him to retire.

But Don Givens, relegated to substitute, joined in in the 35th minute and had a splendid match.

He was full of fire and enthusiasm, and his work-rate and distribution were of a high order. He was Luton's best player.

Moore and Garner did well at the back, and full-backs Shanks and Ryan came through with credit. Ryan did everything in his

power to wipe out his earlier terrible error.

Court gave a satisfactory performance, and his footwork in the later stages, when Luton needed possession, was good.

In goal Barber gave another competent and confident show, and he is quickly establishing himself as a Town favourite.

Doldrums

Luton's defence let nobody down, but there are still problems in midfield and up front which have to be sorted out.

Had it not been for Halom pulling out all the stops, Luton could still be in the doldrums of the lower positions. It just shows what a few goals can do.

Wednesday manager Derek Dooley praised Luton for their comeback. "Their forwards did well. They realised we had an inexperienced keeper and they went at him. I would have told my players to do exactly the same. Even so, I thought we were the better side over the 90 minutes," he said.

MATCH DETAILS

Luton Town: Barber; John Ryan, Shanks; Moore, Garner, Slough (Given 35 mins); Halom, Court, Anderson, Keen, Busby.

Sheffield Wednesday: Pearson; Rodrigues, Clements; Pugh, Thompson, Todd; Sinclair, Craig, Joicey, Sunley, Sissons. Sub: Burton.

Referee: Mr Kenneth Sweet (Aberdare).

Goals: Joicey (Sheffield, 12 mins).

Halom (Luton, 76 mins).

Halom (Luton, 86 mins).

Halom (Luton, 88 mins).

Attendance: 9,121.

■ Pictured top left, Wednesday goalkeeper Pearson thwarts Viv Busby while (left) Vic Halom finds room for the second of his three goals

