

A GOAL in the 27th minute from John Aston gave Luton a well-deserved win.

Forest were slow hand-clapped by their own fans — and for long periods Luton looked a far superior side.

There was a shock for Luton fans when they got to the City Ground this afternoon. For Town skipper John Ryan was missing from the line-up.

John apparently went down sick yesterday afternoon after manager Harry Haslam had announced an unchanged side.

Don Shanks was grafted into the side for his first senior match of the season. Bobby Thomson, who joined the club during the summer from Birmingham, was made skipper.

Forest also had their problems. Paul Richardson failed a fitness test yesterday and was replaced by Robertson. Barry Lyons was named as substitute.

Considering Forest's good League position and the fact that Luton have been picking up some attractive results, there was a rather small crowd for today's game.

Long shot

Luton went straight onto the offensive, as is their habit this season, and a good run by Jimmy Ryan produced to them a corner in the opening seconds. It was taken by Aston

but Forest scrambled the ball clear.

The Reds hit straight back but McKenzie was offside when Gemmell tried a long shot.

Jim Ryan's good early form continued when he embarked on another 40-yard run and he nearly got away with some trickery in the penalty box but was robbed at the last minute by Cottam as he was about to shoot.

The town continued to go forward and some good work between Busby and Aston ended with Ryan taking a good pass from his opposite winger and testing Barron with a low shot.

Early on Rodney Fern almost got himself into hot water for indicating to a linesman that he needed glasses after an appeal for a corner had been turned down. He escaped with a talking-to.

A through ball from Cottam sent McKenzie through and it took some good defensive work from Faulkner and Shanks to concede a corner, which Anderson cleared.

Then it was Luton's turn again. A good ball from Fern was chased by Busby and he got to it before goalkeeper Barron but then ran the ball out of play.

With both teams playing good attacking football, there was plenty of excitement at both ends and in the 11th

minute Forest nearly went ahead through a McIntosh

MATCH FACTS

NOTTINGHAM FOREST:
Barron; Hindley, Gemmell; Serella, Cottam, Fraser; McIntosh, Lyall, McKenzie, Robertson, O'Neill. Sub: Lyons.

LUTON TOWN: Barber; Shanks, Thomson; Anderson, Faulkner, Garner; Jim Ryan, Fern, Busby, Halom, Aston. Sub: Slough.

Referee: Mr R. Johnson (Lowestoft).

Goalscorer

ASTON (Luton) 27 mins

Attendance: 9,495

shot but Barber made a good diving save.

Then Aston had a terrific drive stopped at the foot of a post by Barron, again following good work by Fern. But Luton won a corner out of it from which Halom headed just wide.

An Anderson-Busby move had the Forest defence in

more trouble and Barron did well to block a fierce shot from Halom, who was given plenty of time in which to operate.

Luton's pressure paid off when they went ahead with a delightful goal. Jimmy Ryan tricked the whole Forest defence with a magnificent swerve and dribble over on the right and put in a good cross. Halom was just beaten in the air but the ball ran down to ASTON, who carefully picked his spot to score with the outside of his left foot just inside the left-hand post.

There was further excitement for the Town fans when Aston sent Busby on a long run but he was stopped at the last moment. Then Fern almost broke through but the ball was cleared before he could shoot after he had pushed it through the legs of Cottam.

Superior

Then Busby went close with a snap header after a header from Halom had been directed towards the goal. Busby's diversion sent the ball just wide but it was a good effort.

For long spells Luton were the far superior side and they continued to attack with relish. A shot from Busby was diverted for a corner from which Halom went close with a header.

But in the 36th minute Robertson nearly put Forest back into the game with a low shot. Fortunately for Luton Barber was wide awake and he turned the effort onto a post before diving upon it.

HT: Nottm Forest 0, Luton 1

A good run by Fern ended with a fine pass to Busby, and the Town centre-forward put the ball into the net only to see an offside flag raised against him.

In the 54th minute, Aston should have put Luton further ahead. He received a good pass from Halom, and although the linesman waved for offside, he was over-ruled by the referee. But Aston's shot was blocked.

Unlucky

Some determined football from Halom, Anderson and Busby ended with Anderson trying an intelligent shot after he had seen that goalkeeper Barron was well off his line. He was unlucky that the shot went over.

The angry mutterings of the Forest fans were obviously unsettling the team and a shot from Lyall lacked power from an unmarked position on the edge of the penalty box. This, of course, was a signal for further abuse.

Barber was twice brought into action halfway through the second half, first to save at the feet of Lyall and then he had to go full length to get behind a powerful shot from full-back Hindley.

Still Luton went forward. Halom hit one over the top following good work by Ryan and Anderson and then Aston brought a good save out of Barron with a solo effort.