

LUTON'S MISERIES ARE GONE AT LAST

LUTON won back their home pride this weekend when they ended a four-and-a-half-month run of misery which had left the fans disillusioned and the players demoralised.

And with next week's fourth round Cup-tie at Newcastle racing towards them, Luton can go north with renewed belief in themselves.

After Saturday's strength-sapping win, I asked coach Roy McCrohan how he honestly rated Luton's chances on Tyneside. "If we go at them like we went at Forest today we can win," he said. "I am certain of that. But it has to be all effort and aggression."

Luton completed their second successive double on Saturday against a team that still had a lot of the First Division written over it. For that's where Forest were last season — and the season before when they came to Kenilworth Road and won 4-3 in another thriller — this time an FA Cup replay.

Luton put this right on Saturday in the most exciting match I have seen this season.

Scored

"Bullet" Butlin was robbed of at least a hat-trick by the brilliance of goalkeeper Jim Barron who made three incredible saves to keep the bewildered centre-forward off the scoresheet.

Butlin had perhaps his best match so far for the Town and his speed and graft showed well. But everyone worked hard and the strain showed on 22 faces at the end.

Every credit must go to the Midlands for their attacking manner. They were as eager

to score as Luton and when you get two sides playing football like that you get entertainment at a high standard.

In fact, winger Martin O'Neill, who wouldn't have been playing if Barry Lyons had been fit, almost scored three times after the Town had gone ahead. And I could see them scoring right to the last minute.

Alan Slough had the distinction of scoring Luton's goal after John Ryan and Aston had scrambled about by a post to put the ball in. It was unselfishness on the part of these two in the end that gave Slough his chance.

The goal came in the 66th minute when it looked as if Barron would be too good for Luton.

Slough had a splendid match, driving forward strongly from midfield but he did not stand out any more than his two colleagues John Ryan and Gordon Hindson, who, I thought, was Luton's best player.

I nominate him because he

By **ROGER DUCKWORTH**
Luton Town 1 Nottingham Forest 0

has been out of the side so much and now he's been given his chance he is grabbing it greedily. Hindson's control at speed and distribution were a treat to watch.

Hindson was pushed closely for the outstanding man award by left-back Thomson. How Luton managed to get this player for nothing I'll never know. He must surely be the best full-back in the Second Division. He turned in another faultless performance on Saturday.

Skills

Moore was also strong in defence, while Garner, who was fast and fearless, found the dangerous Galley a difficult man to mark. Galley is strong and shields the ball well before laying it off intelligently.

Shanks also did well for the Town and his strong running in possession was most valuable.

Barber looked good in goal but his kicking was bad again. In recent weeks he looked to have overcome this problem but it reared its head again on

MATCH DETAILS

LUTON TOWN: Barber; Shanks, Thomson, Slough, Garner, Moore, Jimmy Ryan, John Ryan, Butlin, Hindson, Aston. Sub: Hales.

NOTTINGHAM FOREST: Barron; Hindley, Winfield, Chapman, Serella, Fraser, McIntosh, Robertson, Martin, Galley, O'Neill. Sub: Lyall.

Referee: Mr D. Nippard (Bournemouth).

SLOUGH (Luton) 66 minutes
Attendance: 10,083

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Saturday and is something at which he must work.

Winger Jimmy Ryan was again on song and he showed some delightful on-the-ball skills and was always eager to get in his cross.

So was Aston but the former Manchester United man missed a couple of decent chances through over-anxiety. But he was not isolated in this problem and it ran through the whole side — until Slough scored.

Then the pressure was off and Luton began to use the long ball to good effect. But even when they went clear they still had Barron to beat. And that's why they scored only once.

Offside

Had Luton's goal not come when it did, manager Harry Haslam may well have sent on the much-vaunted Derek Hales, who was sub. But he was right not to when Luton had gone ahead. He did not want to rock the boat at that stage.

The match was excellently

handled by Bournemouth referee Derek Nippard. He contributed to the high level of entertainment by keeping the game going when a man in an offside position was not interfering with play. We could do with more like him.

By scoring, Slough has the distinction of giving Luton its first Evening Post tree in our Plant a Tree in '73 campaign. We have promised to give the town a tree for every goal the Town score at home. Appropriate it should have been against Forest.