

TOWN JINX BEATEN BY SLOUGH'S GOAL

VERDICT

By **ROGER DUCKWORTH**

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

THE jinx on Luton's home record was finally ended after 66 minutes of skilful and thrilling play against Nottingham Forest this afternoon.

And the credit goes to Alan Slough, who took advantage of a terrific mix-up in the Forest goalmouth to shove the ball home.

The goal gave Luton their first home win in a League match since September 16.

With Vic Halom, who was hurt playing for the reserves at Southend on Wednesday, out of the reckoning, Derek Hales came in as substitute.

Former Preston man George Lyall was substitute.

Luton had an early let-off when Shanks was slow to move to a through ball from midfield. The dangerous John Galley took possession, but Garner covered quickly to sort him out.

Even so, Forest came back and it took a couple of good tackles from Moore to clear the danger.

But Luton obviously wanted an early goal and a good cross from Aston was met by the head of Butlin. He was not able to get a lot of power behind it but Barron had to catch it under the bar.

Ideas

The crowd were really behind Luton in the opening minutes and they had more to cheer about when a good ball from Jim Ryan out to Slough on the right produced a fierce cross that Barron had to tip over.

But Forest also had plenty of attacking ideas early on and Barber was forced to make

good saves from Galley and full-back Hindley.

But in the seventh minute Luton should have gone ahead. Barron failed to hold a hard shot from Jim Ryan and Aston raced into the goalmouth to kick the loose ball at the vacant goal. But he decided to take two bites at the cherry and by the time he had taken the second Barron was back to block his shot.

The match quickly developed into an open thriller with much of the skill coming from Luton. Good centres by both Aston and Jim Ryan

caused havoc in the Forest defence and it was good to see a lot of the better moves being started by Hindson in midfield.

But Galley was always looking for a goal at the other end and he fired a good shot over the top.

Skill

With Aston, Slough and Hindson all probing ambitiously the Forest defence had to be at its best. And when Butlin bravely chased a through ball his flick beat the goalkeeper but trickled wide.

An exciting run by O'Neill from the halfway line to the



Butlin chases for the ball

penalty box was ended by a good clearance from Moore. Then John Ryan sent Hindson away and another good cross from Jim Ryan was headed narrowly past his own goal by Forest full-back Hindley.

The match was full of skill and Luton went close again when Moore got up well to a Hindson free kick and the ball was scuttled away for another corner.

Forest full-back Winfield was hurt when he was tackled by Shanks and appeared to be in considerable pain as he received treatment. But the referee indicated that if he wanted any more attention he

should have it off the field. Winfield was soon back in action.

The Nottingham side continued to show aggression and Galley beat Barber's dive to get the ball across the face of the goal but there was nobody there to help it along.

Pressure

More good work by Hindson and Butlin in the air produced a fleeting chance for Jim Ryan and his short-range shot was tipped over the top. Aston took the right-wing corner and Hindson had a header kicked off the line by Fraser.

This gave Luton yet another corner, again taken by Aston. But this time Butlin was wide with his header under pressure.

A lovely Luton move involving Aston, John Ryan, Slough and Jimmy Ryan ended when Butlin fouled Serella as he went up for the header in the goalmouth.

All Luton needed was a bit more bite in front of goal.

McIntosh made a meal out of being brought down from behind by John Ryan. Fraser's free kick whipped across the front of the goal and Barber was right to moan that his goal did not have the right amount of quick cover.

Clever footwork by Hindson and Butlin sent the Luton centre-forward clear but he hurried his shot from about 18 yards and it went wide.

HT: Luton 0 Nottm Forest 0



Follow that ball. Barry Butlin (left) looks determined to catch it as Luton push forward against Forest this afternoon. John Aston is up in support

A FIVE-STAR thriller in driving sleet eventually brought Luton their first home win in the league for four and a half months.

It was worth waiting for. In spite of the shortage of goals both sides played exciting, open football and Luton were only just about that one goal better than Forest.

The all-important goal came in the 66th minute from Alan Slough. But all afternoon both sides had threatened goals galore.

Even after Luton had gone ahead Forest went close three times and the result was in doubt right until the end.

Luton's man of the match was midfielder Gordon Hindson, who played perhaps his best match for the Town. But there were 21 others who were only a shade behind him in both ability and effort.

Right from the start both teams played their football at top speed which was well appreciated by the crowd. During the week Luton manager Harry Haslam said that Luton must still be regarded as promotion hopes.

If they continue to play like this they are certainly still in with a chance.

Nottingham goalkeeper Barron made two saves from Butlin that were out of this world. He certainly did not deserve to be on the losing side.

In Luton's defence, Thomson had an outstanding match. But so did his colleagues and in midfield John Ryan had another good game following his revival at Huddersfield last week.

Luton's win gives a great start to the Evening Post Plant a Tree campaign, in which we'll be planting a tree for every home goal they score.