

A LONG WAY TO GO YET, YOU HATTERS

73/74



THERE IS still a lot of hard work to be done. That must have been the New Year's Day message spelled out by Luton manager Harry Haslam in yesterday's after-match inquest.

For although 1974 seems to hold so much promise for the high-flying Hatters, it couldn't have got off to a worse start.

Defeat at Carlisle led to another of Luton's now familiar after-match "talk-ins". And it was 75 minutes before the dispirited players trooped from the dressing room fully realising that they are still a long way away from a place in Division One.

"We talked about the match in general. I like to do it while it's still fresh in everyone's mind," said Mr Haslam when he eventually emerged.

With only two goals scored in their last four outings, it seems obvious that Luton's problems lie up front.

Once again there could be few complaints about their entertainment value. In the first half they gave as good as they got.

Best effort

With Alan West, Peter Anderson and Jim Ryan moving well in midfield there was a time when Luton threatened to dominate the game. But their slick soccer inevitably broke down in the Carlisle penalty area.

Luton's best effort of the half came in the 15th minute when full-back Don Shanks hit a 25-yard drive which dipped fiercely and goalkeeper Allan Ross had to move smartly to tip over the bar.

United's manager Alan Ashman admitted: "We were

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Carlisle United 2 Luton Town 0

pleased to go in at half-time with the scoresheet still blank. Luton had given us some anxious moments and it gave us a chance to sort ourselves out."

It was a different story in the second half. For although Luton continued to look the more skilful, the hard-grafting Carlisle side took command. With a stiff breeze at their backs they had John Faulkner and company under constant pressure from the restart.

Bobby Owen had the ball in the net but was ruled offside, then minutes later he missed a golden chance when he blasted wide from six yards.

The writing was on the wall for Luton and in the 54th minute Carlisle went in front. A Dennis Martin corner skidded off the head of centre-half Bill Green and went into the net off the fist of keeper Graham Horn.

Luton tried to fight back. Anderson, the one player who looked likely to find a way through the home defence, got in a header for which Ross was well-positioned to save.

But Luton were soon in more trouble and in the 70th minute Martin made it 2-0. A jinxing run by Joe Laidlaw had the Luton defence in all

sorts of trouble and his cross was headed against the foot of the post by Martin. The ball rebounded to the winger who scored.

Trouble

With striker Barry Butlin virtually marked out of the game there seemed little likelihood of Luton coming back. Jimmy Husband, although proving he had the ability to get past his man, all too often tended to run into trouble.

In a final effort to salvage something of the match, Haslam replaced John Aston with John Ryan and pushed Anderson into the front line. It was to no avail.

Apart from a couple of John Ryan shots, both deal with capably by Ross, Luton spent the rest of the match confined in their own territory.

Carlisle gained ample revenge for their 6-1 thrashing at Kenilworth Road earlier this season. Few could deny them the points. On yesterday's performance the Cumbrrians looked a good outside bet for promotion.

DIVISION 2

The top half

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Middlesbro	24	15	8	1	34	14	38
Orient	25	12	9	4	41	23	33
Luton	24	12	6	6	35	30	30
Carlisle	24	12	5	7	35	26	29
Nottm For	24	9	10	5	32	19	28
Blackpool	25	10	8	7	34	25	28
WBA	25	10	8	7	28	24	28
Notts County	24	10	7	7	37	36	27
Hull	25	7	11	7	25	26	25
Portsmouth	23	10	5	8	31	35	25
Fulham	24	8	8	8	20	23	24

CARLISLE'S GOALS

■ Above: Dennis Martin shoots wide of Graham Horn to score Carlisle's second goal

Carlisle: Ross; Winstanley, Gorman; O'Neill, Green, Tiler; Martin, Train, Owen, Clarke, Laidlaw. Sub: Balderstone.

Luton: Horn; Shanks, Thomson; Anderson, Faulkner, Garner; Jim Ryan, Husband, Butlin, West, Aston (John Ryan, 76 mins).