

CHAMPIONS TOO GOOD FOR LUTON

73/74
By **BILL MEREDITH**

Luton 0, Middlesbrough 1

JACK CHARLTON munched a boardroom ham sandwich after the match that clinched the Second Division championship for Middlesbrough: "It tastes good," he said.

Naturally, everything tastes good for Charlton these days. In his first season as a manager, he has steered Boro back to the First Division for the first time in 20 years.

In 36 League games they have lost only twice (the first home game of the season against Fulham and 5-1 at Nottingham Forest a few weeks ago). Since that Forest setback, they have taken 17 points from nine games and streaked to a massive 15-point lead at the top of the table.

Trailing behind, like L'Escargot trying to catch Red Rum, are Luton. They hardly made a race of it on Saturday as Middlesbrough dictated the first-half, relaxed in the second and allowed Luton the freedom of midfield—and no more.

West did his best to provide Luton with a hint of subtlety, and Anderson toiled long and hard in midfield, but, after Mills had turned sharply to shoot 'Boro ahead in the 76th minute, there was little resistance from Luton.

At the final whistle, Jack Charlton embraced his players, who then proceeded to run a lap of honour. Then the Middlesbrough manager grabbed that ham sandwich and made for the station, where he caught the Leaguelineer back home with some 550 fans. The champagne, like the sandwich, tasted good.

Luton.—Horn; John Ryan, Thomson, Anderson, Faulkner, Garner, Jimmy Ryan, Husband, Butlin, West, Aston.

Middlesbrough. — Platt; Craggs, Cochrane, Souness, Boam, Maddren, Murdoch, Mills, Hickton, Foggon, Armstrong.