

FUTCHER'S FANCY

By C. A. COUGHLIN

Luton 1, Newcastle 0

LUTON moved off the bottom of the table with a spirited rally to beat Newcastle with a goal by 18-year-old Ron Futcher. The Kenilworth Road fans were delirious at the victory which gives the Hatters 10 points from a possible 14.

This is not relegation form and nor was their performance against the stylish Tynesiders. If they can sustain it they must surely fight clear of the nightmarish prospect of returning to Division Two after only one season in the top flight.

That Luton realise the enormous task before them was obvious by their determined fight-back in a rousing game that gave the crowd excellent value for their money.

Newcastle were captained by former Luton favourite Macdonald who sportingly—in gladiator style—acknowledged the acclaim he received as he led the Magpies onto the heavily-sanded pitch.

Macdonald was soon prominent in two early Newcastle raids, the first being luckily wrecked by the other Futcher, twin Paul, on the 18 yard line. Supermac and Burns only had him to beat to break through with Horn in goal at their mercy.

The same Newcastle duo swept forward again within minutes as Burns out-paced John Ryan to collect a Clark pass and then push a square ball to the feet of Macdonald.

Anderson deflected his full-blooded drive for a corner.

With David Craig shooting just over from outside the box and Macdonald getting over a centre that no colleague was forward enough to reach, Luton looked in for a tough time. But they weathered those frights and switched to aggressive attack.

Aston deserved to have a nin-in the 19th minute but nobody point centre turned in for a goal was there to connect. Then McFaul had to dash off his line six minutes later to make a brave save at the feet of Anderson.

Husband missed a golden chance when he failed to connect with John Ryan centre from close range but he atoned in the 40th minute with a brilliant drive that was tipped over. As the Luton pressure mounted, Craig cleared a Faulkner header off the line from Aston's corner just before the break.

Inevitably, the Newcastle defence cracked to give Luton their 56th minute goal.

A free kick on the left by Buckley soared out to Ron Futcher on the right of goal and without hesitation he blasted a drive from about 15 yards that screamed past McFaul as a defender got a touch to it.

Newcastle made tremendous efforts to snatch a point with Macdonald making a solo run in from the right to bring a fine save at the post by Horn.

Although the home defence gave their supporters some frightening moments in the last five minutes by failing to clear promptly, they managed to hold it.