

NEW-LOOK LUTON HIT THE BLUES

74/75

LUTON are not sunk yet. Their brave late-season fight to retain Division One membership continued with the drubbing of Birmingham—putting the Blues back in fear of relegation. It was easily Birmingham's worst performance of the season.

The fans turned their anger on manager Freddie Goodwin with demands for his resignation and shouts of "Out!"

Luton's joy was marred a minute from the end when Jimmy Husband got his marching orders for striking Ken Burns.

Luton manager Harry Haslam stormed afterwards: "That was a diabolical decision. It's a sad day when a player gets a fellow professional sent off. He never hit Burns. Jimmy says Burns hit him—and he's got a swollen ear to prove it."

REWARDED

Luton's work-rate was magnificent, as they attacked down the flanks, and they were fairly rewarded for their hard running and non-stop chasing.

They stunned the home crowd with a 14th minute goal. It came when full-back John Ryan hammered a direct free-kick home from 25 yards.

The next moment, Birmingham nearly squared things, but Jimmy Calderwood's rocket of a shot made the crossbar shudder.

After that, Luton dominated the first session and, on the

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Birmingham 1 Luton 4

stroke of half time, they increased their lead when Adrian Alston weaved round Malcolm Page and Gary Pendrev to lift the ball into the roof of the net.

Three minutes into the second half, Luton exposed Birmingham's defensive weakness when Alston rose at the near post to head in John Aston's right wing flag kick.

Birmingham's Trevor Francis had three shots off target before the break. But he celebrated his 21st birthday with a typical piece of individualism on the hour, which resulted in him scoring with a low, angled drive to reduce the deficit.

Birmingham withdraw Calderwood to a storm of booing, and brought new striker Ian Smith into action. But it was Luton who nearly made it four, when Alston slid in to slip the ball inches wide.

Then, in the 75th minute, Husband picked up a wretched back pass from Page to chip the ball over the advancing 'keeper. And that was their fourth.

At the end, as the players left the pitch, Luton coach Roy McCrohan and Burns exchanged words about the sending off. Luton manager Haslam and a linesman stepped between them to prevent trouble.