

KING CROWNS A GREAT DEBUT

NEW BOY Andy King helped Luton to a right royal victory this afternoon.

The talented teenager's debut goal gave the Town a convincing 2-0 win against Hull.

He shared the scoring honours with Ron Futcher. Their efforts crowned a vigorous team operation that spared no effort to make this an impressive start to the season.

Kenilworth Road Looked immaculate. I don't think I have ever seen the pitch looking so good, and a few licks of paint around the ground have really given it a facelift.

Even the clock over the Bobbers Stand looks like a huge orange and blue target for the Hatters.

Luton were forced to start the season without midfield man Jimmy Ryan and young defender Paul Futcher. Both are suspended for offences committed last season.

Ryan is out for three games and Futcher still has a one-match suspension to serve.

Steve Litt carried on as the Luton sweeper, with teenager Andy King making his first full appearance as a League player. The Luton substitute was Peter Spiring, who turned in some good performances in the pre-season tour in Belgium.

Otherwise the Town side looked very much as it did for most of last season.

For Hull, Alf Wood, who scored so many goals for Millwall and Shrewsbury, was playing at centre-forward alongside the long-serving Ken Wagstaff.

Luton had left out Jimmy Husband and decided to use Ron Futcher and Adrian Alston as the two strikers, with Aston playing wide.

Luton's first serious challenge came when Alston chased a through-ball and was penalised after colliding with goalkeeper Wealands.

Hull were awarded the first free kick of the season and the two players good-humouredly patted each other on the back. Alston replaced a divot which he had displaced in his charge through.

Some more work by Alston won Luton a free kick. It was taken by John Ryan on the right, but headed clear by Croft before Ron Futcher could get his head to it.

LUTON	2
HULL CITY	0
ROGER DUCKWORTH REPORTS	

In the third minute Luton might have gone ahead, when a cross from Buckley was knocked back by Alston. But Futcher was offside as he went in to finish.

In the seventh minute Barber made a diving save to a low free kick from Lord, to prevent Hull going ahead. It was both a good shot and a good stop, low near the left-hand post.

After Luton's initial burst had been quelled, Hull got into the game. A hard shot from Lord was well saved by Barber. But another forward was whistled offside.

Luton hit back with a free kick after Alston had been fouled outside the box. John Ryan pushed the ball to Buckley, who won a corner with a deflection. It was cleared rather easily.

There was further good football from Luton when King sparked a move in midfield that led to a West cross being just missed by the inrushing Futcher.

A minute later, Futcher got good control and raced into a shooting position, but wasted it with a mis-timed shot.

Luton's game was all effort and with Futcher, King and Alston really putting their backs into it, another move was unlucky not to come off when a decision for a goal-kick went against Aston.

After 22 minutes, Luton's



Ron Futcher goes down in an attempt to score

efforts bore fruit. Faulkner started the move in midfield and Alston got the ball out to Aston on the left with some skill.

Aston beat Banks and put over a lovely cross which RON FUTCHER killed cleverly, before smacking a right-foot shot into the goal.

A couple of minutes later, Wood headed a Hull free-kick wide. But there never really looked any danger to the Luton goal, with Barber well-placed and the goal attempt well off target.

More skill by Aston fed a long crossfield ball to Alston, who cut inside quickly and tested the Hull goalkeeper with a hard but straight shot.

Aston still looks one of the best left-wingers in the game. Every time he got the ball, Luton looked as if they might score.

Twice in two minutes he produced attempts at scoring, providing the first for Futcher and having a lob himself.

Attempts became reality a couple of minutes later, when Luton scored their second.

Aston took a pass from King on the left, and got over another of his searching crosses which Alston headed into the middle. Futcher's effort bounced off the crossbar, with goalkeeper Wealands struggling.

It was the easiest job in the

MATCH DETAILS

LUTON TOWN: Barber, John Ryan, Buckley, Anderson, Faulkner, Litt, King, Alston, Ron Futcher, West, Aston. Sub: Spiring.

HULL CITY: Wealands, Banks, de Vries, Galvin, Croft, Roberts, Grimes, Lord, Wood, Wagstaff, Greenwood. Sub: Fletcher.

REFEREE: Mr R. Challis (Tonbridge).

ATTENDANCE: 10,389

RON FUTCHER, Luton Town, 22nd minute

KING, Luton Town, 33rd minute



world for KING, the instigator of the move, to follow up and tap the ball into the net for a debut goal.

Luton were in charge in every part of the field. If this first half of the season is anything to go by, we can surely be looking forward to an entertaining and successful campaign.

Yet another Aston cross, just missed by West, provided Anderson with a fleeting chance. But he was unable to control his effort, which ended on the roof of the Oak Road stand.

Luton's progress might have been even better had not a long shot from King sailed over the crossbar. He might

have done better to push the ball through to find a colleague.

Just before half time, a good free kick by John Ryan looked like meeting the head of Alston.

But sweeper Roberts headed behind for a corner, which brought two great attempts from Futcher. One of them hit a post and the other was cleared off the line.

The lid came off the pressure cooker when Litt, who was having a good game, blasted a shot high over the Oak Road stand into the gardens behind. Even so, their efforts could well have brought Luton a third goal.

HT: Luton Town 2, Hull City 0

Early in the second half, it was the Oak Road goal that was again the centre of attention.

Right from the kick-off, Hull attacked from the left. A good cross by de Vries was volleyed wide by Wagstaff.

Luton took considerable time to settle again after the tea break. Hull began to read a lot of the Town's passes and looked a better side.

When Futcher put Aston through with a good pass, the winger could make nothing of it, giving de Vries an easy effort to clear from the penalty box.

As Luton struggled to get back into the game, Litt did well to catch two Hull forwards offside as they made another break through the middle.

A healthy Luton attack led by Futcher might have had another goal in the 56th minute, but the Town centre-forward was adjudged to have fouled goalkeeper Wealands as he jumped for Aston's cross.

Hull continued to dominate for a spell, and some industry by Wagstaff gave Lord the chance of a shot which Barber caught — leaving Wagstaff offside.

Barber's customary bad goal-kick came in the 64th minute. He seems to manage one every match, but this time it came to nothing, with the Town defence closing quickly on Lord well back in the Luton half.

Some skill by Alston and King almost gave Luton that elusive third goal. King's cross was dived at by Futcher, who missed. Alston, following up, collided with Wealands, who made a good save.

Both Alston and the Hull goalkeeper had to have attention.

Aston headed a pass from West, forward for Buckley to chase. But the overlapping full-back was injured in a collision with a defender, and had to have treatment on the touchline.

Two youths who were ejected by the police were booed by the Luton crowd as they were marched round the touchline. It is good to see just what the real fans think about hooligans.

In the 79th minute, Futcher made a mess of scoring what would have been his second goal. He mistimed a volley at a good cross from Ryan and put it wide.

If Luton can keep up the form they produced in the first half, with King, Alston and Futcher, assisted by skipper West, giving this sort of promise, then I am sure Luton will be up there with the leaders before the season is very old.

By half time Luton were streets ahead and looked home and dry. But they lost some of their sparkle in the second half, letting Hull more into the game. It was not until about a quarter of an hour from the end that they began to zip again and leave the crowd buzzing with expectations of even better things to come.

Ron Futcher banged in an Aston cross for the first goal and debut boy Andy King scored as a result of another one. Star man was left winger John Aston, still one of the best at his trade in the country. He ran the whole defence ragged and his crosses had the Northerners chasing shadows in the goalmouth.

A RATHER flat second half took the gloss off this opening victory of the season for the Town. It was a victory that was forged with some tremendous football in the first half, a first half that the Luton crowd will use as a template for their expectations for the season.

The Verdict...