

HATTERS FIRE A CLEAR WARNING

JOHN ASTON won't be going to Portsmouth on Saturday. He lost his head for the first time in his long and distinguished soccer life on Saturday — and landed a retaliatory left hook on the jaw of Chelsea's Ian Britton.

He was booked and sent off. He automatically misses the next match and accumulates 12 disciplinary points.

"The referee had no option but to dismiss me," he said. "I was a damned fool. It's the first time in my life I have retaliated."

"I know I shouldn't have done it. I don't know what came over me. Perhaps it was some of the threatening atmosphere in the ground that crept into me. Now I just feel that I have let everyone down."

It was the threatening atmosphere that almost ruined a superb Luton victory. It spilled on to the pitch in the shape of a couple of hundred loutish Chelsea fans.

It brought a call for the return of birching from Bristol referee Eric Read.

And it left a trail of damaged property, damaged cars, damaged railway carriages and damaged people.

When the wounds have healed it is to be hoped this match will be remembered for the stunning football played by Luton — and not the stunning savagery perpetrated by the louts from the back streets of London.

The Town served up one of their best displays of flowing football for years.

By ROGER DUCKWORTH
Luton 3, Chelsea 0

From the start they looked victors. Every member of the team played above himself, and Luton's promise to return to the First Division at the first attempt will be fulfilled if this is a preview of things to come.

Centre-forward Ron Futcher was my man of the match but others also did extremely well. Twin brother Paul had a marvellous match as Chelsea's attacking ideas were crushed under the authoritative boot of the Luton defence.

You can't forget the crowd invasion. You can't forget the Aston sending off. You can't forget the five bookings. But most of all you can't forget the distinguished performance of this ambitious-looking Luton side.

They murdered Chelsea. In

modern soccer terms — they were magic.

One of the men most responsible was Peter Anderson. He swept his two previous luke-warm performances under the carpet, came back with a bang and was boss in midfield.

Andy on song is a match-winner. With Alan West and the talented Andy King giving him considerable help, Anderson fashioned this Luton victory.

He scored the first goal himself and showed his delight during a lap of sky-thumping jubilation.

But always there was the latent power of Ron Futcher. Somehow you knew he was going to score. He has strength, control, skill and

MATCH DETAILS

LUTON TOWN: Barber; John Ryan, Buckley, Anderson, Faulkner, Paul Futcher, King, Alston, Ron Futcher, West, Aston. Sub: Chambers.

CHELSEA: Sherwood; Graham Wilkins, Sparrow, Bason, Droy, Dempsey, Britton, Ray Wilkins, Maybank, Swain, Cooke. Sub: Ron Harris.

REFEREE: Mr E. Read (Bristol)

GOALS: Anderson 27 min

Buckley (pen) 46 min

Ron Futcher 57 min

ATT: 19,024

above all the nerve to take people on and shoot.

Luton were leading by Anderson's goal at half-time, and it could have been a lot more.

A minute after the break Ron Futcher was upended by Bason and Steve Buckley scored his first League goal from the resulting penalty.

He had to take it because Jimmy Ryan, the usual spot-kicker, is suspended.

Chelsea were gone. With Aston probing, West pushing, King prompting and Alston producing his skilled turns and passes, it looked just a matter of how many Luton would score

Buckley banged in a free-kick which the clever Alston nudged into the middle for Ron Futcher to score the third from, and by the time of the invasion it could have been 5-0 to Luton.

John Faulkner had a fine match in defence, and somehow even managed to beat his opposite number, the giant Micky Droy, in aerial battles when Chelsea won corners.

John Ryan gave his customary distinguished performance, tackling with authority and overlapping with enthusiasm.

In goal Barber was complete master of the Chelsea attack, and he deserves a medal with bar for standing up to the evil attentions of the scum in the Chelsea crowd who pelted him with fists, coins, stones and toilet rolls.

And let us not forget Brian Chambers who replaced West in the second half when the Luton captain had to go to hospital to have a wrenched shoulder X-rayed.

Suspension

It is to be hoped West will be fit for Saturday. With Aston already missing, the Town can't afford further handicaps for their visit to Pompey.

Jimmy Ryan will be available after his three-match suspension, but he is not match fit. However hard you have trained, there is no short cut to Second Division football, when you have only played friendlies since the previous season.

It is surprising that so many people were booked in such a good game of football on Saturday. Charlie Cooke went into the book for dissent, Buckley for a foul on Bason, Droy for a foul on Buckley, Britton for a foul on Aston... and Aston for hitting back.