

King's cracker

LUTON did not have to be brilliant to master Portsmouth, who failed in their opponents' penalty area.

Injury-hit Pompey were not without individual skill, but they failed to harness it. And they ran out of steam soon after half an hour.

Luton's centre-back John Faulkner stamped his tidiness and authority in front of goal, and the blond heads of the Futchers twins, defender Paul

75/76 by JAMES FRENCH

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and attacker Ron, were well to the fore.

Luton went ahead after 39 minutes. Anderson's pulled-back centre left Lloyd stranded on the edge of his area and Andy King's shot went in despite a desperate diversion attempt by Reynolds.

The first half was even, but the second was Luton's decisively. Ron Futchers thumped a ball out to the right (56 minutes) to Peter Spiring via Anderson, and he pulled back the return from past the far post to Alston.

The No. 8 had his back to goal, but was permitted half a dozen touches of the ball before threading a soft shot through Pompey's lead-foot defenders.

Portsmouth had their moments when George Graham fired over an angled drive and Reynolds brought another great save. But they had their lucky escapes, too, when unmarked Anderson headed over a Brian Chambers corner and, minutes from time, when Spiring's header hit the foot of the left post and was fielded on the line by Lloyd.

Almost the loudest cheer of the afternoon came when a spectator clutched a fleet-footed hooligan who had eluded a pursuing policeman.