

LUTON HAMMER OUT A WARNING

75/76

LUTON smashed the three-goal barrier for the first time this season with a fight of great character that would have done any heavyweight proud last night. The fact that bottom club York were on the receiving end of Luton's victory takes no credit away from the Town.

Luton turned mean last night; fed up with the taunts of the goal-hungry crowd and angry that they had been pushed back on to the ropes for a couple of rounds in the first half, by a club scrapping for its very survival.

Now Luton can go to Southampton with some confidence at the weekend. Saints' manager Lawrie McMenemy was at Kenilworth Road last night, and left with much to think about.

"I saw a lot there that could worry me," he said. "Admittedly York collapsed after a fair start, but Luton showed they know how to score goals.

"I still don't put them in my top eight clubs. I don't even put ourselves there at the moment. Our problem is that we can defend only when we are pushed into it. We can't do it to order. It should be one hell of a game on Saturday."

If Luton can produce this sort of open-minded flair, then they must be in with a chance of ticking up their first away

win since that at Portsmouth on September 6.

Their four goals put right the balance too. They have now scored more times than they have played.

Even so, for the first 15 minutes they struggled to establish a pattern. Goal-keeper Barber was allowed to suffer pressure, often because of uncertainty by Bobby Thomson.

By ROGER DUCKWORTH
Luton Town 4 York City 0

Have-a-go York suspected, but not with great conviction, that they might just be in with a chance. Luton helped them with bad passing and a lack of direction. One couldn't help thinking that while everyone else seems to beat York easily, Luton were making hard work of it.

Then John Aston took over. He has completely recovered from his injury. His speed and control are back to match the ideas that never deserted him. Twice he almost scored in the first half after thrilling runs.

But the most you could say after half an hour was that Luton were not losing.

Confidence

Five minutes before half-time goal-a-game Jimmy Husband smashed in Luton's first after Anderson had dropped the ball in space between him and the goal.

In the second half the confidence surged through Luton's veins. Aston paralysed York from the left wing, and with Chambers and King supplying clever skills and bright ideas, and with West driving the team forward from midfield, Luton did what we have all been waiting for all season.

Anderson fired wide with his head from an Aston centre and had a shot blocked after Crawford had made a wonderful save from a Husband header. Terrific shots from attack-minded full-back John Ryan were caught by the shell-shocked York keeper.

West then scored Luton's second after Aston had again bemused a defence that was by now hanging on for dear life.

Spectre

Andy King headed in an accurate centre by Husband after good work by Anderson, and Luton were home and dry. In fact it began to look just a matter of how many they would score.

York were shattered. The spectre of relegation haunted their every move. One almost began to feel sorry for them, but they were the poorest side I have seen in the Second Division this season.

King had three more close shaves, and Anderson put one over the top before scoring the goal he so richly deserved — thanks to an unselfish pass by Husband in front of goal.

West had one effort cleared and Chambers hit the bar with perhaps the most clever shot of the match. It was nice to hear Luton cheered off the field at the end instead of suffering the barbed comments to which they have become accustomed in recent weeks.

With only two goals in their previous five matches, Luton lashed back at their critics last night. And poor old York have now let in 19 goals in their last six matches. They must be on a collision course with Division Three.

Match details

LUTON: Barber; John Ryan, Thomson; Chambers, Faulkner, Paul Futcher; Husband, King, Anderson, West, Aston. Sub: Jimmy Ryan.

YORK: Crawford; Oliver, Downing; Cave, Swallow, Topping; Pollard, Holmes, Seal, Jones, Wann. Sub: Woodward.

REFEREE: Mr A. Lee (Street).

ATTENDANCE: 7,982.

GOALS: Husband (Luton) 40 minutes, West (Luton)

58 minutes, King (Luton) 59 minutes, Anderson (Luton) 68 minutes.

BOOKING: Thomson (Luton) for foul on Pollard.

	P	W	D	L	A	A	Ps
Sunderland	15	10	2	3	26	11	22
Bolton	15	9	4	2	31	16	22
Bristol C	15	8	4	3	29	16	20
Notts Co	15	8	4	3	15	11	20
Bristol R	15	6	7	2	20	13	19
Fulham	14	7	4	3	19	10	18
Southampton	14	7	2	5	26	20	16
Charlton	14	6	4	4	19	20	16
Oldham	15	6	4	5	21	23	16
LUTON	15	5	5	5	17	12	15