

THE YOUNG BRAVES

Luton kids boost promotion push

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TOP OF THE TABLE

Bristol C	31	15	10	6	46	26	40
Bolton	30	16	8	6	48	28	40
Sund'land	30	17	5	8	47	29	39
Notts Co	31	16	7	8	46	29	39
Sthmptn	31	16	5	10	54	37	37
Luton	32	15	7	10	45	34	37
WBA	30	13	10	7	33	27	36



■ It's a goal Jimmy Husband twists in the air to head in Luton's winner from a Brian Chambers corner

**LUTON TOWN 1
SOUTHAMPTON 0**

**By Roger
Duckworth**

But still Luton missed chances. Chambers had a tricky free-kick saved, King had a hard shot blocked in its infancy, and West shot wide.

Southampton's one and only chance fell to Channon, who seemed so surprised to get away from Paul FUTCHER for once, that he blasted it wide.

Then came perhaps Luton's best move of the match. Paul FUTCHER's sheer aggression won a corner on the left. Chambers knocked it across and Faulkner, out on the right, headed the ball back into the goalmouth.

Stalked

Chambers sold the sweetest of dummies by deliberately missing the ball, and Fuccillo saw Turner tip over a beautifully-weighted shot.

Luckily, a couple of minutes later Luton scored. Chambers put another corner from the left into the goalmouth, and Husband stalked in to head firmly into the net.

The goal gave Luton added heart. The afore-mentioned youngsters, King, Fuccillo and the FUTCHERS — all 19 — called upon the arrogance of youth to rub it in. There was no way Southampton were going to win now.

The Saints, with Osgood showing great skill on the ball, tried to do something about it, but were beavered aside by the ambitious Town.

Southampton still tackled with their teeth showing, but in the last ten minutes both FUTCHERS went close.

Blyth and Bennett took no prisoners — as they say in the trade — in the Southampton defence, and left-back David Peach, a Bedford lad, showed a lot of strength when going forward.

Luton's current form still says they can go back to the First Division. I hope they can keep this mood about them until Saturday when they go to Bristol.

Although their goal came from the wise head of Jimmy Husband, the kids were marvellous. Lilly Fuccillo, Andy King and the FUTCHER twins, they all played leading parts in this important victory.

In a thrilling second half they forced their way through some wincing tackles, often in packs of three or four, the scent of success in their nostrils.

With Sunderland doing their usual vanishing trick from the pole position, Luton go West on Saturday in equal fifth position — on points — and only three points behind their next opponents — Bristol City.

Even Bolton, the best-looking side in the chase, stumbled last night, startling their confident followers by going down at home to Oxford.

The soreness of last night's bruises will have worn off by the weekend. I should imagine this team — that has beaten Sunderland as well as the Saints — will be unchanged.

Early on, we saw a sequence of long clearances as both goalkeepers sought to establish superiority in the order of the boot.

Then there was a serial of back-passing scripted by two defences who wanted time to settle, and who were uneasy about making the first mistake.

But with Fuccillo and Steve Buckley probing well from the left, Luton's shoulders were the first to broaden.

Their forwards soon realised that England's Mike Channon held no fears for Paul FUTCHER, who again gave an eye-catching performance that belied his 19 years.

He won the battle with Channon hands down, and walked off with another famous scalp on his belt.

With John Ryan playing some crisp football from right-back, and with Faulkner, so confident of FUTCHER behind him, able to move up, Luton always looked potential winners.

In fact, Peter Osgood was a bit lucky to escape a booking when he floored the Luton centre-half when he went on another foray up front.

Husband was aching to get into shooting position, and he almost managed it from a through ball from Chambers.

Buckley went close twice and Fuccillo had a shot deflected. But a period of uncertainty sent Luton in all-square at half-time.

Keith Barber had little to do, but his positive throwing and much-improved kicking made the Luton keeper an important participant.

With Chambers supplying the delicate stuff, and King and West not minding too many flying feet, Luton again got a grip.

The breakaway Fuccillo was grassed from behind by Peter Rodrigues who later got his desserts when he was booked for a deliberate handling offence.

**Pictures
by
NIGEL
CAIRNS**



■ Southampton keeper Turner dives out to catch the ball with Ron FUTCHER trying hard to get past Bennett

MATCH DETAILS

LUTON TOWN: Barber; John Ryan, Buckley; Chambers, Faulkner, Paul FUTCHER; Husband, King, Ron FUTCHER, West, Fuccillo. Sub: Aston.

SOUTHAMPTON: Turner; Rodrigues, Peach; Holmes, Blyth, Bennett; Fisher, Channon, Osgood, McCalliog, Stokes. Sub: Gilchrist.

REFEREE: Mr John Hunting (Leicester).

GOAL: Jimmy Husband (Luton) 72min.

ATTENDANCE: 13,737.

BOOKING: Rodrigues (Soton) deliberate hands.

■ Luton centre forward Ron FUTCHER ran the gauntlet of the tough Saints defence. In this picture goalkeeper Ian Turner just beats him to the ball with Bennett and Blyth in support

