



■ Ron Futch, back on his old stamping ground, wins the ball in the air but finds the Chester defence just as efficient as he remembered it

HATTERS ARE HUMBLLED



Here's the goal that brought the house down



Chester goal-hero Ian Edwards races away in delight after his late cup winner.

LUTON were so bad on Sturday they were sent to bed without supper. Or so it seemed. As the team coach sped home from the frozen North the customary meal stop was ignored.

"Let's get the hell home," growled manager Harry Haslam.

The mood was so low after Luton's dreadful expulsion from the FA Cup that hardly a word was spoken during the three-hour journey.

And coach Roy McCrohan was so angry that he refused to answer any questions at all. "I'm too sick to speak," he snapped.

You can understand the mood. Luton had been so much on top early in the game that goals looked a mere formality. But as they tossed aside chances with mad abandon, you began to feel that Chester could steal it.

The end came in five or six minutes of high drama. The game was in injury time when Ian Edwards, a mountain of a Welshman from Mold, knocked in a right wing cross that Ian Howat had stepped over to dummy the Luton defence.

And all hell broke loose. The crowd behind the goal —

where most of the Luton fans were standing — surged forward and the retaining wall broke, spilling dozens of youngsters on to the pitch.

At first it seemed as if the Luton fans were trying to get the game stopped, and manager Harry Haslam ran across the pitch to console them,

urging them back to their places.

The game was held up for five minutes before referee Peter Willis — the best I've seen this season — restarted it and then blew the final blast.

Edwards, 22 yesterday, spoke afterwards about his goal that put Chester into the

fifth round for the first time in history.

ball and it came through to me, I thought 'My God.' Then I saw I had a bit of time and just thought about keeping it low when I hit it."

He hit it right, and Luton were out of the Cup. But they

can't moan about it. Chester pulled themselves back from the grave with spirit and enthusiasm. Luton seemed to think that victory was their hereditary right.

Aston, Husband and Ron Futch all missed first half chances, and goalkeeper Millington made a wonderful save to a rising drive from Fuccillo.

Good save

But before half time, winger Paul Crossley had brought a good save out of Milija Aleksic and had stubbed his toe on another occasion when he should have scored. At half time Luton should have been beginning to realise that it was far from over.

Early in the second half, Howat miskicked in front of goal, and then Chester scrambled a Faulkner mistake into the Luton net. But Ian Edwards had fouled the Luton keeper.

When Billy Dearden flashed a diving header past the Luton goal, they realised they had better try to do something in retaliation. Brian Chambers had a hard shot saved by Millington and Paul Price hit the outside of a post with a first timer.

So sick

It looked all set for a replay as Chester strained to get another attack in, realising that each one could be the last.

Referee Willis had checked his watch and acknowledged that it was injury time to his linesmen when Chester grabbed their winner.

For the Futch twins it was a poor homecoming. After all last week's publicity the two ex-Chester lads found it hard to accept defeat.

"I'm sick, sick, sick," said Paul.

So was everyone else. So what went wrong?

Luton looked uncertain in defence on a tricky pitch and nervous of experimenting in midfield.

Lil Fuccillo was the best of the middle three, and had a fine first half. But Brian Chambers and Alan West looked below their best form, and Fuccillo faded after the break.

With Aston performing only in fits and starts, and Ron Futch finding Bob Delgado a bit of a handful, it looked as if Luton's main hope up front was Jimmy Husband. He beavered away, but a blow on the head in the second half slowed him and dimmed Luton's chances.

Aleksic did well enough in goal, and had little chance against the winning effort. And backs Price and Buckley put in a lot of hard work but didn't experiment enough with the overlap.

Paul Futch gave another cool performance, and but for a couple of boops, Faulkner looked strong.

But having said all that, let's remember that Luton were knocked out by Third Division Chester. Enough said?

MATCH DETAILS

LUTON TOWN: Aleksic; Price, Buckley; Chambers, Faulkner, Paul Futch; Husband, West, Ron Futch, Fuccillo, Aston. Sub: Jim Ryan.

CHESTER: Millington; Nigel Edwards, Walker; Storton, Delgado, Oakes; Dearden, Richardson, Ian Edwards, Howat, Crossley. Sub: Owen.

REFEREE: Peter Willis (Co. Durham).

ATTENDANCE: 10,608 (receipts £6,678).

Chester 1

Luton Town 0

By ROGER 76/77
DUCKWORTH (FAC)