

Bertschin hat-trick — justice is done !

Luton 2 Blues 3 79/80

Tony Towers into the mid-field trio.

Towers brought Johnston into the action for the first time after five minutes, and the winger slid a neat pass to Dillon, whose fierce shot was blocked.

But the corner that resulted put Blues into a sixth minute lead. Johnston's cross saw Gallagher rise above two defenders to nod the ball to Bertschin who took a right foot chance precisely from eight yards.

Luton surged back immediately, but Wealands went on to his knees to save from Hatton.

Johnston already had the highly-thought-of Stephens in in considerable trouble, and the Scottish winger's next piece of skill brought a free kick which he struck savagely across the goalmouth, for former Villa 'keeper Jake Findlay to make a safe catch.

Twice Gallagher kept his composure to head dangerous crosses away, but table-topping Luton were looking the more uneasy side.

Wealands did extremely well to catch Moss's cross following pressure after Luton's first corner in the sixteenth minute.

City continued to attack with Dillon making much use of Johnston, then suddenly turning the point of attack to leave Curbishley with a half chance which was deflected for a corner. Luton's disquiet was apparent again then, but Bertschin's wild hook at a cross was easily cleared.

Six corners in 22 minutes showed Blues commitment to attack as Luton's play became both rugged and ragged.

The finest piece of individual skill so far belonged to Lynex who, with a swerving 50 yard run, beat two men and curled a shot with the outside of his right foot for Findlay to make a giant leap and save.

Not to be outdone, Dillon swept into space midway into the Luton half and struck a drive with such stunning velocity, that the ball stuck in the netting a foot the wrong side of Findlay's goal.

Blues were playing superlatively well, using Bertschin and Lynex in quick thrusts and had Luton's central defenders in frantic trouble. Dillon, ghosting to the edge of the area, could only effect a shot looping into the crowd.

The surging excitement had faded somewhat but there was still no doubting the mastery that Blues had imposed in every area. Twice Todd made breaks down the back, bringing Johnston into

action, and so there was even less excuse for Lees handling the ball in the penalty area when Moss, himself, had the ball.

The winger sent his right foot penalty way beyond Wealands for his 13th goal of the season, and a totally undeserved equaliser.

Even though Luton came forward, it was Blues who created the best opening before half time, when Curbishley took part in a splendid interchange of passes before miscuing his shot terribly.

Willie Johnston, usually so full of tricks, embarrassed himself with an attempted long thrown which somehow fell out of his hands and went for a goal kick. It was probably the first mistake he had made so far.

Momentarily, the City defence was split by a diagonal pass from Moss to which Wealands leapt for the vital touch off the head of Saxby.

Blues, who could so easily have been shaken by that penalty equaliser, instead continued to put pressure on the home side by strength in midfield when the ball hardly seemed to be missed. Towers, Bertschin and Curbishley continued to play well together and Lynex, Bertschin and then Towers all had openings but they shot ineffectively.

Twice the free kick expert Moss was given opportunities for his expertise, but both attempts went far too high. Todd, with the coolness for which he is famous, brushed aside Hatton's challenge almost with insolent ease, and Grealish was booked for arguing with the referee over a free kick decision.

From only their third dangerous assault on Blues goal, Luton went into a 69th minute lead when Hatton ran round the right hand side of the defence to hit a bouncing cross which STEIN ran in.

But, City, playing with a hunger rarely seen this season, struck back within a minute when BERTSCHIN dispossessed Grealish on the edge of the area, seemed to have taken too long to shoot, but then jabbed the ball beyond the vainly diving Findlay.

GOALS AND THEIR SCORERS
6m. Luton 0, B'ham 1. Bertschin
41m. Luton 1, B'ham 1. Moss
69m. Luton 2, B'ham 1. Stein
70m. Luton 2, B'ham 2. Bertschin
89m. Luton 2, B'ham 3. Bertschin