

Hatters go under in seven-goal Barnsley battle

81/82

LUTON's lead at the top of the Second Division was cut to a mere two points at Barnsley last night in the most exciting game to be seen at Oakwell so far this season.

The Town left saturated Barnsley with their pride shattered from a 4-3 defeat and their worst fears were realised when the news filtered through that rivals Watford had won at Grimsby.

Seven goals contributed to a highly entertaining match, but Luton can have no cause for complaint at the final result.

They ran into a Barnsley side full of running and determination, and Luton could have been forgiven for thinking they had been knocked down into one of the grimy pits surrounding the ground.

Springboard

The Town managed to force only two corners in the entire 90 minutes. Barnsley were awarded 13 and that statistic emphasised the gap in attacking ideas between the two teams.

Even the advantage of taking the lead after only nine minutes was not enough to provide a victory springboard for Luton as Colin Walker devastated the Town with two goals and was denied his hat-trick only by an offside decision and a goal line clearance.

Walker was a continuous thorn in Luton's sore side and he could easily have added further goals when keeper Jake Findlay made another two important saves from him.

The Town were vulnerable on both flanks and the defence were susceptible to the quick break. Even Ricky Hill had difficulty in finding his normal self-imposed high stan-

MATCH DETAILS

Barnsley: Horn, Law, Chambers, Glavin, Banks, McCarthy, Evans, Walker, Aylott, Mann, Birch. Sub: Barrowclough.

Luton Town: Findlay, Stephens, Aizlewood, Horton, Goodyear, Donaghy, Hill, Stein, White, Fuccillo (Antic), Moss.

Referee: Norman Wilson (Morecambe)

Attendance: 14,044

Goals: Walker (45, 52), Banks (67), Evans (75); Stein (9, 54), Law (79, og).

Bookings: Law (dissent), Donaghy (foul on Walker).

dards on a gluey pitch which Barnsley mastered far better.

But when Brian Stein gave them a ninth minute lead it seemed that the Town had the early quality to maintain their run-away lead at the top of the table.

The move was manufactured by Kirk Stephens with a long through ball which Ian Evans failed to control. The pass had enough power behind it to find Stein, who ran on well before pushing the ball low past Bob Horn into the bottom corner.

Until then, Barnsley had produced nothing to test Findlay and the Town could have had the benefit of a second goal after 17 minutes when David Moss set Stein up for another dig. But he found himself outnumbered by defenders and shot wide.

Ten minutes later, Moss's free kick — awarded after Stein had been fouled trying to force his way through — was also wide. That signalled a renewed aggressive threat by the home side although Findlay didn't have to stretch too far to pull down Alan Birch's shot directed towards the top corner.

The first half had only two minutes to run when Moss's low drive was clawed away for the Town's second corner before Findlay repeated that save from Walker's cross.

say, striking in injury time to secure the equaliser.

It came from a corner when he was given a free header at the far post to convert Birch's kick.

Three minutes after the restart, Findlay again showed his agility with a full-length save to prevent Walker adding the second. But the Luton keeper was left cursing his bad luck when Barnsley went in front four minutes later.

The keeper did well to tip out Birch's deceptive dipping cross but the ball ran loose to Walker, who promptly smashed it back past Findlay.

Luton, however, recovered their composure to equalise within two minutes. It was the best goal of the evening and was instigated by skipper Brian Horton, who supplied Raddy Antic — a second half substitute for the injured Lil Fuccillo — with a perfect pass.

The Yugoslav provided an equally telling move for Stein to run on and beat Horn with a low shot.

But the Town's recovery lasted only 13 minutes when Barnsley went in front for the second time. Jimmy Mann, making his home debut, nudged his free kick sideways to Ian Banks, who beat Findlay with a shot which found its way into the net through a forest of Luton legs.

Three minutes later, Stephens was in the right place at the right time when he hacked Walker's



BRIAN STEIN . . . scored twice shot off the line for yet another corner.

Another set piece, however, ruined any chance Luton had of getting back into the match when Ian Evans, perfectly placed at the far post, nodded a powerful header past Findlay from a free kick.

Walker had another shot driven off the line and a "goal" disallowed for offside before the Town pulled one back in the 79th minute. Antic attempted one of his swerving specials from a free kick which Barnsley managed to block, but the bobbling ball was misdirected past Horn by fullback Nicky Law with his head.