

87th-minute Antic goal puts Benson men in Division Two

DOWN! CITY FALL OFF TIGHTROPE

82/83

MANCHESTER CITY are relegated to the Second Division for the first time in 20 years following today's disgraceful home defeat by Luton Town at Maine Road.

A dramatic only goal came three minutes from the end with substitute Raddy Antic scoring with a powerful drive.

City needed only to draw to save themselves, but they could not achieve even this in yet another pathetic performance by a team who were well and truly buried after years of lavish spending and outrageous wages to so-called star players.

Luton, it has to be said, were the better side and deserved their victory.

Now a lot of soul searching and rebuilding will have to be done at Maine Road, and this time the Board have got to take much of the responsibility.

City, unchanged from the side that gained a First Division lifeline with victory at Brighton last week, received a tremendous welcome as Power led them out for his 250th League appearance.

With a massive contingent from Luton, the attendance was building up towards the 0,000 mark at the kick-off.

And City stormed forward from the outset, Ranson swinging the ball in tantalisingly. Godden stretched to take the cross, with Tueart and Reeves hovering close by.

Baker threatened down the right, but Donaghy swept the ball into touch first time.

Bond was quickly in the wars for the Blues, seemingly taking a blow in the face after a clash with Stephens.

TENSION

Stein was checked by McDonald when he attempted to break down the right.

The big Luton No 11 got another chance, and this time shrugged aside Power's challenge to get in a cross that Donaghy headed straight at Williams.

With so much at stake for both sides, the tension was razor sharp. There was an angry response from Goodyear when Tueart dived in vigorously at the edge of the Luton penalty area.

The football also suffered, and ultra-fussy referee Challinor did not help either in keeping

TEAMS

MANCHESTER CITY: Williams, Ranson, McDonald, Reid, Bond, Caton, Tueart, Reeves, Baker, Hartford, Power. Sub: Kinsey.

LUTON TOWN: Godden, Stephens, Elliott, Horton, Goodyear, Donaghy, Hill, Aylott, Walsh, Turner, Stein. Sub: Antic.

Referee: A Challinor (Rotherham).

the flow of the match moving

Reeves swept the ball wide to the right for Tueart, whose cross was turned behind for a corner. Elliott soared above Bond to head clear when Hartford crossed to the near post.

Luton responded, with Hill prominent, but with a quarter of an hour gone neither side had created a worthwhile chance.

THREAT

Hartford next switched the point of attack to the right, but this time neither Baker nor Ranson could reach the ball before it skidded into touch on a rain-saturated surface.

City used a Hartford free kick as their next threat, but Horton cleared at the expense of a corner.

Luton, in fact, were playing a more containing game than usual, although in the circumstance a draw was of no use to them unless Birmingham, the only other team who could go down, were to lose by four goals.

The outcome was that chances remained thin on the ground, with both sides content to slog it out in a boring midfield exercise.

Hill, always a danger for the visitors, threatened with cheeky lob that McDonald turned behind on his leg.

Horton also used the near-post as his target from where Stein launched himself full length to head narrowly wide — City's closest call so far.

Both sides were still



Mine ! A sliding tackle from Manchester City's Paul Power on Luton Town's Clive Goodyear.