● SUPER-STRIKE: Paul Walsh lashes in the Town's third-minute opener at Rotherham, 42 minutes before it all turned sour for him with a sending-off.

Verdict on Luton Town's week

SWEAR-WORD TURNS CUP TIE UPSIDE-DOWN

REPORTS By BRIAN SWAIN

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FOR 45 MINUTES at Millmoor on Tuesday night, Paul Walsh looked like making the second leg of the Town's Milk Cup-tie a pointless formality.

But then his impetuous tongue got him sent off. The game he had threatened to win on his own became a typical cup-tie test for the ten men left in the Town side.

Walsh, 21 last Saturday, and selected for the England under-21 party to go to Hungary next week, looked world class in the first half.

CONSTANT PRESSURE

The Town oozed class and confidence, despite the absence of David Moss, and Rotherham were taking a pasting.

A brilliant turn and rapid shot from the edge of the box after good work by Brian Stein and Frank Bunn gave Walsh a goal in the third minute, and seven minutes later, his pin-point cross from the right gave Bunn the simple chance to shoot the second. With Trevor Aylott operating in attack with Walsh and Stein going wide on the flanks, Rotherham were under constant pressure.

● CLINCHER: Trevor Aylott leaves two defenders grounded as he scores the Town's last-minute winner at Rotherham on Tuesday night, from a cross supplied by Brian Stein, who is on the extreme left.

ROTHERHAM UTD	2
LUTON TOWN	3
(Half-time 0-2)	

Aylott was unlucky with a couple of swinging shots from long range, Stein put a good chance over the bar, and the Town's confident build-up often left Rotherham chasing shadows. The Third Division side almost caught the Town on the break, but John Seasman shot wide from a clear opening, and the Town defence rarely looked in trouble.

But Walsh changed all that a few seconds before half-time. Frank Bunn was penalised for a foul just outside the box, and as Walsh lined up in the defensive wall, he made a comment to referee Derek Owen. Walsh admitted later that he had sworn at the ref. Mr Owen had no option under football law but to send him off.

Rotherham's confidence was boosted for the second half, when the Town used Aylott and Stein as a two-man attack, with Ricky Hill and Bunn trying to support them through the middle.

Mal Donaghy, Brian Horton, Kirk Stephens and Hill all broke forward purposefully, and delivered shots without scoring. But slowly Rotherham made the extra man count, and the Town had to fall back on massed-defence.

THE WINNER

A weak clearance header by Stephens enabled Willie Raynes to give Mick Gooding half an opening in the 66th minute, and he made it count with an accurate low shot from just inside the penalty area.

With everyone defending hard for a spell, the Town were hard put to survive. A shot by O'Dell almost beat Les Sealey, but was pushed round the post, and the goal-keeper did well to save a hard header by Rotherham defender and skipper Nigel Johnson.

The growing pressure brought Rotherham an equaliser two minutes from time when Kevin Kilmore somehow eluded three or four attempted tackles and beat Sealey with a low drive.

But Rotherham's jubilation was cut short within 60 seconds when Stein went racing down the right wing, crossed hard and low, and Aylott swept the winner into the net.

MATCH DETAILS

TOWN: Sealey; Stephens, Elliott, Donaghy, Turner; Hill, Horton, Bunn; Stein, Walsh, Aylott. Sub: Antic not needed.

ROTHERHAM: Stevenson; Forrest, Johnson, Crosby, Friar; O'Dell, Gooding, Mitchell; Kilmore, Seasman, Raynes. Sub: McEwan not used.

THE GOALS: Walsh for the Town three mins; Bunn for the Town ten mins; Gooding for Rotherham 66 mins; Kilmore for Rotherham 88 mins; Aylott for the Town 89 mins.

OTHER STRIKES AT GOAL: Town eight saved, and ten wide; Rotherham nine saved and seven wide. Corners: 6-6.

ATTENDANCE: 4,035—Rotherham's lowest of season, and the lowest for any Town match since 3,132 saw them at York on February 7, 1976.

REFEREE: Derek Owen, Wirral—Very finnicky, but right in football law over the sending off of Paul Walsh.

ENTERTAINMENT: Typical cup-tie in the second half, but it would have been a massacre of Rotherham if Walsh was as clever with his tongue as he is with his feet.

Spurs aid the cause

WATCHED by BBC viewers on Saturday night, the Town moved up four places in the First Division, to ninth. And on Sunday afternoon, in the first live league game to be televised, ITV showed Spurs safeguarding the Town's place.

A Nottingham Forest victory at White Hart Lane would have put the Town down to tenth.

But Spurs replied to Colin Walsh's early goal with a second-half scores by Gary Stevens and Steve Archibald to chalk up their first home league win of the season and prevent Forest moving up the table.

The attendance was 30,000, the best of the weekend, with ITV delighted that pre-match fears of empty stands and terraces had not been realised.

But it was done at a price — Spurs reduced admission charges for the match, which cost them £18,000, and they spent another £2,500 on a two-hour pre-match entertainment programme.

The First Division has a day off this week to help the England party prepare for their European Championship match in Hungary. The Town are on 13 points from eight games, five points below first place, and seven above the relegation zone.

Top teams had a bad weekend. Leaders West Ham were beaten for the second time in three matches, away to Stoke. Manchester United, who were second, drew 3-3 at Norwich after being three up, and Liverpool lost their unbeaten home record to the unlikely lads of Sunderland. Gary Rowell's penalty did the damage.

Southampton moved up to second place with a 1-0 home win over struggling Wolves and Ipswich are third after a 2-1 victory at Coventry, which was the end of the Sky Blues' unbeaten home record.

At the other end of the table, Leicester and Wolves are beginning to lose touch. Both are still seeking their first win of the season. Only two Leicester players have scored league goals this season — Gary Lineker has hit four and Robert Jones one.

Wolves haven't scored a First Division goal for a month and Notts County and Norwich are also in trouble. County went down to their sixth consecutive defeat, by the only goal at home to Everton.

TODAY'S FIRST DIVISION PLACES

	P	W	D	L	F	A	P
West Ham	8	6	0	2	19	7	18
Southampton	8	5	2	1	9	2	17
Ipswich	8	5	1	2	20	9	16
Man. Utd	8	5	1	2	14	11	16
QPR	8	4	2	2	15	8	14
Liverpool	8	4	2	2	8	5	14
West Brom	8	4	2	2	13	11	14
Birmingham	8	4	2	2	9	9	14
LUTON TOWN	**8**	**4**	**1**	**3**	**15**	**8**	**13**
Notts For	8	4	1	3	12	11	13
Aston Villa	8	4	1	3	11	10	13
Arsenal	8	4	0	4	13	10	12
Everton	8	3	3	3	8	7	12
Spurs	8	3	2	3	12	9	11
Coventry	8	3	2	3	12	14	11
Sunderland	8	3	1	4	7	13	10
Watford	8	2	2	4	14	14	8
Stoke	8	2	1	5	8	16	7
Norwich	8	1	3	4	11	14	6
Notts Co	8	2	0	6	8	16	6
Wolves	8	0	2	6	5	19	2
Leicester	8	0	1	7	5	20	1