

HATTERS UNDER THE HAMMER



83/84

● Scorer Walsh

THERE WAS MORE bad news for the Hatters after this defeat plunged them into an unexpected relegation scrap.

Midfield ace Ricky Hill told the Herald he is far from ready to rejoin the club's second successive battle to beat the drop.

"I've only just started training on the leg again," said Ricky. "No dates have been set for a comeback. But I hope to return before the end of the season."

Luton never really deserved to take any reward away from West Ham.

Yet they spurned the offer of a point by failing to bite when Hammers revealed their soft centre in the second half.

Paul Allen provided the passes for Tony Cottee and Alvin Martin to put West Ham two up at half-time.

Paul Walsh, back after a two match absence through injury, put Town back in contention before Cottee's second goal made sure Hammers stayed in line for a place in Europe.

There was added pressure for they had won only once since going out of the FA

WEST HAM 3 LUTON 1

Cottee, 2, Martin

Walsh

By DOMINIC BIGGS

Cup in disgrace at Birmingham in mid February.

Recently a 6-0 thrashing at Anfield preceded a home defeat by Sunderland.

Backed by a 15,430 crowd, their lowest in the league this season, they took the game to Luton and were repaid in the 25th minute.

Cottee, the 18-year-old who scored West Ham's winner at Kenilworth Road, caught a sleeping defence to shoot past Sealey.

With Barnes raiding down both flanks, Hammers created a stream of openings.

When Allen slung over a cross eight minutes before half-time, Martin and Swindlehurst were left alone in the six yard box. Martin accepted the invitation by heading in over the stranded keeper.

Luton attacks meanwhile were snuffed out on the edge of West Ham's penalty area — their best effort was a Moss shot. Hammers were inches away from a third goal following a move between Bonds, Cottee, Brooking and Swindlehurst.

Walsh's goal, 20 minutes into the second half, changed the trend.

Horton, outside the 18 yard box, passed wide to Bunn, who found his way to the line and cut the ball back for Stein. His deflected shot bounced over the diving Parkes for Walsh to tap in.

Only then did Luton threaten, Bunn bursting into the box, creating scoring chances for Stein and Walsh.

But Bunn it was who went off 16 minutes from the end, as Clive Goodyear took over at the back and Mal Donaghy pushed up into midfield.

Minutes later Walsh had the chance to make it 2-2. Clear through, he waited for Parkes to dive before chipping over him — but into the side netting.

Last season Walsh won this fixture for Hatters with a virtuoso hat trick.

But this time it was Cottee who popped up among an again static Luton defence to hook a drive past Sealey and make it his and West Ham's night.

WEST HAM: Parkes, Stewart, Walford, Bonds, Martin, Barnes, Allen, Cottee, Swindlehurst, Brooking, Pike. Sub: Donald.

LUTON: Sealey, Stephens, Thomas, Horton, Elliott, Donaghy, Parker, Stein, Walsh, Bunn, Moss. Sub: Goodyear.

CANON LEAGUE Division One

	P	W	D	L	F	A	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Liverpool.....	35	12	3	2	39	9	8	6	4	20	17	69
Man Utd	36	13	2	3	38	15	6	9	3	26	19	68
Nottm F	36	11	3	3	35	15	7	4	8	26	25	61
QPR	36	12	3	3	32	10	6	3	9	24	21	60
Southampton	34	12	4	2	29	15	5	4	7	15	18	59
West Ham	36	10	4	4	38	20	7	3	8	18	26	58
Tottenham	36	9	3	6	26	22	6	6	6	30	31	54
Arsenal	36	8	4	6	33	23	7	3	8	28	27	52
Aston Villa	36	12	3	3	29	18	2	6	10	22	35	51
Watford	36	8	5	5	33	29	6	2	10	28	38	49
Everton	35	7	8	3	15	10	5	4	8	18	27	48
Norwich	35	9	5	4	30	16	3	6	8	12	22	47
Leicester	36	10	4	4	35	24	2	7	9	24	33	47
LUTON	37	6	5	7	26	28	7	3	9	21	28	47
Coventry	37	7	4	8	29	30	5	6	7	21	27	46
Birmingham	36	7	4	7	18	17	5	4	9	17	24	44
West Brom	35	8	4	5	23	19	4	3	11	17	33	43
Sunderland	36	6	8	4	22	16	4	4	10	13	31	42
Stoke	36	10	3	5	24	20	1	5	12	11	38	41
Ipswich	36	8	4	6	29	22	2	3	13	14	31	37
Notts Co	35	5	6	6	26	29	4	3	11	16	30	36
Wolves	35	3	7	8	14	25	2	2	13	12	42	24

(● After Tuesday's results)