

WHAT a feast! Hungry Hatters gorged themselves on Southampton's ineptitude and left the fans bloated on a diet of non-stop action.

The great Peter Shilton was helpless against the onslaught that produced Luton's best ever First Division victory.

Hatters gave Saints a lesson in mobility, movement off the ball that made seasoned defenders look like park players. Southampton were confused and ultimately destroyed by the pace and

LUTON 7 SOUTHAMPTON 0 Report by GRAHAM PUNTER

precision of it all.

Such invention and fire-power should bring back the crowds. It would be naive to suggest it will, of course, but at least the 8,876 who turned up will bear witness to the entertainment on offer.

At the risk of appearing greedy, it has to be said that missed chances saved Saints'

blushes because this truly could have been a scoreline in double figures.

It would be difficult to imagine any professional team offering less resistance to Luton's attack and at the other end, providing an easier afternoon for Les Sealey.

King among kings was Brian Stein, so



● David Preece puts another one past Shilton.

sharp and dangerous, who deservedly conjured up a hat-trick with which to celebrate his 28th birthday.

Southampton competed seriously for six minutes, until Nwajiobi's opener, and then slightly less so until Stein's first after 33

minutes.

That second goal ended the game as any sort of contest and from then on it was simply a case of how many Luton would score.

Another five followed, but there were seven other good

chances, without reply from Southampton, that could have produced goals.

Stein was unlucky with a ninth minute effort set up by Nwajiobi that ended with the ball flashing just wide.

Harford, off the

7UP!

Match details

**LUTON TOWN 7, SOUTHAMPTON 0
HALF-TIME 3-0**

TOWN: Sealey; Breacker, Foster, Donaghy, Thomas; Hill, Nicholas, Preece, (Daniel 73 mins); Stein, Harford, Nwajiobi.

SOUTHAMPTON: Shilton; Baker, Wright, Bond, Dennis; Case, Lawrence, Armstrong, Townsend; Cockerill, Moran. Sub: Puckett, spared from being sent on.

THE GOALS: Brian Stein hat-trick, 32, 55, and 89 mins (penalty); Meka Nwajiobi 5 mins; Ricky Hill 35 mins; David Preece 59 mins; Ray Daniel 88 mins.

OTHER STRIKES: Town 11 saved and nine wide; Southampton four saved, none of them dangerous, and six wide. Corners: 5-4 to Southampton.

ENTERTAINMENT: An amazing display of pace, power and precision by the Town, with Peter Shilton preventing the score going into double figures.

REFEREE: Colin Downey, Hounslow—counting the goals was the hardest problem the Town set him.

BOOKED: Steve Baker of Southampton for a late and high tackle on Brian Stein, who tormented all members of the visiting defence and midfield.

ATTENDANCE: 8,876—second lowest of the season for a league game, but 200 more than for the corresponding match last year. The absentees should kick themselves.

scoresheet but a major contributor to this comprehensive performance, brought the best out of Shilton just before half-time.

Then Stein chipped just over the bar, displaying wonderful control.

Hard

Nwajiobi drove the ball hard and low but inches wide in an astonishing attack that had three players bearing down on Shilton as the keeper's kamikaze defence were stranded on the half-way line.

Stein had a header a fraction too high and then a brilliant dipping volley that Shilton tipped over.

Wide

Nwajiobi actually rounded the formidable keeper, but was driven wide in so doing and his shot crashed into a covering defender on the line.

This was a day to savour and it's just a pity some of those goals couldn't have been banked for Saturday's trip to Anfield.

LUTON: Sealey, Breacker, Foster, Donaghy, Thomas, Hill, Nicholas, Preece, Stein, Harford, Nwajiobi. Sub: Daniel.

SOUTHAMPTON: Shilton, Baker, Wright, Bond, Dennis, Case, Armstrong, Townsend, Lawrence, Cockerill, Moran. Sub: Puckett.