

Speedie rocket sinks Luton

Chelsea 1, Luton 0
WINDSWEPT Luton came away from Stamford Bridge with nothing to show from a lively performance that gave high flying Chelsea a run for their money.

From the start it was clear that the fiercely swirling wind would make it a difficult afternoon for skilful football.

Luton fielded a forward pairing that just a few weeks ago would have been unrecognisable.

New striker Mike Newell struggled to adapt to the pace of First Division football and Mark North also had early problems with the conditions.

Chelsea started in a rough and ready fashion and Luton's first two openings came from free kicks. First a sixth minute foul on Stein led to problems in the Chelsea area and moments later Foster was hauled back as he burst through on to a loose ball. Luton though, could not

Report by Greg Fountain

find anything to threaten the keeper on this occasion.

After 10 minutes Newell made his first mark on the action when his dipping shot flew just over from 20 yards.

At this stage Luton were well in control and Chelsea hardly looked like championship contenders. Their attacking ideas were restricted to long balls for Kerry Dixon to chase, but on a couple of occasions this did prove awkward for Luton's defence.

Dixon shot wide as Sealey charged out to confront him and the he did convert a chance only, for the referee to rule him off-side.

In the final quarter of the first half both sides livened up, Chelsea winning two corners and getting into Luton's penalty area for the first time in the process.

Les Sealey was forced to tip over a close range effort, but it was at the

other end that the deadlock was nearly broken.

Mark North hit the underside of the bar with a rising cross shot, and then Ricky Hill, who was enjoying a splendid afternoon, saw his shot beat the keeper but slither agonisingly wide.

Chelsea started the second half at a furious pace, and Sealey had to be at his most alert to make a save on his line from a Dixon header.

Luton struggled to make an impact but the two full backs were not discouraged from pushing forward and both Thomas and Breacker gave the Chelsea defence nasty moments.

But Chelsea took the lead in the 56th minute with a typically simple goal. David Speedie burst through into the Luton area to crack an unstoppable shot past Sealey.

The whole pattern of the game then turned against Luton, and Foster was lucky to escape with only a booking after hauling down Speedie as Chelsea took over the midfield.



Ricky Hill, who was outstanding for Luton.

Chelsea: Niegzwiecki, Lee, Dublin, Rougvie, McLaughlin, Bumstead, Nevin, Spackman, Dixon, Speedie, Hazard. Sub: Canonville.

Luton: Sealey, Breacker, Thomas, Nicholas, Foster, Donaghie, Hill, Stein, Newell, M. North, Preece. Sub: Daniel.