

MAGIC BROTHERS DEMOLISH SAINTS

A PIECE of solid determination by Ian Allinson, and a touch of magic from the Stein brothers, has earned Luton an FA Cup fifth round tie at Queen's Park Rangers on February 20, ironically the same date the teams were due to meet in the league.

The Hatters, already in the semi-finals of the Littlewoods Cup, plundered victory in the last eight minutes in an explosive finale which lifted the match out of the doldrums.

Southampton seemed to be on line for victory after Colin Clarke had put them ahead with a 30 yard freak goal, but that only sparked Luton into action and on to success.

As far as Cup games are concerned Luton's confidence seems sky high and the feeling is that the brilliant Hatters find it difficult to believe they can be defeated.

On Saturday Luton face Littlewoods Cup opponents Oxford United at Kenilworth Road.

When the teams met earlier this season Oxford were thrashed 5-2 at the Manor Ground and Ray Harford's men will be aiming to maintain their superiority in what should be quite an entertaining affair.

Keeper John Burridge certainly kept Southampton

LUTON 2
Allinson 83,
B. Stein 84
SOUTHAMPTON 1
Clarke 71

in with a shout with two breathtaking saves before Luton broke through, and the referee ensured that the scoresheets remained blank for both sides by disallowing goals from Danny Wallace for what looked to be offside and by Brian Stein for handball.

Measure

The match began in typical cup style with the teams trying to find the measure of each other. Allinson made the first positive move in the 10th minute with a spectacular lob in the area and Mark Stein's effort rose too high.

However, he had a great opportunity, courtesy of Darron McDonough, 10 minutes later but a brilliant point-blank save from Burridge denied him.

Luton were always in control up to the interval with only one worthwhile

expedition into their area which was badly finished by Wallace.

The second half took some time to warm up and the best opportunity for Saints arrived in the 57th minute when a defensive

error allowed Clarke the freedom of the area but he wasted a glorious chance.

Mick Harford hit a rasping 25 yard drive but Burridge was equal to it with another great save.

The deadlock was broken in the 71st minute when Clarke, over on the right touchline near the corner flag, stunned the Hatters with a left foot drive which seemed to be intended for Wallace but which curled into the net leaving Les Sealey stranded.

However, the Hatters turned the heat on and in a blistering two minutes changed the whole result.

A short corner from substitute Ashley Grimes in the 83rd minute found Allinson who took full advantage of Southampton's backpeddling defence when he shot low and hard to the far post. His effort was helped in by defender Derek Statham.

But before anyone had time to draw breath Mark and Brian Stein combined with deadly effect in the 84th minute for Brian to slot home from close range and so wrap up the game.

Afterwards manager Ray Harford said: "They just feel that they are never going to get beaten."

Southampton's boss Chris Nicholl said: "The players thought they were coasting it and that's the trouble."

LUTON: Sealey, Breacker, Johnson (Grimes 75), McDonough, Foster, Donaghy, Wilson, B. Stein, Harford, M. Stein, Allinson. Substitute: Black.

SOUTHAMPTON: Burridge, Forrest, Statham, Baker, Moore, Blake, Hobson, Cockerill, Clarke, Townsend, D. Wallace. Substitutes: Benali, R. Wallace.

Referee: Danny Vickers (Ilford).

Attendance: 10,009.



● Mick Harford looks on as Brian Stein, number eight, earns Hatters' victory.