

STEIN MACHINE'S HAT-TRICK TONIC

87/88



● Three of Hatters' marksmen — left to right — Mark Stein, Darron McDonough and Mick Harford with no. 11, Ian Allinson.

WHEN Luton and Oxford meet, the match usually produces a glut of goals but their latest encounter certainly surpassed all expectations.

Oxford slumped to one of their worst defeats since entering Division One but Luton also gained a dubious record, conceding the most goals on their Kenilworth Road ground since going plastic.

However, it's not just the front line that produces goal sprees for Luton reserves beat Oxford 5-2 and the youngsters also beat their Manor Road rivals 4-2.

So, adding Luton's 5-2 away win in September last year, the scoreline reads: Luton 21 for, 10 against.

But last night's Littlewoods Cup semi-final first leg game was expecting to see a likely change with perhaps the goals not being so free flowing.

Both teams must have their sights set on a Wembley appearance, Luton have waited for 29 years.

Mark Stein was really a Stein machine hitting a brilliant hat-trick in a terrific 12 minutes in the second half.

Mick Harford showed all his skill, opening and closing proceedings with a brace of well taken goals.

Mark's brother Brian also got into the scoring act with a stooping header while Darron McDonough hit a scorching drive.

But really questions have to be asked about Luton's defence.

Yet Luton did score seven and hit the wood-

All expectations are surpassed

LUTON 7

(M. Stein 3, Harford 2, B. Stein, McDonough)

OXFORD 4

(Saunders, Foyle, Hill, Phillips)

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work three times.

"I was pleased with the way we were playing, going forward, but when you concede four goals at home it frightens you," said Ray Harford.

Oxford boss Maurice Evans said: "It could have been 10 each change service, I think."

Mick Harford set the ball rolling in the sixth minute with a left foot drive after being set up by Mark Stein. Then Tim Breacker, having a superb match, hit a low cross for Brian Stein to head home after 19 minutes.

Mark Stein then hit the post and in the 34th minute Oxford came back when Dean Saunders scored from the spot after Breacker was adjudged to have handled.

Martin Foyle pulled another one back for the visitors in the 41st minute.

At that stage many must have thought the free scoring was soon to dry up but the first half was just a taster of what

was to come.

Darron McDonough stretched the Hatters' lead further in the 51st minute and two minutes later Mark Stein got the first of his three goals after showing some marvellous individual skills. He hit his second two minutes later.

Richard Hill pulled yet another goal back for Oxford in the 62nd minute. McDonough hit the post a minute earlier.

Mark Stein made it 6-3 in the 63rd minute and Les Phillips made it 6-4 in the 65th minute.

The goal scoring eventually drew to a halt in the 71st minute when Harford rose well to connect with Breacker's cross to head powerfully home.

LUTON: Sealey, Breacker, Johnson (Grimes 45), McDonough, Foster, Donaghy, Wilson, B. Stein, Harford, M. Stein, Allinson. Substitute: Black.

Oxford: Hardwick, Bardsley, Hill, Shelton (Mustoe 83), Briggs, Caton (Whitehurst 73), Hebberd, Foyle, Saunders, Phillips, Rhoades-Brown.

Referee: Noel Butler (East Molesey, Surrey).

Attendance: 8,063.