

# THE CRAZY GANG!

## A brave fight after seven mad minutes

A SEVERE seven-minute mauling devastated Luton's hopes of completing a successful Lion-taming exercise.

Hatters paid a heavy price for their inexperience and lack of vigilance during those fateful first-half minutes, when Millwall's bluff and bluster blossomed briefly into decisive fruit.

Stunned by a three-goal blast, the wounded young troops proved man enough to stand up and fight back but, as boss Ray Harford admitted afterwards: "There is nowhere to come from when you are 3-0 down."

It was tragic for Marvin Johnson — whose performance at Leeds last week was truly inspired — that he should be the one to give away the vital goal in the 18th minute.

His firmly hit square pass across the face of the penalty area came at Steve Foster like a rocket, and the Luton skipper had little chance of controlling it. Teddy Sheringham raced through and drilled the loose ball into the bottom corner.

Until that moment Millwall had been held at bay by a solid rear-guard, in which Julian James showed he had got over his Elland Road tears, and by good support play from Danny Wilson, Ricky Hill and Kingsley Black.

And Hatters had showed that they were willing to go forward at every opportunity, relying somewhat too heavily on Roy Wegerle's undoubted ability and David Oldfield's aerial

dexterity.

Both were too often swamped by tough nonsense defending and lack of support.

Millwall's second goal emerged from the chaos following four minutes after the first. A George Lawrence corner caused an outbreak of leg-flailing in the Luton defence, which ended with David Oldfield tripping Darren Morgan.

### Penalty

In truth, it might have been a good deal more fair if the referee had penalised Keith Stevens for bulldozing Black a split second before, but Kevin O'Callaghan buried the penalty.

Hatters tried to fight the rising tide, winning



88/89 • Hands up — Roy Wegerle gets his collar felt at The Den.

### MILLWALL 3 LUTON 1

By GREG FOUNTAIN

• MILLWALL: Horne, Stevens, Dawes, Morgan, Thompson, McLeary, Lawrence, Briley, Sheringham, Cascarino, O'Callaghan. Subs: Ruddock, Salman.

• LUTON: Sealey, James, Dreyer, Williams, Foster, Johnson M, Wilson, Oldfield, Wegerle, Hill, Black. Subs: Johnson R, Grimes.

• ATTENDANCE: 12,511

a 23rd minute corner which twice moderately tested outstanding keeper Brian Horne, but Millwall were up and running and scored again two minutes later.

Wilson obstructed O'Callaghan on the edge of the box and was booked for his trouble, and O'Callaghan then slid the free kick short to Ian Dawes whose dead-straight shot hit Les Sealey's top corner with awesome power.

Hatters at this stage were totally out of their stride, and could have suffered further agonies had Les Briley not wasted a chance from the edge of the box, but they recovered their composure with the best move of the game in the 39th minute.

Hill fanned a pass

out to Black on the left, which Oldfield took up and fed to John Dreyer on the overlap. Dreyer then exchanged passes with Steve Williams before curling a delightful shot which was matched by a thrilling full-length save from Horne.

Millwall's power faded as the game wore on, and Luton were only threatened occasionally, but they could not muster the creativity from midfield to put Wegerle or Oldfield in front of goal.

Oldfield had two tame shots, one of which almost beat Horne after an awkward bounce, but it was Millwall's Sheringham who came closest, beating three men and bringing a great save out of Sealey with his shot from 12 yards.

Tony Cascarino, whose presence unsettled Luton all afternoon, skinned Foster 15 minutes from time, but shot wide after running into the box.

Rob Johnson came on for James but the straight swap made little impact as Johnson's efforts to forage forward were continually frustrated.

Finally, Luton did score two minutes from time. Oldfield won a free-kick halfway inside the Millwall half, and Williams' swiftly taken kick was dive headed into the corner by the running Wilson.

Suddenly Millwall were all at sea, hacking clear as Dreyer's cross caused havoc, and struggling even to breach the half-way line. For Luton it was proof that those seven minutes of madness had cost them a real chance to do well.



• Grunt and grapple — Kingsley Black and Danny Wilson groan as they are pushed off the ball by a Millwall mauler.