

# IT'S DOWN TO US!

**HATTERS WILL HAVE** no one to blame but themselves if they drop out of top flight soccer.

Defeat at Old Trafford — their fifth loss in six league games — did little to ease Luton's relegation fears.

Boss Ray Harford was heartened by his troops' stirring finale which saw new boy Richard Cooke hit a post and Iain Dowie head just over.

He said: "The majority of our last eight games are at home so it's in our hands now."

"If we do not do it then we do not deserve to stay up."

And he added: "Our attitude was better today — there were no shirkers out there — it was not a bad performance."

Soccer pundits have long thought that Hatters' home advantage would see them to First Division safety.

Poor performances against Millwall and Sheffield Wednesday and Tuesday's defeat at the hands of Spurs have knocked Hatters' confidence at Kenilworth Road, and they will need to rediscover their form to take advantage of the remaining home games against Coventry, Derby, Charlton and Norwich.

Hopeful Harford had thought Manchester United were ripe for the taking.

Hatters have never won at Old Trafford and have failed to hit the net at the famous stadium since November 14 1959, but United's exit from the FA Cup

## MANCHESTER UTD 2 LUTON 0 By MICHAEL WEINSTEIN

*MAN UTD: Leighton, Martin, Blackmore, Bruce, McGrath, Donaghy, Robson, Beardsmore (Maiorana 79), McClair, Hughes, Milne. Other sub: Gill.*

*LUTON: Sealey, Breacker, Harvey, McDonough, Foster, Beaumont, Wilson (Cooke 67), Preece (Dowie 82), Harford, Hill, Black.*

• Attendance: 36,335.

88/89

left the manager saying: "United's season looks as if it's finished — they could be ripe for a defeat."

Harford might have got his wish had Hatters not gifted United a two-goal lead.

David Preece's poor third minute clearance was worked back into the danger zone and Ralph Milne was left all alone to side foot home at the far post.

And after 26 minutes, Foster was caught out of position as he argued with Tim Breacker and Clayton Blackmore swept through Hatters' rearguard to score under Les Sealey in some style.

Hatters' best chance in the opening period came after 34 minutes

when Foster took the ball off Mick Harford's head from a Preece free kick — the ball dropping comfortably for Jim Leighton — when the striker would have done better.

Sealey kept Luton in the game after the restart, with two breath-taking saves in quick succession.

England skipper Bryan Robson connected with a 59th minute free kick after Richard



• Old pals — Ricky Hill is watched closely by ex-Hatter Mal Donaghy.

Harvey had handled but the keeper made a fine reflex save.

And three minutes later he was there again with a tremendous diving stop from Milne's crushing shot.

But it was Hatters who finished the stronger.

Harford — who ran his heart out with little support — was a whisker away from connecting with another Preece free kick after Black had been pulled back in a promising position.

Danny Wilson picked up the pelvic and back

injuries that kept him out of Tuesday night's game with Spurs in the 67th minute.

His replacement, Cooke, a £125,000 deadline signing from Bournemouth, headed

against a post after Black's lightning run and cross.

And in injury time, second sub Dowie glanced a header just over, from another Black cross.