

Liverpool..... 2

Luton 2

89/90 **David Keenan**

THOSE among a 35,312 crowd, who confidently expected Liverpool to repeat their 8-0 humiliation of Swansea with a similarly emphatic victory against struggling Luton, received what must have been a nasty shock to the system at Anfield yesterday.

They might have been content with what looked a thoroughly competent, if less spectacular Liverpool performance, had a Barnes goal from a 32nd minute free kick remained the difference between the two sides.

But no-one at Anfield could have been prepared for the transformation which put Luton, deep in relegation trouble and still without a League win in 11 games, within sight of what would have been a remarkable victory.

All seemed well for Liverpool when they profited from a handling offence by Donaghy. Barnes, in typically flamboyant style, curled the free kick into the top corner to give goal-keeper Chamberlain no chance of saving.

Liverpool would have consolidated their advantage but for some excellent covering by Dreyer and one goal-line clearance in the 55th minute by their captain, Wilson.

But the game was transformed when Luton scored twice in three minutes, only to be denied what would have been a useful victory by Nicol's late equaliser.

Black started the Luton revival with a crisp left-foot volley from the edge of the area after the Liverpool defence had failed to clear a right-wing cross. Then Nogan, a reserve team striker, celebrated his Luton debut by clipping a second goal past Grobbelaar after Black had set up the opportunity with a strong run and cross from the left.

Within two minutes Liverpool had scored their face-saving equaliser, Nicol rising at the far post to meet a cross from Barnes with a powerful header, which left Chamberlain stranded.