



● Beaumont: Another outstanding display, particularly after an early booking.



● James: The find of the season, who defended and attacked with maturity beyond his years.



● Dreyer: Did a great job with Beaumont to subdue Harford and Saunders.



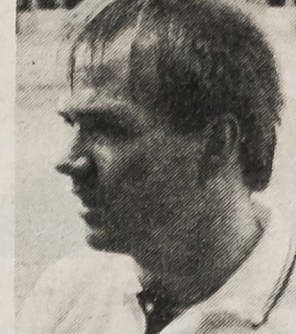
● Wilson: "We were written off, and people seem to want us down. But we play attractive football."



● Rees: A constant threat, who gave his all in the first hour with a typically lively performance.



● Dowie: Must have covered miles in the 80 degree heat, and admitted: "It's the best day of my life."



● Preece: Has found a new lease of life under Ryan.



● Black: "The fans were magnificent, their support was worth a couple of goals."



● McDonough: "If winning the cup was half as good as this it must have been great."



● Brecker: "I was going to chip the free-kick into the box, but it was only Shilts in goal!"



● Chamberlain: A breathtaking save from Wright.



● Preece and Black celebrate.



● Shilton beat Dowie to this one but was still beaten three times himself.

EVERYONE A WINNER

FROM start to finish this was a pulsating encounter lacking in nothing, and providing the climax to a season that had to be seen to be believed.

Every drama relies on its ending, and the finale at the Baseball Ground was one of the most incredible days of sport I have ever witnessed.

Everyone was indeed a winner; Jim Ryan and his staff, the 13 heroes on the pitch, and the thousands of Luton fans who provided full-blooded support which matched the efforts of their team.

The Hatters have certainly survived the hard way, beating Palace with seconds to spare, and then squandering a two-goal lead at Derby. But their performances deserved reward, and Sheffield Wednesday have only themselves to blame for their appearance in Division Two next season.

Many in the top flight wanted Luton down, but whatever the rights and wrongs of plastic and membership schemes, Jim Ryan's team are winning friends by playing an entertaining brand of football.

There was nothing artificial about the win at Derby, for this was class on grass against a

team who had conceded on average just a goal a game all season.

We expected drama, and got it in the first minute as Tim Brecker crashed in a 35-yard shot which left Peter Shilton motionless.

It was an unrehearsed free-kick move which Ryan later admitted annoyed him when the ball was first played. But that changed to delight, almost matched by a press-box colleague: the only man in the ground to back Brecker at 33/1 to score first.

The news came of a Forest score, and the Hatters' elation increased further when Wilson and Dowie combined to set up Black

who gave Shilton his second touch on his second visit to the back of the net.

Old boy Harford headed over, but as Wright moved forward Derby looked increasingly dangerous, and he pulled one back on the half hour.

Chamberlain produced a breathtaking save to deny Wright a second, but after Dowie had headed a good chance wide, Derby equalised on the stroke of half-time; Williams firing home after a free-kick had been awarded for his clash with Wilson.

89/90
**Class on grass
on incredible
day for Hatters**



● Elstrup tries to break through the defence after coming on for Rees midway through the second half.

But in the second half it was all Luton; either finding the tireless Dowie or the dangerous and brilliant Black.

A box of heart tablets found in the stand was testimony to the tension as Luton searched for a way through.

Black saw Shilton make one great save, before threading a shot through the defence and in off the post.

With Forest now 2-0, and later 3-0 up, the scene was set for a nail-biting ending, but Luton maintained their composure for an historic win.

The apparently impossible dream had come true, achieved with skill and determination, a truly great escape. As one fan commented: "All that's missing is Steve McQueen riding a motorbike across the pitch."



● Wilson battles for possession with Derby's Forsyth.

**'Well
done
lads'**

FORMER Hatters star Mick Harford paid tribute to Jim Ryan for turning round the fortunes of the team.

The Derby striker said Ryan had done a great job, and although disappointed by his sides' performance he pointed out:

"All credit to Luton; they came needing to climb a mountain, and they have done it. It was do or die for them, and they put us under a lot of pressure and deserved to get the winner.

"At the end of the game I said 'Well done' to the lads, because they deserved it with the way they played."



● Elstrup: "I have never experienced anything like this."



● Kennedy: "I was promoted with Portsmouth but this is better than that."



● Ryan: "The response from all the players has been quite moving."

● Luton's win was voted Barclay's Performance of the Week, by a panel chaired by England manager Bobby Robson.

The prize is £650 to be donated to a local boy's club of Luton's choice.