

GOAL-LESS IAIN ON A DOWNER!

IAIN DOWIE saw three late chances go begging and admitted: "I'm prepared to take the blame for us not winning."

The striker, nicknamed Downer by team-mates, is now without a goal in five games.

He refused to take a swipe at lady luck but if she'd been on his side, surely one of the chances would have found the net.

Chance No. 1 came with 15 minutes to go when the striker failed to divert a quick Steve Williams free kick past Neville Southall.

No. 2, the most glaring miss of all, saw Dowie head over from point-blank range.

And No. 3 came when the striker hurled himself at a cross from young sub Jason Rees, only to direct the header wide of the mark.

All three chances came in the space of just three minutes and left the striker saying: "It's getting very frustrating for me.

"We dominated the game and came away with only the draw.

"It's not my way to say I was unlucky. You can't shirk your responsibility — I'm prepared to take the blame.

"I believe you make your own luck, but I've not had the rub of the green recently.

Spectacular

"As a forward, I believe you should score in every game.

"I'm my own biggest critic and I'm doing extra training after everyone else has gone home.

"I feel I didn't get the rub of the green with the first chance, I jumped to early for the second and the third was a tough one.

"One day, four will go in for me. All I can do is hope it's the next game."

The striker had a special thank-you for the Kenilworth Road faithful who remained solidly behind him, even after the late misses.

David Preece brought a spectacular save out of Southall with just 12 seconds



● It's there — Iain Dowie celebrates as Lars Elstrup's header beats Neville Southall.

LUTON 1 EVERTON 1 BY MICHAEL WEINSTEIN

LUTON: Chamberlain, Johnson, Harvey, Williams, Beaumont, Dreyer, Elstrup (Rees 62), Preece, Dowie, Hughes, Black. Other sub: McDonough.

EVERTON: Southall, Atteveld, Keown, Ratcliffe, Watson, McDonald, Nevin, McCall, Sharp, Cottee, Ebbrell. Subs: Newell, Youds.

● REFEREE: Steve Bell.

● ATTENDANCE: 10,047.

90/91

on the clock and Ceri Hughes was a whisker away from converting a superb Lars Elstrup run and cross.

The eccentric Southall came out of his area to hoist a clearance in the direction of the Arndale Centre.

Neil McDonald escaped punishment for a dreadful challenge on Preece and after referee Steve Bell, making his First Division debut, had turned down two Luton penalty claims in quick succession, Steve Williams went into the book for dissent.

Southall just got a fingertip to a curling Richard Harvey cross but he was powerless to prevent Luton taking the lead from a stunning move after 25 minutes.

Top-scorer Elstrup cut in from the wing and tucked a neat ball into Preece. The midfielder played an instant pass to Harvey whose splendid cross was converted by Elstrup from 10 yards.

Southall raced out of his goal again after 28 minutes and after losing possession to Kinglsey Black, deliberately handled the winger's cross some 30 yards from his goal. The crowd were baying for the keeper's dismissal but Bell stood firm and showed him a yellow card.

The Merseysiders drew level six minutes after the re-start when Harvey failed to deal with a high cross from Martin Keown and Pat Nevin nipped in to score past Alec Chamberlain.

Luton's effectiveness dipped when Elstrup, who turned an ankle in the first 60 seconds, went over again and had to be replaced by Rees.

However Dowie's late spurt ought to have produced a more convincing result for Hatters.



● Congratulations — Lars Elstrup celebrates his goal with Richard Harvey