

Sherwood wins it

MARK BOWEN led City in his official capacity as new team captain for the first time as they took on Luton Town at Kenilworth Road this afternoon.

Manager Dave Stringer kept faith with the side beaten by Nottingham Forest in last week's FA Cup quarter-final.

Ian Butterworth, who lost the captaincy this week after having a second transfer request turned down, was again on the bench alongside striker Ruel Fox.

It was the Canaries last match on the plastic pitch before it is taken up in the summer.

Luton, who beat Liverpool and Forest in their previous two home games, kept the side beaten at Coventry in midweek.

Defender Graham Rodger recovered from a neck injury he suffered at Highfield Road.

Steady rain fell for half-an-hour before kick-off but had just about petered out by the time the action started, with City kicking off.

It was a bustling start and a huge goal kick by Chamberlain caused some uncertainty before Gunn rushed to the edge of his area to hammer the ball clear.

As Luton attacked again, Elstrup delivered a teasing cross and Goss did well to intercept and steer the ball back to his goalkeeper.

Polston tried to set up a swift counter attack but his through ball was just too long for Crook.

There were some determined challenges going in in midfield and Pembridge earned applause from the home crowd for some tigerish play before he was crowded out.

Elstrup, who scored a hat-trick at Norwich in September, was keen to add to his tally but his first effort, following a touch from Dowie, was badly mistimed.

With eight minutes gone, Pembridge was first to a loose ball and tried to set up Black for a crack at goal, Polston timing his challenge well to dispossess the No 11.

There were half-hearted calls for a penalty when Beaumont went down under challenge from Blades, but the referee was unimpressed. Preece then tried to send



Dreyer through wide on the left, only to be foiled by the linesman's flag.

It was an untidy contest so far and, after an off-the-ball skirmish between Fleck and Dreyer, Johnson had to resort to a desperate clearance to prevent Goss getting on the end of a cross by Phillips.

The Canaries were unable to make anything from the corner, however, and were soon on the defensive as Elstrup and Preece combined to give Black a useful chance. There were groans from the home terrace when Blacktamey lobbed his effort wide of the target.

Luton were looking lively now and a great one-two between Pembridge and Elstrup almost paid dividends with the final ball to Black just a touch too strong.

With 21 minutes gone, however, City moved ahead with a goal of great simplicity and polish, SHERWOOD scoring his eighth of the season.

Phillips, who had switched flanks to good effect, provided the cross and Fleck knocked the ball

Today's line-up

LUTON TOWN — Chamberlain, Johnson, McDonough, Beaumont, Rodger, Dreyer, Elstrup, Preece, Dowie, Pembridge, Black. Subs — Farrell, Harvey.

NORWICH CITY — Gunn,

Culverhouse, Bowen, Blades, Polston, Crook, Gordon, Fleck, Sherwood, Goss, Phillips. Subs — Fox, Butterworth. Referee — Martin Bodenham, Looe, Cornwell.



already been ruled offside.

There was a real scare for City on the half-hour when Sherwood crashed to the ground in some discomfort following an off-the-ball clash with McDonough. The Luton man seemed lucky to escape without so much as a word from the referee but Sherwood, after treatment on what appeared to be a blow in the side, was able to carry on.

There was clearly some ill feeling between Sherwood and McDonough, and Luton earned a free-kick when the big No 3 went down a shade theatrically as Sherwood challenged him just outside the Norwich area.

Preece curled the resulting free-kick towards Dowie, who headed just off target when he might have done better.

The game was becoming bad tempered and so were the crowd. They were furious at having appeals for a penalty rejected when Black crashed to the floor under challenge from Polston as he tried to put the finishing touches to another Preece-Dowie combination.

back perfectly for Sherwood to side-foot a cool 20-yard effort into the corner of the net.

As Luton hit back, Beaumont let fly from 20 yards but Gunn was right behind it.

There was then a angry scuffle on the edge of the area between Culverhouse and Preece and both players earned a lecture before play restarted with a free-kick to Luton, Preece curling his centre towards Dowie, who headed just wide.

Black threatened again when he brought down a cross from Preece and whipped in a left-foot volley which struck Elstrup on the back.

But after 26 minutes, Phillips was no more than a foot away from stretching Norwich's lead. A free-kick by Polston went straight to him on the edge of the area and he produced a powerful right-foot shot which fairly sizzled past Chamberlain's left-hand post.

The home crowd thought Luton had equalised two minutes later when Dowie rose high to head in a cross from the left but he had

As played carried on, Fleck upended Johnson — and from the free-kick, the Hatters really should have equalised. Preece was again the provider and when McDonough challenged in the air, the ball fell kindly for Black, who failed again with the goal at his mercy and City at sixes and sevens.

There was another escape for Norwich four minutes before the break when Johnson fired a cross deep into the area and Black once more failed to cash in, Blades robbing him with a vital last-ditch tackle and landing quite badly on the hard surface.

In first half injury time, Crook curled a free-kick just wide after Fleck had been fouled by McDonough.

Half-time —
Luton Town 0, Norwich City 1

Luton won the first free-kick of the second half, which started in heavy rain. Preece took it just five yards into his own half and Dowie won the ball in the air, but Culverhouse was well placed to head clear.

It was certainly a very murky afternoon, with the

floodlights on full from the restart, but things should have been considerably brighter for the home side just three minutes into the half.

A deceptive cross from Johnson reached Preece at the far post but he allowed Gunn to close him down and produce what proved to be an excellent save at the feet of the Luton midfielder.

Luton were certainly doing all the pressing at this stage but there was the ragged look about the final pass all too often and the crowd were becoming very frustrated.

Norwich won a free-kick when they did break forward, but Sherwood could only get in a rather half-hearted shot from the edge of the box which Chamberlain gathered very comfortably.

Ten minutes into the half, Gunn produced a brilliant one-handed save from Elstrup to keep his side in front. Dowie had again posed problems in the air and when the ball fell to Elstrup, he whipped in the half-volley with his right foot which Gunn, three or four yards off his line, managed to claw away.

McDonough, something of a wild man on the evidence of this match, delivered another bad challenge on Fleck as City tried to break quickly, but finished up rather worse off himself. With 58 minutes gone, he was forced to hobble off with an injury to his right leg, possibly the result of that challenge.

Luton's increasing frustration was evident moments later when the crowd went wild, firmly of the opinion that Polston had handled in the area, although it appeared unintentional.

Substitute Harvey was quickly into the action with a fierce left-foot drive which Gunn did extremely well to beat away.

Norwich broke quickly when they could, and after Goss had a right-foot shot plucked out of the air by Chamberlain, Sherwood tried to work a one-two with Fleck, the return pass just proving too strong.

Gunn produced his fourth outstanding save of the half after 63 minutes. As Dowie let fly from 20 yards, his right-foot shot looked a goal all the way but Gunn dived brilliantly to his right to turn the ball away.

Tempers flared again in City's next attack when Beaumont clattered Fleck and then took exception to

the Scotsman's angry reaction, Rodger having to break up the argument.

Luton were really buzzing now and another cross from Harvey reached Dowie, whose attempt to shoot was charged down at the expense of a corner.

The Hatters forced two flag kicks in succession and Dreyer almost equalised from the second when, with Gunn for once beaten, Gordon managed to clear for a third corner. This was knocked back to Beaumont whose overhead kick only just cleared the bar.

With 71 minutes gone, Luton manager Ryan threw his second substitute, Farrell, into the fray and withdrew Johnson.

Harvey had made a big impact since replacing McDonough, and another of his crosses poised problems when it reached Elstrup, who might have done better than shoot into the boards. When the Hatters attacked again, Gunn dived bravely at the feet of Dowie, who needed treatment before being able to continue.

There was another mad scramble when a clearance by Blades struck one of his teammates and headed back towards Gunn, the 'keeper once more having to throw himself on the floor to foil Farrell.

For the fourth time, Luton were screaming for a penalty after 78 minutes when Farrell crashed to the floor as he challenged Blades for a huge kick from Chamberlain. The referee, by now a figure of ridicule for the home crowd but in this case absolutely right, awarded a goal kick.

It was all Luton and Elstrup found Pembridge in enough space to have done better than slice a drive across the face of the goal.

Sherwood could have wrapped up the points with his second goal when Gordon sent him racing clear but he allowed Chamberlain to close him down at the near post and produce a vital save.

Result —
Luton Town 0, Norwich City 1

Deadline day

THE transfer deadline is 5pm on March 28 and the Football League has warned clubs to make sure they have enough goalkeepers on their books by the deadline, because there will be no dispensation after it in this specialist position.

Leeds look to Strachan

GORDON STRACHAN, their inspiring captain; could be the man to gain FA Cup revenge for Leeds in tomorrow's live TV showdown at Highbury — and put Arsenal's championship hopes back in the melting pot.

Arsenal manager George Graham admits on the eve of the sixth meeting of the season between the two sides: "At 34 he is a tremendous example. There has never been any questioning his skill, and his level of fitness is superb. He still has a tremendous appetite for the game."

Strachan, recently back in the Scotland side, has been having treatment for a troublesome knee injury all week but is expected to take his familiar place — in a familiar battle.

Arsenal finally got the better of Leeds at Elland Road last month to end a four-match stalemate in the FA Cup. The League game at Leeds last September was also drawn.

● Anglia show the fixture live on The Match, which starts at 2.55pm.

● Paul Elliott makes his return to the Celtic team after injury tomorrow with a clear message for Rangers: "Don't expect any gifts this time."

The Old Firm clash on successive Sundays, but tomorrow's St Patrick's Day Scottish Cup quarter-final clearly carries greater significance than next weekend's league meeting.

A high finish in the championship could take Celtic into the UEFA Cup, but the Scottish Cup offers one last throw of the dice in terms of capturing any silverware.



★ **G O R D O N STRACHAN** . . . could be the man to gain FA Cup revenge for Leeds at Arsenal.

Charlton's big gamble

JACK Charlton is gambling on Kevin Sheedy recovering full fitness for the Republic of Ireland's decisive European Championship qualifier against England at Wembley on March 27.

The Everton winger is named in the squad, even though he has been out of action for five games.

Mick McCarthy and Ronnie Whelan are out injured, but Ray Houghton and John Aldridge return.

Squad — Bonner (Celtic), Peyton (Bournemouth); Morris (Celtic), Irwin (Man Utd), Staunton (Liverpool), Hughton (West Ham), McGrath (Villa), O'Leary (Arsenal), Moran (Blackburn), Houghton (Liverpool), Townsend (Chelsea), Sheridan (Sheffield Wed), Sheedy (Everton), McLoughlin (Southampton), Waddock (Millwall), Aldridge (Real Sociedad), Quinn (Man City), Cascarino (Villa), Slaven (Middlesbrough), Kelly (Leicester), Byrne (Brighton).