

Chelsea overrun by Luton express

Luton 91/92 2
Chelsea 0

John Ley

LUTON TOWN, the team that had forgotten how to win, collected their third successive victory to move off the foot of the First Division for the first time in six weeks.

Luton, who had gone 14 weeks without a win before this run, could even afford the luxury of missing a penalty against Chelsea, who had Boyd dismissed towards the end for a professional foul.

It has been a remarkable turnaround for Luton, who had not won three successive League games for 19 months. They have now achieved it in the space of nine days, without conceding a goal, and more than deserved this exciting victory.

David Pleat, the Luton manager, said: "We were hoping that, because it was Christmas, the League might give four points for a win!"

Chelsea, meanwhile, have lost four of their last five League games and will not have impressed their most famous fan, Prime Minister John Major, who was in the Kenilworth Road stands to witness their demise.

To be fair to the visitors, Chelsea did have a large amount of possession but two goals inside 10 minutes turned the game.

Chelsea had a chance to open the scoring in the 25th minute when a shot by Dixon was saved by Sutton and the rebound, which spun off Harvey, was again stopped by the on-loan goalkeeper.

But Luton responded when, in the 39th minute, they took the lead through Harvey. They won an indirect free kick, which was taken by Pembroke, and passed through the legs of Preece to Harvey who dispatched a magnificent left foot drive from 30-yards around the Chelsea wall and into the right hand corner.

Chelsea had little time to recover; a minute later Beasant blocked Pembroke, who was chasing a long ball from Preece. The goalkeeper, playing in place of the suspended Hitchcock, was only booked but could not block the penalty, taken by Dreyer.

Chelsea had to replace the limping Clarke with Stuart at half-time while Luton had Harford cautioned soon after the restart for fouling Wise.

Luton showed signs of nerves as Chelsea upped the pressure in the second half and they had Sutton to thank for pushing a shot from Elliott on to the crossbar.

Then came the controversy when Telfer robbed Monkou but, with only Beasant to beat, was floored by Boyd, the Scottish international full-back.

Referee John Deakin originally played on but, after consulting a flag-waving linesman, he gave the penalty and sent off Boyd.

Mr Deakin was immediately surrounded by a posse of protesting Chelsea players but at least they survived the penalty.

Pleat ordered Harford to take the kick instead of Dreyer and the striker's shot crashed against the underside of the bar and was cleared.

Chelsea continued to complain about the penalty incident and Elliott was booked for dissent.