



● Maik Taylor dives at full stretch but cannot stop Stuart Douglas' header



● Hatters players celebrate Douglas' goal

■ Top class: Davis kills off Fulham millionaires in style

Rich pickings as Hatters triumph

STEVE Davis plundered goal number six of the season to kill off the Craven Cottage millionaires in devastating style.

Coming to Fulham to play one of the firm favourites for promotion, with a team stuffed full of multi-million pound signings courtesy of Harrods boss Mohammed-al-Fayed, it looked like a classic case of David against Goliath – Fulham, unbeaten at home all season, Luton after two consecutive defeats with it all to do to get their season back on track.

As it turned out, not only were Fulham given a thorough footballing lesson by the 'no-hopers', superb finishing by Phil Gray, Stuart Douglas and Steve Davis left the home side with only Alan Nielson's late header as consolation.

Hatters could hardly have made a better start.

After a couple of Fulham attacks that came to nothing, the visitors established domination in midfield and took the lead as the clock ticked up to the fourth minute.

Man of the match Steve Davis collected a hopeful Fulham punt out of defence and surged forward in typical style. He found Sean Evers in acres of space with a great pass, and as he burst down the right wing, the youngster's inviting cross fell nicely for Phil Gray to pounce with an excellent diving header.

The goal took the steam out of Fulham in

Fulham 1 Luton 3
By BILL COLE

a big way. The only answer from the home side were hopeful high balls into the Town box, many of them from free kicks awarded by a referee who was pleasing the home fans even if their team were not.

Ray McKinnon should have done better for the Town with a free header from the edge of the box. Stuart Douglas persisted with a shot that was always going to be blocked when Evers was in a much better position, and Evers chose to sidefoot a shot from Gavin McGowan's cross that was easily saved by Maik Taylor.

On a rare home attack on the half hour, striker Rob Scott dived at both keeper and ball as Rufus Brevett's cross came in high and Scott came off second best. Not only did Kelvin Davis punch well clear, but the Fulham forward was laid out cold and was stretchered straight off down the tunnel.

What Luton did best in the first half they bettered in the second. Only two minutes in Mitchell Thomas – given a rare start in place of McGowan who moved up to midfield – powered through three tackles, put McGowan away down the left and Douglas flicked a near post header beautifully over Taylor and into the far corner.

The game was effectively over after 64 minutes when from McKinnon's long, long free kick taken from close to both touchline and half way, Steve Davis rose majestically to beat £2.5m defender Chris Coleman and glance a header back across

Taylor and into the net.

The 86th minute jinx struck Luton for the third week running, but this time it mattered little. Fulham had hardly forced a corner all game, but from the last of them the ball bounced about in Town's area and Nielson, up from the back, headed home from close range.

The goals that began each period seemed to knock all the fight out of Fulham. The experienced Peter Bearsley and Paul Bracewell in the centre of midfield were outbattled, outplayed and out-thought by Luton's youngsters Spring and Evers. So much so that Fulham hardly knew what to do when they did get the ball and, more often than not, gave it away again.

As the third goal flew in 2,000-plus Hatters fans celebrated by singing 'what's it like to be outclassed?' – without reply from the normally vociferous home fans.

The Town needed little luck, but did get some when the referee took pity on Gavin McGowan. Having given Fulham almost all the 50-50 decisionst, he only lectured McGowan for a series of muggings on home sub Gus Uhlenbeek all down the wing midway through the second half.

McGowan had already seen the yellow card for a couple of bad fouls and was fortunate not to see red for the second week in succession.

Team: K.Davis, Alexander, Thomas, Spring, S.Davis, Johnson, McKinnon, Evers, Douglas (Fotiadis, 89), Gray, McGowan (Cox, 86). Sub not used: White.

Attendance 11,856.

Bookings Thomas (6), McGowan (39).



● Phil Gray and Marvin Johnson get to grips with Paul Bracewell



● Sean Evers bursts through the Fulham defence