



■ **ABOVE:** *Stuart Douglas leads a Luton charge.*



■ **LEFT:** *Phil Gray gets in a tackle.*

■ **RIGHT:** *Gerry Harrison in the thick of the action against Chesterfield*



Luton deep in doldrums

98/99

LUTON'S dreadful run continued at Chesterfield yesterday.

After more than holding their own for 50 minutes, they conceded three second half goals in 15 minutes which put the game well beyond them.

What made it worse was that it took the introduction of a former Watford striker, Jason Lee, to change the course of the game.

Phil Gray did pull one back with his first goal in three months with 10 minutes to go, but it was only the proverbial consolation.

For the second away game running, Luton wasted a tremendous chance to take an early lead and peg the home side back.

At Walsall, Spring was the culprit. Yesterday, it was Stuart Douglas.

In the second minute Graham Alexander took the first corner of the match. Mitchell Thomas headed it on, but Douglas, unmarked six yards out and right in front of goal, tried a first-time

**Chesterfield 3
Luton Town 1
By BILL COLE**

sidefoot volley and skied it way over the bar.

It was Luton's turn to escape seven minutes later, when, again from a corner, Steve Blatherwick looked as if he had put the home side in front with a firm header.

But skipper Marvin Johnson saved the day by sliding across the goal and hooking the ball out just as it was about to enter the net.

Another Blatherwick header, from a long throw this time, caused problems, but Kelvin Davis was able to drop on the loose ball at the far post just before a couple of home forwards got to it.

Alexander had the best effort of the first half with a snapshot from 30 yards that surprised Billy Mercer, who had to scramble across his goal and parry the ball.

The Town defence, with Chris Wilmott at the

heart of it, looked solid in the first half with neither attack having the flair to outwit two determined back lines.

The half-time substitution changed all that. The former Nottingham Forest man with the pineapple haircut, Jason Lee, came on, and proved to be a real thorn in the side for Luton.

He had already laid on one chance with his aggression in the air when he did it a second time, this time producing a result.

Having caused trouble, he picked up the ball as it fell loose and pulled it back from the byline into Steve Wilkinson's stride. He struck it beautifully into the corner of the net from the edge of the area on 52 minutes.

Seconds later it was two. As Luton pushed up chasing an equaliser, from a corner Gavin McGowan lost the ball in his own half and left the back three to cope with four attackers.

As the defenders back-pedalled, Wilkinson took the ball on towards Luton's penalty area and unleashed another cracker past the bemused Davis.

Wilkinson turned provider for the third home

goal, feeding David Reeves for a run and a shot, that again found the target for the Spireites.

Davis did well to deny Beaumont by tipping over his fierce volley as Chesterfield chased a fourth goal. Instead Luton pulled one back.

Luton were trying, without any success in the last third of the pitch, when substitute Gary Doherty was able to take advantage of a slip by Beaumont, and Gray was on hand to thump a close-range shot just inside the far post.

Although Gray almost provided a second for Douglas, who was bravely stopped by Mercer, two remarkable misses at the other end kept the score down to 3-1.

Two banners were unfurled, one with the routine 'Lennie out', but a second probably summed up the frustration of Luton followers. I said simpy: 'What is happening to our club?'

Team: Davis, Alexander, Thomas, Spring Wilmott, Johnson, Harrison (Doherty 66), McKinnon (McLaren 75), Douglas (George 86), Gray, McGowan. Attendance 3921. Man-of-the-match: Alexander.