

# Luton end 34-year wait

HATTERS fans have had to wait 34 years for a victory at Chesterfield but Saturday's 3-1 win brought that miserable run to an emphatic end.

It was the Hatters' first win at Saltergate since 1966, when goals from John O'Rourke, Gordon Riddick and Fred Jardine also earned Luton a 3-1 victory.

But in those intervening years the Hatters can rarely have faced such a poor Spireites' side. What a difference three years make!

In 1997, manager John Duncan should have been given the freedom of Chesterfield after guiding the club to within a whisker of the FA Cup final.

But after Saturday's defeat against the Hatters, the home fans were trying to run him out of town, calling for the beleaguered Duncan's head in an organised demonstration.

A goal from Gary Doherty after just 48 seconds and others from Julian Watts and Liam George, all in the first-half, tightened the noose around Duncan's neck. Jonathan Howard scored a second-

## match facts

● **CHESTERFIELD:** Mark Gayle, Jamie Hewitt, Chris Perkins, Chris Beaumont, Steve Blatherwick, Ryan Williams, Tony Carrs, Jonathan Howard, Steve Payne, Steve Wilkinson, Roger Willis.

● **HATTERS:** Ben Roberts, Alan White, Julian Watts, Marvin Johnson, Emmerson Boyce, Paul McLaren, Adam Locke (Matthew Spring, 45), Matthew Taylor, Liam George, Gary Doherty, Stuart

## CHESTERFIELD 1 LUTON 3

Douglas (Andrew Fotiadis, 70). Subs not used: Gavin McGowan, James Ayres, Nathan Abbey.

● **Shots on target:** Chesterfield 2, Luton 8.

● **Off target:** Chesterfield 8, Luton 5.

● **Corners:** Chesterfield 5, Luton 4.

● **Referee:** Richard Beeby (Northampton).

● **Top Hatter:** Watts – Immaculate.

half consolation for Chesterfield but, on this evidence, they are doomed and heading for Division Three football.

Matthew Taylor's left foot is gradually returning to its lethal best and it was his excellent left-wing cross that led to Luton's first-minute breakthrough.

Emmerson Boyce fed Taylor and his brilliant centre was headed powerfully past home keeper Mark Gayle by Doherty from six yards out.

Adam Locke and Stuart Douglas both went close soon afterwards before Watts added a second on 22 minutes.

Stray passes bedevilled Chesterfield throughout the first period and when Howard conceded possession in his own half to Watts the Hatters defender charged out of defence unchallenged before feeding George.

Gayle tipped George's strong drive on to the bar but Watts, who had ghosted into the home box unmarked, followed up to head in the rebound.

The angry Spireites fans watched in dismay as their side continued to concede space and possession to the visitors, who made it three on 42 minutes when George

fired into the roof of the net after Doherty's shot was beaten out by Gayle.

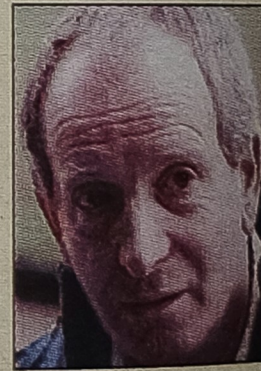
Moments later, Ryan Williams, by far the home side's best player, fired wide with Chesterfield's only meaningful goal attempt of the half.

Lennie Lawrence's men threatened to run riot against a Chesterfield side devoid of confidence, ideas and inspiration. But after the break, Luton sat back instead of going for the jugular with Paul McLaren, who had bossed the midfield throughout the first-half, playing a less prominent role.

On 52 minutes, Chesterfield won their first corner to ironic cheers and, on 72 minutes, they managed their first shot on target – a Williams chip that was headed off the line by Alan White.

Three minutes later, Howard punished a casual visitors defence when he turned and shot low past Ben Roberts.

The goal stood despite a strong suspicion of handball. For Duncan, the division's second longest-serving manager behind Brian Flynn and one ahead of Lennie Lawrence, it was probably too little, too late.



## Lennie's verdict

It was a very professional first-half. Standards dropped in the second-half a bit but we're not 3-0 up away from home too often. There were a few tired legs after three games in seven days.