

Hatters make do with triple strike

01/02

Luton Town 3 Swansea City 0
THIS was as comprehensive a win as you are likely to see.

Luton could quite easily have had eight as only the Swan's keeper Roger Freestone stood between the Hatters and a hatful. His opposite number Carl Emberson didn't have save to make.

Dean Crowe opened the scoring with a truly professional finish when put clean away by a superb Ahmet Brkovic pass in the 23rd minute and Russell Perrett touched in off Freestone's chest in the 55th minute.

Crowe took a heavy knock on the ankle but his replacement Adrian Forbes carried on his good work and put the icing on his individual cake just after the hour. The smallest man on the pitch thumped home a header after a short free kick move involving Jean Louis Valois and man-of-the-match Matthew Spring.

Spring was the instigator of much that was good in the Hatters play and that was considerable. The returning Arron Skelton also showed how much he has been missed with an assured performance at right back putting in some dangerous first time crosses.

Even referee Paul Durkin had a good day. Usually premiership referees strut around and produce card after card at this level, but Mr Durkin played good advantage, didn't take a single name and kept close control on the game throughout.

Crowe had already looked a live wire and Freestone distinguished himself with a fine save from Steve Howard before the opening goal.

Skelton started in with a measured header out of defence to Brkovic. He ran away from his marker to hit a wonderful pass into Crowe's run on the left. Crowe calmly took it on, picked his spot from an angle and gave the keeper no chance at all.

Within seconds he could have doubled his money shaving a post after taking advantage of a defensive mix-up, and Chris Coyne missed an absolute sitter from a yard after Valois' free kick found him all alone at the back post. Forbes was proving a worthy substitute for Crowe and was only denied by a brave Freestone block when the little winger embarked on a typically muscle run and shot.

Brkovic's power volley from a narrow

Seaside FA Cup trip

LUTON have been drawn away to fellow Division Three outfit Southend in the first round of the FA Cup on November 24.

It is a difficult tie, but on current form, the Hatters will fancy their chances of earning at least a replay.



■ Adrian Forbes celebrates his strike, above

angle deserved better than the deflection that took it for a corner kick, but Perrett enabled Town fans to breathe easier by getting a touch to a Valois cross from a short free-kick move to make it two and the Valois, Spring connection worked beautifully six minutes later to seal the destination of all three points.

Spring took the ball from Valois, chipped accurately into the middle and up popped Forbes completely unmarked to net with an irresistible header.

Freestone was again the Swan's hero when he produced a reaction save to turn over a thundering Coyne header. But it was all one-way traffic on the day that produced the points that took the Town back to the top of the table once again and deservedly so.

After the game the Town were drawn away to Southend United in the first round of the FA Cup.

Luton: Emberson, Hillier, Perrett, Coyne, Skelton, Brkovic, Spring, Nicols, Valois, Crowe (Forbes 35), Howard (Fotiadis 82). Subs not used: Ovendale (gk), Holmes, Dryden.

Attendance: 6,705

MoM: Matthew Spring.

■ DESPITE Dagenham and Redbridge drawing their FA Cup tie yesterday their LDV match at home to Luton on Tuesday goes ahead.



■ Crowe celebrates, above, Howard heads, below,



■ Adrian Forbes heads the ball goalwards for Luton yesterday

