

NATIONWIDE DIVISION 3									
Leyton Orient	5							Lincoln City	0
Luton	2							Hartlepool	2
Rochdale	3							York City	1
Rushden	3							Carlisle	1
Scunthorpe	2							Plymouth	1
Torquay	3							Oxford Utd	3
	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts		
Plymouth	23	14	6	3	33	13	48		
Luton	23	13	4	6	46	30	43		
Hull	23	11	8	4	37	22	41		
Mansfield	23	12	5	6	37	26	41		
Rochdale	22	11	6	5	32	22	39		
Scunthorpe	23	10	8	5	40	25	38		
Shrewsbury	23	11	5	7	34	26	38		
Rushden	23	8	9	6	26	22	33		
Exeter	23	9	6	8	26	35	33		
Cheltenham	22	9	8	5	38	24	35		
Leyton Orient	23	8	6	9	34	33	30		
Hartlepool	23	8	5	10	28	22	29		
Kidd'minster	21	8	5	8	20	20	29		
Darlington	22	8	5	9	27	31	29		
Southend	23	8	4	11	24	26	28		
Swansea	23	7	6	10	28	35	27		
Oxford	23	6	8	9	26	30	26		
Macclesfield	23	6	8	9	22	30	26		
Lincoln	23	5	10	8	22	28	25		
Torquay	23	6	5	12	19	34	23		
York	22	6	4	12	26	40	22		
Bristol Rov	22	5	6	11	16	27	21		
Carlisle	23	4	8	11	19	30	20		
Halifax	22	4	7	11	16	32	19		



■ Heads I win: Steve Howard powers in Luton's first goal at Kenilworth Road yesterday

Sub saves Hatters from shock defeat



■ Goalscorer: Steve Howard who got one goal and could have snatched victory in the dying minutes

**Luton Town 2
Hartlepool United 2**
A LATE strike by supersub Marvin Johnson rescued a point for the Hatters after the visitors fought back to take the lead having gone behind to an early Steve Howard header.

For the second time in as many weeks a goal on the stroke of half time turned a match between these two sides. In the north east, it was Luton that got the vital score. This time it was United.

Darrell Clarke grabbed it when he seized on a rebound from 'keeper Mark Ovendale who spilled a Gordon Watson cross shot that he should have held. They drew great confidence from the score when it had previously been lacking.

They came at their hosts at the start of the second half, forcing David Bayliss to brilliantly scoop a Watson effort of the line before Clarke netted a fortunate second.

After Johnson's excellent equaliser with six minutes to go, Howard had a golden chance to earn the town three points to consolidate their second position in the table.

Adrian Forbes put the big man clear with only Anthony Williams to beat. A little chip over the advancing 'keeper would have done the job, but he went for power and Williams was able to save with his feet by spreading himself.

With his injury crisis easing by the day, Joe Kinnear was able to field a strong squad with an excellent substitutes bench. Johnson and Paul Hughes were named for the first time since mid September.

Jean-Louis Valois was in the mood from the start. He was an imposing figure on the early play with some powerful runs.

But his final ball was poor as it was from other players, which allowed the visitors to hang on. Crosses and even a Valois corner hardly got above knee level, but after 34 minutes things changed.

Valois first combined well with Matthew Taylor to earn a corner. His delivery was top class, and Howard put a powerful header into the

net against one of his former clubs. Howard should have made it two almost immediately from Matthew Spring's fine cross but Williams made a great save.

In first half injury time, the Hatters threatened, but United hit back decisively on the break. Paul Smith sent Watson away for a shot that was too hot for Ovendale and Clarke coolly beat the defenders on the line with the follow-up shot.

The Town faced an onslaught after the interval and survived several close attempts before Clarke netted with an effort that he admitted afterwards was an attempted cross meant for Watson's head.

It sailed over Ovendale into the far top corner of the net and Hartlepool looked capable of holding on to their lead with some comfort.

They continually got a foot in to frustrate the Town attack and Kinnear, with the last throw of the dice, made a couple of late substitutions.

One of them proved decisive because Johnson came on to play at full back with authority and the ice on his Christmas cake was his first goal for three seasons.

A bought of crisp passing on the edge of the area was finished by the club skipper popping up to pass into the far corner of the net with a low sharp side foot from an angle fifteen yards out.

Luton Town: Ovendale, Boyce, Bayliss, Perrett (booked 50), Taylor, Brkovic (Johnson 61), Spring, Nicolls, Valois (Forbes 79), Howard, Crowe (Fotiadis 79).

Subs not used: Emberson (gk), Hughes. Attendance, 6,739