

Travel just the ticket for Luton

By Nigel Fuller

01/02

SOUTHEND UNITED

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LUTON TOWN

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MATTHEW TAYLOR'S close-range header seven minutes from time ensured Luton go into the new year as football's most successful travellers.

It earned Luton their eighth away triumph of the season and makes them firm favourites to reclaim the Second Division status they recently lost.

Taylor's goal crowned a sparkling performance and won warm praise from manager Joe Kinnear, whose decision to switch the full-back into a more advanced attacking role at half-time proved the catalyst.

"He's been a revelation," enthused Kinnear. "Ask him to do a job, whether at the back or in midfield, and he never lets you down."

Driven on by the subtle touches of Kevin Nicholls and the unselfish endeavour of Taylor, Luton came from behind after Carl Hutchings was left unmarked to fire Southend into a 53rd-minute lead.

Fifteen minutes later, however, Taylor fed Dean Crowe to drive in his 10th goal in 16 outings, before he found the net himself with the winner.

Southend: Gay, Broad (McSweeney 32, Rawle 89), Cort, Whelan, Searle, Clark, Maher, Hutchings, Thurgood (S Forbes 82), Bramble, Belgrave. **Subs:** Sansome, L Johnson. **Goal:** Hutchings (53). **Booked:** Bramble, Maher.

Luton: Ovendale; Spring, Perrett, A Forbes (Hillier 46), Nicholls, Taylor, Boyce, Howard, Valois (Brkovic 46), Bayliss, Crowe. **Subs:** Emberson, M Johnson, Hughes.

Goals: Crowe (68), Taylor (83). **Booked:** Hillier.

Referee: M Ryan (Preston).