

Taylor-made for Hatters

Southend United 1,
Luton Town 2

THE Hatters' ability to come from behind again surfaced as they avenged the FA cup defeat on this ground last month.

Having fallen behind to Carl Hutchings' opener, goals from Dean Crowe and Mathew Taylor earned them their first double of the season and confirmed their recent superiority over the Shrimpers. This was the sixth successive league win over Southend.

The victory was based on a solid first half performance in which defences were well on top. What half chances there were came the way of a Luton side full of confidence after their recent good run.

Adrian Forbes headed Jean-Louis Valois' corner inches wide before a corner enabled the Frenchman to hit a curling shot that 19-year-old Daniel Gay did superbly to touch over on his debut.

Steven Clark was a lively right winger for the home side and he struck a powerful drive straight into Mark Ovendale's midriff.

The keeper then had to be alert to get down low to save Tesfaye Bramble's long range volley.

Just before the whistle there was a scare at both ends, Leon Cort headed a beauty into the bottom corner only to be denied by Emmerson Boyce, stationed on the post, and within seconds Damon Searle was called upon to clear David Bayliss's shot off the line.

Gay saved his side within 15 seconds of the restart when he spread himself to block Crowe.

The home side have been a powerful second half side recently and they



■ Storming game: Kevin Nicholls, a commanding figure

showed why by gaining the upper hand, especially in midfield.

Kevin Maher fed Clarke after 53 minutes who beat substitute Ian Hillier and accurately laid back a pass for Hutchings to convert in style from six yards.

But Luton are made of stern stuff these days and began to stem the tide with Kevin Nicholls having a fine match.

They mounted a comeback through Taylor, who was pushed up to midfield when Valois was substituted at the interval.

The youngster fizzed a hard centre across the face of goal without anyone getting a touch, then provided a cross for the equaliser, Crowe latched on to it to score his tenth of the season in just 14 league starts.

Acrobatic defending by Russell Perrett kept the Seaside out before Nicholls

made a chance for Crowe who hit his hot too high. But that was merely a precursor to the winning goal.

Nicholls took a long free kick into the penalty area that Taylor headed towards goal, Gay dropped it, and when the ball was returned Perrett's head got in the way.

But it rebounded to Taylor who promptly smashed it home to keep the Town marching on in second place.

Luton Town Ovendale, Boyce, Perrett, Bayliss, Taylor, Forbes (Brkovic 45), Spring, Nicholls, Valois (Hillier 45), Howard, Crowe Subs not used: Emberson (GK), Johnson, Hughes

Attendance: 5973 (1710 away fans)
Luton man of the match: David Bayliss

NATIONWIDE DIVISION 3

Bristol Rovers	1	Darlington	0
Cheltenham	2	Swansea	2
Exeter	1	Rochdale	1
Hartlepool	3	Leyton Orient	1
Kidderminster	3	Hull City	0
Lincoln City	3	Scunthorpe	2
Macclesfield	1	Mansfield	1
Oxford Utd	6	Halifax	1
Plymouth	1	Rushden	0
Southend	1	Luton	2
York City	1	Shrewsbury	1

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Plymouth	25	15	6	3	36	15	52
Luton	25	15	4	6	49	32	49
Mansfield	24	13	5	6	38	26	44
Hull	24	11	8	5	37	25	41
Rochdale	24	11	7	6	34	27	40
Shrewsbury	25	11	6	8	35	28	39
Scunthorpe	24	10	8	6	42	28	38
Cheltenham	24	9	9	6	36	33	36
Kidd' minster	23	10	5	8	27	21	35
Exeter	25	9	7	9	27	39	34
Rushden & D	25	8	9	8	28	27	33
Hartlepool	24	9	5	10	31	23	32
Southend	25	9	4	12	29	30	31
Swansea	25	9	4	12	29	30	31
Leyton Orient	25	8	6	11	38	41	30
Oxford	25	7	8	10	33	33	29
Darlington	23	8	5	10	27	32	29
Lincoln	24	6	10	8	25	30	28
Bristol Rov	24	7	6	11	22	30	27
Macclesfield	25	6	9	10	23	32	27
Torquay	24	6	6	12	21	36	24
York	23	6	5	12	27	41	23
Carlisle	23	4	8	11	19	30	20
Halifax	24	4	8	12	18	39	20



■ Celebration: Dean Crowe's arm goes aloft after