

Howard head and shoulders the best

STEVE Howard was the two goal hero as the Town consolidated their hold on second place in the table in their quest for promotion.

Once again the Hatters had to come from behind, the lively Minstermen having opened

Luton 2 York 1

the scoring after 17 minutes with a beauty from Michael Proctor.

The lead lasted only two minutes, Howard heading home Emmerson Boyce's cross and six minutes after the break, the big, enthusiastic striker made it two.

This time Adrian Forbes was the provider with Howard's header having too much power for Alan Fettis' dive. The keeper got hands to it but couldn't keep it out.

The win was all the more creditable as the Town were missing both first choice central defenders David Bayliss and Russell Perritt plus midfield dynamo Kevin Nicholls through suspension.

Friday's signing Alan Neilson was thrown straight in alongside Chris Coyne and the reshaped defence did well enough against a side that came to attack with three men up front.

Aaron Skelton was Nicholls' replacement in midfield and looked like a fish out of water as the game passed him by. Luton did much better when Paul Hughes came off the bench to replace him after 57 minutes.

Carl Emberson also earned his corn in goal with important blocks when in-form City threatened a couple of times.

He could do nothing about the goal. The Luton defensive line up was still sorting itself out when Peter Duffield put Proctor away down the left wing with acres of space. He

raced on to hit a peach of shot over the keeper and into the top far corner of the net.

Almost immediately the Town replied. Forbes fed Boyce a square pass close to halfway. He was forced wide but still produced a lovely swinging centre and Howard rose above several yellow shirts to score.

Ahmet Brkovic fired a pass across the face of the visitors' goal straight after the interval without anyone getting a touch, but Howard got plenty of power on to a Forbes centre six minutes later to net the winner with his 13th goal of the season.

Then immediately afterwards Forbes thrashed a shot in but that was ruled out for handball and Fettis twice denied Howard a hat-trick with close range blocks to keep his side in the game.

Luton Town: Emberson, Boyce, Nielson, Coyne, Taylor, Brkovic, Spring, Skelton (Hughes 57), Valois (Johnson 64), Forbes, Howard.
Subs not used: Ovendale (GK), McSwegan, Crowe.

Luton Bookings: Spring 58.

Attendance: 6,188.

Luton Man of the Match: Steve Howard.



■ New boy: Alan Neilson

■ Overjoyed: Steve Howard celebrates his winner