

Taylor's reward

Dublin's double helps Villa into the third round

By RAY MATTS

Aston Villa3
Luton Town0

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GRAHAM TAYLOR'S declaration of Worthington Cup intent was taken to heart by Aston Villa last night.

He wanted a positive start to their campaign and there was never the slightest hint of Luton proving a stumbling block for the previously goal-shy Premiership side.

Villa besieged the Second Division visitors two goals from 33-year-old striker Dion Dublin helped them progress to the third round and avert any terrace rumblings.

They were in front after nine minutes as Ecuador winger Ulises de la Cruz impudently back-heeled home at the far post after a build-up involving Jloyd Samuel and Gareth Barry.

It typified the home team's desire to supply a touch of class allied to the work ethic, best demonstrated by the non-stop running of midfielder Lee Hendrie, who played a decisive part in Villa's second goal after 25 minutes.

Hendrie's free-kick from the left, after Darius Vassell had been up-ended, was straight into the path of Dublin, whose stooping close-range header gave Luton goalkeeper Carl Emberson no chance.

Luton, who had brought an amazing number of fans for the cup-tie, were in danger of being over-run by the intensity of Villa's onslaught and Joe Kinnear tried to plug the gaping holes in his midfield just before half-time manager by bringing on Alan Neilson for Peter Holmes.

Vassell's replacement by teenager Stefan Moore hardly made a difference to Villa's domination as Dublin added a third goal in the 48th minute — controlling the ball on his thigh before turning on the edge of the penalty area to despatch a right-foot shot inside the post.



Golden oldie: Dion Dublin heads his first and Villa's second goal last night

Picture: ALAN WALTER