

HOWARD'S DAY

Luton 1 Chesterfield 0

03/04

STEVE Howard's solitary second minute strike was enough to secure maximum points for Luton against Chesterfield.

Chesterfield goalkeeper Carl Muggleton seemed to have pushed the looping effort over the crossbar but the ball bounced back off the woodwork and in off the experienced stopper.

Muggleton redeemed his earlier lapse with two brave saves at the feet of Gary McSheffrey and a superb stop to deny Howard as Luton dominated the first half.

Chesterfield turned in a livelier performance in the second half and Chris Brandon might have done better with a snap shot on the turn.

But Luton finished strongly with McSheffrey hitting a shot against Alan O'Hare and Matthew Spring stinging Muggleton's fingers with a 20 yard piledriver.

Hatters boss Mike Newell was happier with the result than he was with his side's performance.

He said: "We could have beaten them

out of sight in the first 20 minutes when we had four or five very good chances.

"I would expect to see us take one or two of those but you have to give credit to Chesterfield for sticking at it and making things difficult for us.

"We didn't create as many chances in the second half until the last few minutes.

"But we have to be pleased with the win because a couple of months ago if we had been defending a one-goal lead we would probably have conceded and thrown points away.

"It looks as though there is some light at the end of the tunnel."

Chesterfield manager Roy McFarland said: "I thought we deserved to get something out of that game. We worked hard in defence but we lacked that little bit of quality in attack.

"Hopefully I can bring in one or two players on loan to do that.

"I couldn't fault the players for their effort and we stuck at it and didn't fold after conceding that early goal.

"But I know we didn't have many attacking options and didn't make the best of those that we did have."