

HATTERS STAY ALIVE IN PLAY-OFF RACE

03/04

Luton 3 Blackpool 2

LUTON kept its play-off hopes alive with a thrilling 3-2 win over Blackpool.

Emmerson Boyce gave Luton the lead after 25 minutes when he turned in a deflected shot from Peter Holmes, who made it 2-0 when Enoch Showunmi set him up.

Blackpool failed to muster a single shot on target until midway through the second half when Tony Dinning fired home a penalty after Boyce brought down Richard Walker.

Showunmi curled a free kick over the wall to make it 3-1 but the Seaside refused to lie down and substitute Matthew Blinkhorn fired home from Walker's knock-down.

Blinkhorn thought he had equalised four minutes later, but the effort was ruled out for offside.

However, Luton boss Mike Newell conceded the effort should have earned

a point for the visitors.

"Blackpool came at us strongly towards the end and I thought the goal that was ruled out was a goal — but over a season these things even themselves out," said Newell.

"We are going to have to learn to kill games off when we go into a two goal lead.

"We certainly should have been more than one goal up at half time, although I was very pleased with our performance, particularly in the first half-hour."

Blackpool boss Steve McMahon was furious.

"It was a goal," he said.

"Everyone in the ground knew it and that was an outrageous decision."

But he was also critical of his own team.

He added: "Too many players under-performed. We woke up when it was too late, although we still should have got something out of the game."