

LUTON TOWN3
Boyce (25), Holmes (66), Showunmi (74)
BLACKPOOL2
Dinning (69 pen), Blinkhorn (79)

Showunmi keeps Luton well on course

BY MARCUS HARRISON

THE STING was in the tail as Luton took the points to keep alive their play-off hopes but only after surviving a scare.

Blackpool had been second best for more than an hour and the game seemed all over when Luton eased into a two goal lead after 67 minutes.

It was no more than they deserved but then three goals in nine minutes made for a nervous finish and left Blackpool wondering why they had taken so long to get going.

The Seaside's failed to have a shot on-goal in the first-half and were indebted to goalkeeper Phil Barnes for a couple of good saves and to

midfielder Stephen McMahon for a goal-line clearance.

Emmerson Boyce gave Luton an overdue lead on 25 minutes and the Hatters kept the momentum going after the break and seemed to have done the job when Peter Holmes doubled the lead on 67 minutes.

But at long last that stirred Blackpool into raising their game. They got a lift

when Boyce tripped Richard Walker and Tony Dinning converted the 69th minute

penalty. Five minutes later Enoch Showunmi struck a brilliant free-kick to put Luton two clear again only for Matthew Blinkhorn to reduce the arrears on 78 minutes.

And four minutes later Blinkhorn struck again and neither of the managers could believe it

when offside was given against him. Luton's Mike Newell suggested the lucky break for Luton on that occasion evened out the break that went against them in the first-half when he was sure Sol Davis was tripped by former Steve Davies.

Blackpool boss, Steve McMahon was furious with the offside decision, which cost his team a point. "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. "Too many players under performed. We woke up when it was too late, although we still should have got something out of the game. Our last half-hour was good, but I want us to be more

consistent with our form over the whole 90 minutes."

Newell said: "We are going to have to learn to kill games off. We should have been more than one up. I was pleased with our performance, particularly in the first half-hour. But we let Blackpool have 10 minutes of the first-half and we gave them even more at the in the second-half.

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

Newell enjoyed the performances of two of his players. Showunmi's free-kick was "a beauty" said the manager, and 17-year-old Keith Keane was "outstanding".

LUTON	BLACKPOOL
57	Possession % 43
5	Corners 1
7	Offsides 5
13	Fouls 15
1	Yellows 2
0	Reds 0
10	Shots On 4
7	Shots Off 2
0	Hit Woodwork 0
LUTON: Hyldgaard 7, Keane 7, Coyne 7, Boyce 7, Davis 6, Nicholls 7, Robinson 7, Hughes 6, Holmes 9, Showunmi 8, Howard 7.	
BLACKPOOL: Barnes 5, Grayson 6, Hessey 5, Davis 6, Elliott 5, Evans (Jaszczun 22), Wellens 6, McMahon 6 (Bullock 57), Dinning 7, Sheron 5 (Blinkhorn 57), Walker 7.	