

Hurst is the hero 03/04

Chesterfield 1 Luton 0

GLYNN Hurst was the Chesterfield hero as his solitary late strike snatched maximum points against Luton and ensured Division Two survival for Roy McFarland's men.

The striker, Chesterfield's top scorer, pounced two minutes from time, just when it seemed that the home side were heading to Division Three.

Hurst beat Luton goalkeeper Dean Brill to a long ball that had been flicked on by Ian Evatt to slot home and spark wild celebrations at Saltergate.

The Spireites went into the game knowing they had to win to have a chance of staying up, while also hoping other results went their way.

But, despite plenty of pressure, they created few goalscoring opportunities before Hurst's strike.

David Reeves almost got the home side off to the perfect start when his shot from the edge of the area was deflected inches past a post after just 40 seconds.

Brill then had to be at his best to keep out an Alan O'Hare free kick.

Evatt had a header cleared off the line with time ticking away and it seemed it was not to be Chesterfield's day.

But Hurst popped up to roll the ball past Brill with just two minutes of the season left.

Chesterfield boss Roy McFarland hailed Hurst after his late goal against earned his side a dramatic last-day reprieve from relegation.

McFarland said: "Hurst has had a great season. We missed him at the start with a back injury and, to be honest, we struggled up front without him.

"But once he got back into his rhythm he was magnificent. He has been so important for us in recent weeks and when it mattered he kept his composure.

"But it was a real team effort. I want to say a massive thank you to the players and especially the fans. They were superb.

"It's been an excellent day and it feels a bit like a promotion. I'm delighted for everyone connected with the club."

Luton manager Mike Newell said: "We knew it would be difficult because Chesterfield were fighting for their lives.

"But I can't fault the effort and commitment of my players as well as our defending, at least for 80 minutes. It sums up our season to play well for most of the game then concede late on. But I'm happy with them."