

Hatters win Howard's way

Blackpool 1

Luton 3

04/05

TWO goals in a minute helped Luton to its fifth consecutive League One win, 3-1 at lowly Blackpool.

Steve Howard, who scored for a club record ninth consecutive game, and Ahmet Brkovic's second half efforts meant the Hatters continued their perfect start to the season, but they had to come from behind against a much-improved Blackpool.

The home side, rock bottom of the table, got off to a dream start when Scott Taylor scored his third goal of the season from the game's first scoring opportunity.

Following a foul on John Murphy by Chris Coyne, Murphy headed Paul Edwards' free kick across goal for Taylor to rifle in.

The game turned on its head as Luton came from behind to lead in less than a minute. It was almost inevitable that Howard, who had been Luton's most threatening player, would instigate the fightback.

His equaliser — a right footed shot from close-range — means he has scored in his last nine matches, a club record.

Howard could have scored moments earlier but was denied by an excellent stop from Lee Jones, and from the kick-off the striker turned provider, setting up Brkovic to stun Blackpool.

Luton goalkeeper Marlon Beresford tipped over Mike Flynn's long-range effort, and Brkovic sealed the win in injury-time with his second and Luton's third.

Beleaguered Blackpool manager Colin Hendry was unimpressed with his side's performance.

Hendry said: "I'm disgusted because the players knew what to do but just forgot all about what they had been told.

"Some people are feeling very sorry for themselves in our dressing room at the moment but they should be asking themselves what went wrong.

"This is very much down to them."

Hendry confirmed that star midfielder Richie Wellens will leave the club sooner rather than later, which will further compound his managerial problems.

Blackpool have already turned down a bid for the 24-year-old from Bristol City but expect a bigger fee to be offered.

Hendry hopes there may be a player exchange deal as Manchester United will receive 50 per cent of any fee for Wellens in a sell-on clause.

He is also understood to have approached his former Blackburn team mate David Batty in a bid to add some midfield steel to his side on a short-term basis.

Luton manager Mike Newell insisted his side deserve to be top of the table.

He said: "The players must now really start to believe in themselves. We are top of the table and deserve to be there.

"I believe in them.

"They are good enough to stay top as long as they keep taking games by the scruff of the neck like this one.

"We have the pace and skill to beat any team in this division."