

Hatters make hard work of it

Luton 1
Milton Keynes Dons 0

04/05

PROMOTED Luton moved five points clear at the top of League One although they needed a Ben Chorley own goal to see off the struggling MK Dons.

Manager Mike Newell has made no secret of the fact he wants his side to claim the title and they took a massive step towards it courtesy of Chorley's first half howler.

Town, who clinched promotion without kicking a ball in midweek when third placed Tranmere lost to Brentford, showed they had lost none of their appetite with a lightning-fast start to the game.

After running out to a standing ovation from the Kenilworth Road faithful, Steve Howard and Peter Holmes tested Dons keeper Matt Baker in the opening moments.

The party atmosphere obviously got

to Chorley on the half-hour when he threw himself full stretch at Foley's cross and headed the ball past Baker to give the hosts the lead.

The Dons, making the short trip along the M1 to visit their new derby rivals for the first time, finally tested home keeper Marlon Beresford when Dean Lewington sent over a teasing cross.

The visitors' lack of invention was summed up shortly before the break when Michel Pensee-Bilong thumped an ambitious 30-yarder high over the bar.

The lively Ahmet Brkovic squandered a golden opportunity to double the advantage shortly after the hour mark when he headed over, whilst Robinson, Howard and Chris Coyne were all guilty of sloppy finishing as Town looked for a second.

But the hosts were rarely under threat as they held on for a win that leaves the Dons looking nervously over

their shoulders at the wrong end of the table.

Assistant boss Brian Stein admitted Luton made it tough for themselves in overcoming relegation-threatened MK Dons.

He said: "We knew it was going to be a tough game because Milton Keynes have been fighting for their lives since Danny Wilson took over and that's how it transpired."

Dons boss Wilson believes his side can still beat the drop despite only being outside the bottom four on goal difference after Torquay snatched a late win against Port Vale.

Wilson said: "A lot of people seem to think we weren't in a relegation fight anymore, but we've never been out of it and I've certainly never thought like that."

"Things are still in our own hands to avoid relegation and the lads can still play with confidence for the final three games of the season."