



**SCORCHER:** Skipper Kevin Nicholls unleashes a 30-yard screamer, inset, and celebrates with fans. But Doncaster hit back to deny Luton their ton target

# Kev can't quite Nic a win

## DONCASTER 3 HATTERS 3

A THUNDERBOLT from Kevin Nicholls was not quite enough to help Hatters to the magical 100 points end of season total.

But an entertaining 3-3 draw with lively Doncaster still took champions Luton to a club record 98 point finish in a memorable League One campaign.

From the moment Rovers striker Lewis Guy scored just 30 seconds in, it was clear this was to be no final game bore. Blustery conditions contributed to an open game that saw Russ Perrett and Steve Howard put Town 2-1 up at the interval before Steve Robinson's own goal made it 2-2 after the break.

Nicholls' 30-yard piledriver just after the hour looked to have marked a fitting end to a superb season, but Rovers had other ideas as Guy hit his second and Doncaster's third.

Nicholls told The News-Gazette: "That's probably the best goal I've scored in my career so far. I knew it was going in from the moment I hit because it was like a missile and it was

## But 98 points is club record

even more impressive because it was against the wind. It would have been nice personally to score the last goal of the season in our games and if it had been it would have got us the 100 points - but 98 points from 46 games isn't a bad achievement!"

On whether the strike would have been a contender for goal of the season, Nicholls laughed: "Possibly, but Brko's goal against Bradford was something special and it's not the only overhead kick he's scored this season.

"He deserves it and with him being my roomy as well there's no way I'd try and take that award off him."

Town started with Perrett replacing Curtis Davies, missing through a dead-leg, Dino Seremet making his first start in six months in for Marlon Beresford

after his operation and Rowan Vine recalled in place of Warren Feeney.

Rovers scored almost immediately when Guy finished in off the post from James Coppinger's cross after Seremet had parried his first effort.

Former Hatter Michael McIndoe squandered three openings for the hosts, but Town levelled when Chris Coyne headed Nicholls' deep free-kick across goal for Perrett to nod his first

of the season in the 32nd minute. Four minutes later, Luton went ahead when Howard charged down keeper Iain Turner's clearance and slotted home.

Rovers equalised in comical circumstances when the wind blew Seremet's goal kick back into the area and Leo Fortune West's cross flew in off the unfortunate Robinson. Nicholls' strike looked to have won it, before Guy's cool 20-yard finish squared matters.

## MIKE NEWELL'S VERDICT



"DONCASTER have only lost two at home all season so we knew it was going to be tough.

"Everyone you speak to says Doncaster are a decent side and they played some good stuff.

"We didn't start well at all and it's a blow going 1-0 down in the first minute.

"But you have to give the lads credit because they

kept going even though there's nothing to play for.

"We scored a cracking goal in the second-half through Kevin Nicholls that deserved to win it, but we couldn't hold on.

"The wind was blowing the ball all over the place and it was hard to get it down and pass it around, but it was the same for both sides."

## STAR HATTER



**KEVIN NICHOLLS:** The Hatters skipper ended the season as he has played most of it - with a typical captain's performance.

The 26-year-old helped out in defence with some important clearing headers in the first-half and was never far from the action in the middle of the park.

He again sprayed the ball about when possible and capped his display with a long distance goal of pure quality in the 63rd minute.

# Trust pays off Gurney debts

HATTERS' fans' group Trust in Luton is raising cash for new future projects after finally paying off debts from the court case against former club owner John Gurney.

The Trust played a vital role in heralding the fall from grace of the controversial businessman in the summer of 2004 after

Gurney had unveiled a host of outlandish schemes for Luton.

Now the supporters' group is looking to increase its fundraising profile with a new membership drive and incentive scheme during 'Trust in Luton Week' from Monday, May 23.

A spokesman said: "We can confirm that due to a number of

very generous donations, Trust in Luton's legal bills have been cleared. We would like to thank our lawyers Bird & Bird for their excellent work over the last two years and all TiL members for their backing."

A new Trust project is to be announced at its AGM on Thursday, May 26.