

WESTLAKE SECURES SURPRISE VICTORY

Ipswich1
Luton.....0

05/06

IPSWICH grabbed an unlikely 1-0 win over Luton at Portman Road thanks to substitute Ian Westlake's 69th minute strike.

Luton's Warren Feeney had the first chance of the game, but the 24-year-old striker's shot was well saved by Shane Supple in the Ipswich goal.

Defences dominated the opening exchanges, and Feeney's shot apart, there was little action of note in the first 15 minutes.

The Northern Ireland striker was at the heart of most of Luton's best moments and he provided a physical presence up front for Mike Newell's men.

The game began to open up as half time approached, and Dean Bowditch had a chance to open the scoring for the home side in the 38th minute but he blasted over the bar.

Luton's Paul Underwood fired wide before Bowditch had another chance for the Tractor Boys just before the break, but he was denied by a good save by Marlon Beresford.

The visitors came out for the second half looking to up the tempo of the game.

Steve Robinson nearly broke the deadlock but his 49th minute header flashed wide.

Ipswich responded through Daniel Haynes, but Beresford was again up to the task for the visitors.

Robinson had another chance to put Newell's men in front in the 55th minute, but again he was unable to hit the target.

Luton were playing with increasing confidence and authority, and Underwood was unlucky when his well-struck drive was brilliantly tipped around the post by Supple.

However, just as the game appeared to be tilting in the Hatters' direction, Ipswich struck.

Kevin Nicholls fouled Jason de Vos on the edge of the box and substitute Westlake stepped up to whip a delightful free kick into the bottom corner.

Newell took off Rowan Vine and replaced him up front with Enoch Showunmi, but the change made little difference for the Hatters.

Robinson again went close in the 82nd minute but his shot was blocked by Fabian Wilnis, and Ipswich closed the game out to secure the points.

Royle praises spirited effort

MANAGER Joe Royle praised the team spirit of his injury-hit Ipswich side after their win over Luton.

He said: "It was a fantastic win and no-one can question the spirit in the team. Jason de Vos played the second half with a dead leg and we were thinking of taking him off at the interval.

"Our crowd was quiet at times but there was no carping at the players. We need the crowd behind us because there will be better times to come.

"It's not hard to see why Luton have done so well. They are full of confidence and remind me of my Oldham team. They are a team in every

sense of the word."

"In Shane Supple and Lewis Price, we have two of the best young goalkeepers in the league," Royle added.

Luton manager Mike Newell expressed his frustration at his side's poor away results.

He said: "It's a bit disappointing but we don't seem to show the same belief and confidence in away matches as we do at home.

"It's a confidence thing.

"We created enough chances and were comfortable on the ball but we play differently away and I just don't understand it."



IAN WESTLAKE