



06/07

By BRIAN HOWARD

DERBY COUNTY striker Steve Howard scored against his former club, as the hapless Hatters slumped to their sixth league and cup defeat in succession.

The 30-year-old bagged his eighth goal of the season 15 minutes from time to follow on from Sunderland loan-man Jonathan Stead's opener three minutes earlier as the high-flying Rams made it four wins in a row.

But the unrest surrounding Kenilworth Road was added to by fans distributing 4,000 leaflets around the ground demanding the resignation of chairman Bill Tomlins.

A dejected Luton manager Mike Newell said after the match: "It's the worst run I've had as a manager or a player. I've never lost five or six games in succession before."

"But if you look at the past three-and-a-half years with the football we've played and the goals we've scored you'll see there's not a lot wrong here."

Luton started well and threatened a minute in when Ahmet Brkovic and Adam Boyd combined to release Rowan Vine down the left, but the former Portsmouth man could only blast his angled left-footed shot across the face of goal and out for a throw-in.

After Morten Bisgaard's tumble in the area under Lewis Emanuel's challenge was ignored by referee Steve Tanner, Stead fired a right-footed effort a yard over the bar from

HOWARD GOAL HAUNTS LUTON

SHALL WE? Derby's Seth Johnson, left, with Rowan Vine

PICTURES: Gareth Owen



MATCH STATS

LUTON v DERBY

2	Shots on target	3
9	Shots off target	8
7	Corners	6
0	Offside	2
11	Fouls conceded	9
1	Yellow Cards	1
0	Red Cards	0
50	Possession %	50

Att: 9,708 Rating: ★★★★★
Ref: S Tanner - 8/10

the edge of the area after Seth Johnson's cut-back.

Luton finally got their act together and fashioned an opening after 21 minutes when Markus Heikkinen nodded back Steve Robinson's header into the area for Russell Perrett to hit a 12-yard left-foot volley that Stephen Bywater saved.

Derby continued to look dangerous though and Matt Oakley's burst to the right-hand by-line in the 26th minute saw him produce a dangerous low cross that Perrett almost diverted past his own goalkeeper only for Marlon Beresford to gather.

Emanuel then blasted a cross-shot past the post from wide out on the left after Marc Edworthy had half-cleared a Vine cross before Derby squandered the clearest chance of the half in the 32nd minute.

Oakley was again the provider with another burst from left to right which allowed him to cross for Bisgaard, who could only volley wastefully over the bar from eight yards.

Luton finished the half with a flourish as Bywater had to stretch to tip over Leon Barnett's looping 16-yard header from Kevin Foley's 36th minute cross.

Luton were almost caught cold after the interval when Edworthy fed Stead who turned and shot from the edge of the area only to see his low strike bounce back off the foot of the post.

Boyd responded for Luton with a 22-yard left-foot strike wide of the target after a one-two with Carlos Edwards in the 50th minute before Derby's Giles Barnes ended

a driving 30-yard run with a fierce 20-yard shot that flew inches past the post.

The game spluttered through a scrappy period of play before County took the lead with a stunning strike from Stead in the 72nd minute.

After Luton had only half-cleared a corner, the ball found its way to the striker on the left-hand corner of the penalty area. He side-stepped Perrett before unleashing a powerful right-footed strike that gave Beresford no chance.

Three minutes later the game was effectively over when Howard grabbed the Rams' second.

A clever free-kick routine saw Johnson tee up Oakley to cross from the right. Bisgaard saw his close-range effort come back off the post and Howard was first to react to slam home from two yards.

Luton rallied late on as substitute Warren Feeney saw a header cleared off the line by Oakley and Boyd hit a 20-yarder just wide, but it was too little too late.



WOUNDED: Steven Howard scores against his old club

MARLON BERESFORD	6/10
No chance with the goals and made some top saves	
LEON BARNETT	8/10
Stood up well in defence and posed a threat in the air	
KEVIN FOLEY	5/10
Struggled at times and didn't attack as much as usual	
MARKUS HEIKKINEN	5/10
Looked unsure of his position on occasions after being moved	
LEWIS EMANUEL	6/10
Disappointing delivery from set-pieces at various times	
RUSSELL PERRETT	7/10
A steady showing from the experienced defender	
STEVE ROBINSON	5/10
Found it difficult to impose himself in the middle of the park	

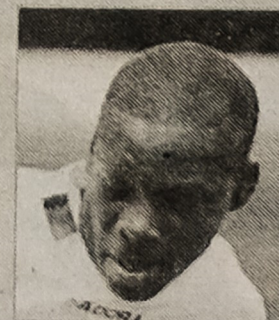
LUTON TOWN

AHMET BRKOVIC	4/10
Disappointing showing after a decent performance in his last outing	
CARLOS EDWARDS	5/10
Lost possession in dangerous areas early on but improved	
ADAM BOYD	7/10
Showed some neat touches and great vision in attack	
ROWAN VINE	5/10
A willing worker but too often his dribbles came to nothing	

SUBSTITUTES

MORGAN; FOR BRKOVIC (72)
FEENEY; FOR VINE (73)
BELL; FOR ROBINSON (85)
NOT USED: BRILL; HOLMES

STAR PLAYERS



LEON BARNETT
STAR RATING
8



JONATHAN STEAD
STAR RATING
9

STEPHEN BYWATER	7/10
Good saves from Adam Boyd twice and Leon Barnett	
DEAN LEACOCK	6/10
Competed well but did lose track of Adam Boyd once or twice	
DARREN MOORE	7/10
Typical committed display from the powerful centre-half	
PAUL BOERTIEN	8/10
Superb at the back and was always an outlet on the overlap	
MARC EDWORTHY	6/10
Disciplined showing on the right and was rarely troubled	
SETH JOHNSON	6/10
Kept it simple and helped Derby boss the possession	
MORTEN BISGAARD	6/10
Saw plenty of the ball throughout but really should have scored	

DERBY CO

MATTY OAKLEY	6/10
Found space and confused Luton when he switched to the right	
GILES BARNES	7/10
Energetic display and covered plenty of the pitch with his running	
JONATHAN STEAD	9/10
Went close twice early on and was always a real danger	
STEVEN HOWARD	6/10
Poacher's goal against his old club although quiet for much of the game	

SUBSTITUTES

JONES; FOR JOHNSON (80)
SMITH; FOR BISGAARD (87)
LUPOLI; FOR STEAD (90)
NOT USED: CAMARA; JACKSON