



Supporters 'were acting like animals'

■ Luton fans were a disgrace, the so called footy fans in the Habbin stand acted like animals from the kick-off. As for no trouble reported outside the ground there was plenty, including a woman in a United shirt being pushed over on Newmarket Road while at a bus stop. I witnessed a man being spat at and abused, lucky the police were close behind.

Posted by: Karen

■ All the trouble at this game was caused by Luton fans, not by Cambridge fans.

Posted by: Phillip George

■ Well I would imagine Hatch did get some stick after being sent off. He is a Peterborough player after all, had just seen red and his side were 2-0 down. If you can't give an opposition player a bit of stick in that situation then when can you? The Luton players in the Main Stand were a little unprofessional by getting involved, but it's football, tempers flare. As for the trouble in the stands, disgraceful from Luton.

Posted by: King Kong

■ I feel the police's NATO helmets and riot sticks were going a bit far to deal with a crowd of men, women and children who had gone to watch a game of football, as was being kept in a field for 25 minutes after the game.

Posted by: Mike

■ The "innocent victims" at Cambridge should remember that it takes at least two

people to have a fight. There was trouble outside the ground. I witnessed some lovely gentlemen insulting an old man who was at least 70 before the game. For what it's worth, the old man was wearing a Luton Town scarf.

Posted by: Boris

■ The atmosphere pre-match was friendly. During the game the police as per usual got heavy handed and started using an aggressive presence towards us Luton fans, even coming into our stand and pushing past people as if they were looking for a criminal. The police were pushing and treating our supporters like animals, so if any violence happened away from the stadium later, I can imagine it was partly whipped up by the heavy handed policing and Cambridge United's bunch.

Posted by: Darren Brown

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UGLY SCENES: Luton Town and Cambridge United supporters taunt each other at the Abbey Stadium. Inset, a Luton fan is arrested. 597702

Seven arrested after football fans clash

A POLICE officer was injured as violence erupted between rival football fans at Cambridge United's R Costings Abbey Stadium.

Tempers flared between fans of the U's and their visitors Luton Town, with missiles being thrown at rival supporters, police officers and on to the pitch in ugly scenes.

Seven arrests were made during the course of the tense match, which Luton won 4-3 in front of a bumper crowd of 4,870.

Will Jones, spokesman for United, said: "There were a lot of Luton supporters, and the massive majority of their fans were well-behaved and added to the excellent atmosphere.

"But a small minority were

■ WORDS: STEPHEN EXLEY
■ PICTURES: DUNCAN LAMONT

intent on causing trouble, and that's exactly what they did. They broke through a police barrier and were climbing up advertising hoardings and throwing bottles at Cambridge fans.

"These were scenes we don't want to see again as a football club. The Abbey is a safe place for families to come - there was more trouble at that one match than there has been in the last few years. We have had an exemplary safety record for a number of years."

Chief inspector Darren Alderson, who was in charge of the operation for Cambridgeshire police, said: "It was a good crowd for the club,

but there was disorder between the fans of both clubs. Missiles were thrown onto the pitch and at rival fans, as well as some at my officers.

"Our officers wore NATO helmets for their own safety. A post-match investigation is underway which will seek to identify those responsible for throwing missiles inside the ground.

"One officer sustained a minor cut to his hand while he was engaging with the crowd, but I can categorically state there was no stabbing. He was immediately taken off duty, and was treated by medical staff at the ground."

There was also an altercation between suspended Luton captain Kevin Nicholls and nearby United supporters, which resulted in the player

being moved to a different stand.

And United fans in the pitchside corporate dugout were seen heckling Luton's Liam Hatch after he was sent off shortly before the incident involving Nicholls.

Chief Insp Alderson added that large numbers of fans had gathered at pubs around the city, including The Regal and the Seven Stars, but no trouble was reported outside the stadium.

One arrest was made for a drug related offence, with the others all relating to public order offences.

Mr Jones described the incident involving Nicholls as "a minor skirmish" adding: "It was all verbal, I don't think there was anything physical."

Hannah Smith, 12, emailed the *News* to say how she and her 10-year-old sister Abi were terrified after their family's car was surrounded by Luton supporters.

Hannah said: "We were in the back of our car on Newmarket Road trying to get to PC world on Saturday.

"Our car was in the queue of traffic outside the Cambridge ground when all of a sudden it was surrounded by hundreds of Luton supporters. They were in the road and on the path. They were shouting and swearing loudly and staring at us. We locked our car doors and closed the windows. We felt really frightened."

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■ U's coverage - see Sportscene

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TEMPERS FLARE: Luton captain Kevin Nicholls argues with a United fan. Left, U's supporters berate Luton Town's Liam Hatch after he is sent off.