

Crow brace lifts Hatters as Sports falls to bits

MATCH STATS	
EASTBOURNE v LUTON	
2 SHOTS ON TARGET	6
6 SHOTS OFF TARGET	9
3 CORNERS	7
5 OFFSIDE	6
10 FOULS CONCEDED	10
2 YELLOW CARDS	0
0 RED CARDS	0

STAR MAN: D Crow (Luton)
 ATT: 2/5/8
 ENTERTAINMENT: *****
 REF RATING: 1/Cooper 7/10

EASTBOURNE 4-2-Banks 6, Cook 7, Austin 7, Langston 8, Jenkins 6, Johnson 7, Brinkhurst 7 (Steven 54), Weatherstone 6, M. Crabb 6, Pacquette 7 (Akin 54), Taylor 7 (Brown 18). Subs not used: Ephraim, N. Crabb, Baker.

LUTON 4-2-Tyler 6, Gleeson 6, Murray 6, Keane 7, G. Pilkington 7, Morgan-Smith 7 (Poku 90), Barnes-Homer 7, Drury 8 (90-2), Kroca 8, Howells 7, Crow 6, Subs not used: Asifu-Agyei, Watkins, K. Pilkington.

By Ken McEwan

LUTON Town displayed promotion quality as they marched to a 4-2 win over never-say-die Eastbourne Borough at a wind-swept Priory Lane.

A lightning second half brace by Danny Crow ensured the Hatters third win in four games, which lifts them into fourth place in the table with a game in hand over the three teams above them.

But while Crow got two vital goals, including one in the penalty spot, it was the performance of the whole side that impressed boss Richard Money.

"I thought the movement of the team was really exciting," he enthused.

"We should have been two or three goals in front before we let them get back into it before half-time. The 1-1 half-time score was no reflection on the first half play.

"We played really well, but shot ourselves in the foot on a couple of

occasions. Overall, we showed good control of the ball and good control of the match.

"We kept the ball on the floor and always looked like scoring goals; it was just that we defended poorly on two occasions."

The huge support from Luton swelled the attendance to 2,518, Borough's biggest of the season. "The support was fantastic," added Money. "Hopefully, they have gone away happy. Nine points from four games is a decent return and we have got ourselves back in contention."

"We are in great form at the moment and I am pleased with the way we are developing as a group. Hopefully we can now get a good run going."

Borough boss Garry Wilson accepted that it was always going to be a difficult game.

"We did not get off to the greatest of starts," he said. "But after pulling back to 1-1 we got ourselves back into a position which gave us some belief at half-time.



LIFT OFF: Danny Crow fires home his first, and Luton's third

PICTURE: Pete Gavlik

I am not too downhearted. We showed great spirit in the second half and at 2-2 we felt the game could have swung in our favour. It was disappointing to concede a third goal and then came a soft penalty."

With the wind behind them, the Hatters made all the early running and it was no surprise when they went ahead at 18 minutes.

Andy Drury's corner from the left was headed back across goal by Keith Keane for George Pilkington to toe poke home from close range.

It was right against the run of play when Borough levelled at 36 minutes.

Amari Morgan-Smith was booked for a foul on Steve Brinkhurst and Matt Crabb's free-kick from the right was headed in by Steve Cook.

Borough came out meaning business in the second half, but at 63 minutes the Hatters were back in front when Matthew Barnes-Homer ran on to an immaculate through ball from Crow to lob advancing keeper Rikki Banks.

Still Borough refused to lie down and four minutes later Simon Johnson converted Matt Crabb's cross to level once more.

The Hatters, however, still had plenty left in the tank.

Crow restored the lead in the 71st minute after Banks had got a hand to a shot from Barnes-Homer.

And it was the jubilant Crow who made sure of victory from the penalty spot three minutes later after Borough skipper Ben Austin had handled Drury's attempted through ball.