

BRABIN BREAKS HATTERS DUCK

By Alan Jones

GARY BRABIN claimed his first win as Luton manager at the fourth time of asking by putting former club Southport to the sword.

It was a conclusive victory for the Hatters, with first half goals from Amari Morgan-Smith and Robbie Williams putting the home side firmly in control as they ended a miserable run of one win in eight games.

The title may be gone, but having previously experienced the disappointment of defeat in the play-offs with

Southport and Cambridge, the challenge now for Brabin is to ensure his current side pick up their form as they enter the end of season shake-up.

"It was a great way to get my first win," Brabin said. "Everything we've worked on seemed to piece together and we really deserved it.

"You could see the togetherness between the players and fans. The atmosphere around the game was brilliant. We've changed our game a little bit and it's up to us to keep it going."

The home side made a confident start, taking a deserved 22nd-minute lead. Morgan-Smith placed a

retaken free-kick into the top right-hand corner from 20 yards after Aaron Turner had been penalised for encroaching on Willmott's initial effort.

Luton could have been in front earlier, with Zdenek Kroca guilty of a glaring miss at the end of a smart move. Willmott, Morgan-Smith and Jason Walker all registered attempts off target as the Hatters hit a fluent stride.

Willmott was lively throughout the first half and he doubled the Hatters' advantage before the inter-

val. Alex Lawless supplied a delightful pass to slice open the Southport defence, allowing Willmott to apply a fine finishing touch.

Southport made more headway during a spell at the start of the second period, but Steve Daly was unable to capitalise on a slip from Kroca.

Tony Gray then stung the palms of the Luton keeper, who also made a flying save to turn aside John Paul Kissock's testing free-kick.

Yet the home side finished with a flourish as they bagged four goals in the

final six minutes.

Freddie Murray added a third for Luton with a deflected shot five minutes from time, before Walker netted from close range.

Kroca then dispatched a far post header and Claude Gnacka completed the scoring from the penalty spot.

Southport's Adam Flynn was shown a red card after the final whistle to end what had been a miserable afternoon for the visitors.

STAR MAN: Alex Lawless (Luton)
ATT: 5,844
ENTERTAINMENT: ★★★★★
REF RATING: L Collins 7/10



LUTON TOWN 6

Morgan-Smith 22, Willmott 39, Murray 84, Walker 88, Kroca 90+3, Gnacka 90+6

SOUTHPORT 0

MATCH STATS		
LUTON v SOUTHPORT		
8	SHOTS ON TARGET	2
6	SHOTS OFF TARGET	3
6	CORNERS	4
3	OFFSIDE	4
13	FOULS CONCEDED	15
1	YELLOW CARDS	4
0	RED CARDS	1

LUTON TOWN: 4-4-2: Tyler 7; Newton 6, Pilkington 8, Kroca 6, Murray 7; Willmott 7 (Gnacka 56, 7); Lawless 8, Keane 7; Howells 7; Walker 7, Morgan-Smith 8 (Barnes-Homer 72, 6). **Subs not used:** Pilkington, Graham, Carden
SOUTHPORT: 4-4-1-1: McMillan 6; Williams 5, Davis 6, Marsh-Evans 5 (Flynn 46 5), McGinn 6; Whalley 6, Turner 6, Moogan 6, Barratt 5 (McNeil 46, 6); Kissock 7; Daly 6 (Gray 67, 7). **Subs not used:** Dickinson, Blakeman