



LUTON TOWN 5
Watkins 41, Antwi 71, Morgan-Smith 73, Willmott 77, Crow 78

SAVE YOUR

Five-star Hatters show Brabin



LETHAL: Danny Crow heads in Luton's fifth goal

PICTURES: Gareth Owen



By Sam Elliott

EVER searched for something for ages and ages only to discover what you were looking for was actually there, right under your nose this whole time?

Luton manager Gary Brabin may be thinking the last few weeks of his life could have been better spent.

James Constable, bid rejected. Reece Styche, bid rejected. Jon Shaw, bid rejected.

Having spent weeks on the motorway, maybe the answer to his centre-forward conundrum was a little closer to home.

After six goals against Southport last April, the Hatters netted five times five months on. Four of those came in a dazzling seven-minute blitz, but call off the striker search? Brabin is having none of it.

He said: "We've been working 24-7 on getting this forward in - I've done so many miles, I'd actually love for once to spend a night having tea with the missus and the little one!"

"We are very, very close to getting who we want now. People may find it hard to believe but we do have a small squad. Although I was pleased with us going forward, I look at it and still think we need that striker."

"The forwards I have here have responded, but it won't change my plans in the transfer market."

There's no doubt that if Luton do decide to write the biggest cheque in their recent history to lure Constable from Oxford United this week, then there will be hell to pay for the rest.

An examination of their bench suggested anything but a stretched squad. With Amari Morgan-Smith, Danny Crow and the much maligned Matthew Barnes-Homer all taking their place alongside the ex-Southport player and manager in the dug-out, you wonder how he'll keep everyone happy.

With all this talk of striker searches, Luton's big miss remains captain George Pilkington.

Sides know the Hatters' are always liable to concede without their injured talisman, and Southport smelt early blood.

John-Paul Kissock's hold-up play was to be admired, he kept hold of the ball in a busy penalty box before ushering it four way to his right where Jonathan Brown was running it. He

SOUTHPORT 1
Brown 8



CASH, BOSS

he doesn't need a new striker

crashed the ball beyond Mark Tyler before the keeper knew what was going on.

It was an action-packed start, the game helped by the early goal, the soggy surface, restless home crowd and visitors to Kenilworth Road willing to have a go. The hosts needed energising after a dull first half hour and when James Dance went off with an eye injury, on came Crow.

Seven minutes after his introduction he provided the first-half's moment of great class, arcing a well-measured half-volley agonisingly over Tony McMillan's crossbar from 25 yards.

The 'Luton Magician' then cast his spell. Adam Watkins, 19, making his first league start, carried the ball forward before picking the right moment and right spot to beat the keeper.

Already you got a sense it was going to be one of those days for the 40 or so Port supporters that travelled down from the north west.

First, they lost Kissock to injury and then watched as their defence completely switched off as Crow stole in, only this time he dragged his shot just wide.

Man, or boy, of the moment Watkins was to have his second telling contribution after 68 minutes. His mazy run was halted illegally by Steve Akrigg - his second bookable offence producing the only likely outcome.

From then on, there was only one winner. Hatters went ahead when Willmott's corner was nodded on

then hammered in by Antwi.

Morgan Smith gave Brabin a timely reminder of his goalscoring ability when he tucked away number three inside James Smith's near post.

The exceptional Willmott banged home a Morgan-Smith lay-off from 25 yards minutes later to confirm the points and within seconds, Crow's expert header from right-back Osano's cross at the corner flag made it five. It was a spell of championship sparkle.

Port boss Watson said: "Once we lost Steve Akrigg to the red card we didn't have a single centre-back on the pitch. The game changed when he was sent off but I know we didn't play as badly as we did here in April."

STAR MAN: Robbie Willmott (Luton)
ATT: 5,681
ENTERTAINMENT: *****
REF RATING: Andrew Davies 7/10



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GARY BRABIN, Luton manager



"The game changed when Akrigg was sent off but I know we didn't play as badly as we did here in April."

LIAM WATSON, Southport manager



WHERE THERE'S A WILL: Robbie Willmott celebrates

MATCH STATS

LUTON v SOUTHPORT

9 SHOTS ON TARGET	3
7 SHOTS OFF TARGET	4
7 CORNERS	4
5 OFFSIDE	2
6 FOULS CONCEDED	5
1 YELLOW CARDS	1
0 RED CARDS	1

LUTON: 4-5-1: Tyler 6, Osano 8, Beckwith 6, Antwi 7, Howells 6, Keane 7, Lawless 7, Watkins 8, Asadu-Adjaye 78, 6) Willmott 9, Dance 5 (Crow 35, 8) O'Connor 6 (Morgan-Smith 59, 8), Subs not used: Pilkington, Barnes-Homer.
SOUTHPORT: 4-1-3-1: McMillan 6, Smith 6, Akrigg 5, Grand 6, Lever 6, Brown 5 (Osbourne 70, 8) Lee 6, Leacham 6, Whalley 5, Kissock 6 (Benjamin 56, 5) Gray 6 (Owens 70, 6), Subs not used: Nemes, Ordish.