

FIRST DIVISION CLUB BEATEN

It seemed almost inconceivable that a team, with only two exceptions, could play such contrasting football at Luton on Monday evening, when compared with that of the previous Saturday. Yet the games were as different as chalk is to cheese. Clever movements in this Southern Floodlight Cup semi-final replay were rounded off with some good shooting, and there were thrills enough to keep the small crowd keenly interested up to the end. First Division Luton found their match, and although there was plenty of what might be termed luck about the game, this was just about equally shared.

In the absence of Ray Reeves, on the injured list, Sylvan Anderton captained the Reading side. The game began with a shock to Reading, McGuffie crashing the ball against the crossbar with a fine long shot. The visiting players soon recovered from this, however, and a quick throw-in on the right, followed by a good movement between Wheeler and Whitehouse, resulted in Harrison getting the first scoring chance, but he sent high over the bar. Then Groves failed with as easy a chance at the other end. Later Harrison did get the ball into the Luton net, but a doubtful off-side decision was given again. Dixon, who appeared to be well onside when the ball was played. Then Wheeler, with a terrific drive, hit the inside of the post, and it did look as if the ball went into the net, but it was scooped round the post and only a corner was awarded.

However, Reading scored a well-worked goal after 29 minutes. Wheeler sent Whitehouse away, and the latter beat the back and centred for **Dixon** to head into the net. Luton retaliated strongly, and an indirect free-kick was awarded against Reading inside the penalty area. But this produced nothing more than a corner, and the interval arrived with Reading hanging on to their slender lead.

Twenty minutes from the end came the penalty kick which, if full use had been made of it, would have saved Reading a deal of trouble in the closing stages. Baynham had frequently been making a lot of ground by advancing with the ball, but on this occasion he was challenged by Wheeler. The goal-keeper used unfair methods to ward off the winger, and the penalty resulted. Penford, deputising for Reeves, was entrusted with the kick. He shot hard enough, but sent the ball a yard wide. For the remainder of the game Reading had to fight grimly against a rampaging attack in order to keep their lead intact. At times the whole of the Reading team were concentrated in their own half. There were, of course, break-