

LUTON NEED NOT BE CONTENT TO DASH AND HOPE

Luton T. 0 Stoke C. 0: by JAMES MURRAY

LUTON should have won fairly comfortably. They were stronger, more adept at switching on an attack, and they spent a high proportion of the game in Stoke's half. But the Luton forwards could not produce those vital variations of the point of attack that would have beaten the cloying saturation defence-in-depth of retreating Stoke.

It was a match of bruises and bustle, with a handful of respectable shots.

Luton's talent will be exploited better by a little more planning. There is too much improvisation, too much dash and hope for the best, at the moment.

Stoke, as befits a side with such men as Stan Matthews, Jackie Mudie, and Tommy Thompson in their attack, showed much more purpose in their approach work. But it generally took three men to create a breakthrough, and there was only lone spearhead Peter Bullock, at centre forward, to attempt the finishing.

Skill was at a premium in a grim game, and here was a surplus of hacking tackles. It might have been merciful if smoke from a nearby chimney fire had continued

to shroud their fumbblings and thumpings.

Luton twice came close to scoring. After 15 minutes, inside-left McKechnie sent in a shot too hot for O'Neill to hold, but left-back Allen cleared coolly from the line. A prolonged blockade of the Stoke goal was concluded when O'Neill dived to finger-tip right-half Pacey's powerful, low drive round the corner.

Referee H. Horner (Coventry) booked Stoke centre-half Andrew and Luton outside-right Walden after a hacking episode when both were on the ground.

Tempers cooled a little in the second half. Luton wasted two good chances when Walden and Legate shot over the crossbar.



Kenilworth-road played the host ground to Stanley Matthews and the other ten men of Stoke City on Saturday afternoon, and although the old maestro was but a shadow of his former self he can still attract a good crowd. Luton's gate went up to the 15,000 mark, and although the Town were below form they managed to collect a vital League point. Above (K6888X), the Stoke goalkeeper in action.