

Luton still have a little hope

Luton 2 Q.P.R. 0 : by GRAHAM BUXTON

A GLIMMER of hope showed for Luton in this display of fighting football against a jaded-looking Rangers. Said manager George Martin : "I think we showed a lot more method and determination, but I am afraid we may run out of time."

Maybe Rangers made their biggest tactical error when they decided to omit Stuart Leary from the six forwards named. In his Charlton past, Luton have been sitting ducks for his subtlety and a ball player of his ability might well have proved a match winner in the mudheap conditions.

The Rangers midfield build-up consisted mainly of long balls being hit by Tony Hazell and Mike Keen. Apart from two or three speculative shots by Roger Morgan, who gave Ken Barton a harassing first half, the Luton goal did not seem in much danger.

Nor with the lack of a constructive build-up did the double spear-head of Brian Bedford and Bill McAdams look much like prospering.

Luton, who have had few breaks this season, gained one in the 10th minute when David Pleat made a speculative effort intended as a

centre but which dipped, deceived Peter Springett and went in off the inside of the post.

There were threats of other Luton goals after this but their work in front of goal was not sharp enough and John O'Rourke, still not looking 100 per cent fit, was seldom out of the grip of Ray Brady.

During the second half both teams became bogged down and Luton made things difficult for themselves by running with the ball. Even so their new-found fighting spirit kept them on top. But it was anybody's game until near to the end when Ted Phillips made certain of invaluable points with a header.

Best of the Luton forwards were David Pleat, Gordon Riddick and Billy Harber, while their defence showed newfound security.