

Northcott jolts jittery Luton

Torquay 2 Luton 0 by DOUGLAS HIRD

TORQUAY are riding the crest of a wave and this game against jittery Luton side illustrated how well things are going. Their two goals came from Tommy Northcott, the man who is keeping Robin Stubbs, top scorer last season in the reserves.

Northcott justified manager Frank O'Farrell's choice in selecting him with fine opportunism and intelligent use of the ball.

His first goal came after 38 minutes from a cross by left winger Gerald King. Nine minutes later the burly Torquay leader snapped up a mistake by goalkeeper Colin Tinsley and hammered the ball home.

Torquay dominated most of the play. Luton's forwards could do little against Torquay's close marking defence and only centre forward Jimmy Gibson got in anything like a worthwhile shot.

An intriguing feature was the tussle between King, Torquay's 18-year-old close season buy from Cardiff, and Bobby Thompson, Luton's experienced right-back who joined the club from Liverpool.

King, playing his first game in front of the home crowd, came off best.

Luton's defence never looked sound against the bustling Northcott and the probing of inside-forwards Tommy Spratt and Alan Kirkman. Only centre-half Alan Rivers gave a good account of himself, although, apart from his one slip, Tinsley performed creditably.

It was the Luton goalkeeper who deprived Northcott of his hat-trick, throwing himself across the goal to clutch a cracking header.