

Leg-weary Luton grab points

Luton 2 Darlington 0: by PETER GILL

LUTON MANAGER George Martin said it quite bluntly: "Darlington are the best team we have played so far." And for 25 minutes the visitors looked a really first-class combination. They had Luton, who had played a hard game on Good Friday, leg-weary in the clinging mud.

Darlington played a 4-2-4 system, and in midfield they relied heavily on the skill of Ray Yeoman, ex-Middlesbrough and Northampton player. But their play fell off in front of goal, where even the lively Tom Cummings was finally mastered by Matt Woods, one of the shrewdest signings Luton ever made.

Another free transfer player, goalkeeper George Ramage, kept Luton firmly in the forefront of the promotion race with two out-of-this-world saves from Cummings and McGeachle in the second half.

Lost rhythm

At that stage the Luton lead amounted to only one goal, scored by Whittaker after 23 minutes. It was a goal that changed the whole tempo of the game.

Darlington, although still crunching hard in the tackle, lost their rhythm. Yet they always had a chance . . . until 25 minutes from the end when O'Rourke got the merest flick at a free kick by Whittaker and completely baffled Moor.

It was a tough battle, in appalling conditions, and the wonder was that only one player—Riddick, the Luton right-back—had to go off through injury.

He was replaced 18 minutes from the end by Read, but he is expected to be fit for the vital home match with Colchester tomorrow.

Riddick, an inside forward converted into a full-back, had given a polished performance, and he was cheered off the field.

Ten minutes from the end Dar-

lington right-back Peverell had his name taken.

Some of the tackling by both sides was uninhibited, to say the least.

Luton won because they had something extra in front of goal—the thrust of O'Rourke and Whittaker.

They were weak on the right flank, but are hoping that Graham French, out of two holiday matches through muscle trouble, will be fit for tomorrow.