

STAND-IN 'KEEPER BOOSTS LUTON PROMOTION BID

Luton 2 Stockport 0: by PETER GILL

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LUTON FOR promotion. That's the theme song the 10,000 or so regular supporters have acquired during their bid, but manager George Martin is keeping quiet on this score. "I am counting no chickens. I am taking each match on its merits and as it comes," he says.

Inwardly though he was well enough pleased with this display and especially with one of his periodic gambles that paid a rich dividend.

Until last Thursday Manager Martin had never seen Tony Read, hitherto his regular inside right, playing in goal in a serious match.

On the strength of what he saw on Thursday he included Read, who probably kept Luton in the promotion hunt with a couple of saves that were out of this world at a critical stage when the lead was a single goal.

Tearaway

That was scored after six minutes by the young star Bruce Rioch during a tearaway start that had the Stockport defence back on their heels.

In fact as Luton swept to the attack they could have been three goals up. What upset their rhythm, which was never recovered in the first half, was a severe ankle injury received by Freddie Jardine after a quarter of an hour.

Jardine was carried off and replaced by 18-year-old Alan Slough.

With reasonable luck Stockport

would have drawn level because Allchurch and Price both struck the woodwork and then came Read's great saves from Young and Allchurch.

Never afterwards did Stockport come so close to equalising but Luton had to keep a careful watch on a clever left-wing pair of Young and Price who were always dangerous.

Nor could the threat from Len White be discounted and Stockport were always fighters.

However they sagged noticeably when in the 61st minute Clarke brought down John O'Rourke with whom he had a rugged battle and Ray Whittaker scored from the penalty spot.

After that Luton might have gone on to more convincing victory for O'Rourke and Moore had goals disallowed for offside. However they were never quite consistent enough on the wings to open up the rugged Stockport defence and Collins had a sound grip on the usually dangerous Whittaker.