

LUTON GO EASY ON NEWPORT

Luton 3, Newport 1

HAD Luton really made the most of their scoring chances, this moderate Newport team could have been on the receiving end of a real thrashing. Conversely, a point was within their grasp early in the second half if they had produced some thrust forward.

It was Fraser, in Southern League football with Barry last season, who headed a neat goal to reduce the Luton lead that was built up by Rivers and Whittaker in a 10-minute spell before the interval.

Unhappily for Newport that was Fraser's only major contribution because of his lack of experience. With Pugh, the link-man, below his best, the attack was firmly handled by the strong Luton defence.

While the score was 2-1, however, there was some suggestion of the game being in the balance even though Thomas was the one forward who showed a real measure of consistency.

No scare

There was no real scare for Luton, and everything came all right for them 12 minutes from the end when the highly promising Reoch scored a grand goal from a fine pass by Whittaker.

Three minutes earlier, Newport had substituted the injured Rowland with Wookey, but this made no difference to the ultimate result, even though it caused a reshuffle.

Although he was dissatisfied about the way in which good chances were missed, the Luton manager George Martin consoled himself with the thought that at least his team had had the ability to create them. That has not happened too regularly this season, but the fact remains that Luton still need a marksman to replace O'Rourke.

Newport's manager, Billy Lucas, made a terse comment: "That was our worst yet." He was understandably disappointed with the forwards' showing.

Luton Town: Read; Slough, Jardine; Thomson, Rivers, Moore; Pleat, Riddick, French, Reoch, Whittaker. Sub.: Grieve.

Newport County: Beswick; Williams, Bird; Rowland, Rathbone, Hill; Thomas, Pugh, Fraser, Jones, Morgan. Sub.: Wookey.

Referee: R. Tinkler (Boston).