

Marksman Rioch is on target

by PETER GILL

Luton 3 Chesterfield 2

DEDICATED ALLAN BROWN, Luton's manager, has had a worrying start to his new career but he wore a broad smile after this gruelling affair.

"I thought the boys all fought hard," he said and of newcomer Max Dougan whom he had not seen playing before outlaying £7,000 for his transfer, he said: "I like him. He will do us a power of good."

Not that this was any sort of day on which to make a judgment on anyone because the ball stuck in the cloying mud so badly that any sort of constructive football was not only a mistake but doomed to disaster.

That in the circumstances these two teams widely apart in the table managed to put on such an entertaining display was a credit to them.

Neither team flagged and Chesterfield, who began the match with promotion aspirations, twice drew level.

Ironic

Ironically from the Luton point of view the scorer on each occasion was Billy Stark to whom they gave a free transfer at the end of last season.

On the stroke of half-time he cleverly lobbed a shot from 25 yards over the head of Tony Read who was some way out of his goal. That levelled a well-taken goal 19 minutes earlier by Ray Whittaker, the most progressive and successful winger on view.

At half-time Chesterfield were distinctly fortunate to be level, especially as a header by Gordon Riddick had made a muddy splurge on their crossbar.

However, they were persistent and worried the Luton defence into some early errors in the second half.

Ivan Hollett, their chief marksman, scarcely found conditions to his liking and gradually Luton settled down again.

Nineteen-year-old Bruce Rioch, the envy of several First Division clubs, then struck with a neatly headed goal after 61 minutes to spark off a burst of scoring.

Eight minutes later Stark got another snap goal to put the game back into the melting pot.

Then the genius of Rioch showed again when he beat Osborne from close range.

On the day the result was about right because Luton created the better chances and always looked the more dangerous. In fact had it not been for the courage and agility of Osborne the result would not have been in the balance.