

Non-stop Luton lack punch

Luton 0 Southport 0: by PETER GILL

WHAT LUTON cannot afford, if they are to keep out of re-election trouble, is to drop home points. But on the evidence of this display, they may well do so again against a determined opposition such as that presented by Southport unless they considerably improve their striking power.

Luton attacked for almost 90 per cent of the game but, although there were some close things, there was never any real promise in the ability of the Luton forwards to make the break through.

For one thing, they were sadly lacking in ideas of how to break down the blanket defence which Southport put down from the start.

Unashamedly, Southport went

out to gain a point because, as their manager Billy Bingham said afterwards: "We have been losing away matches through playing open football."

Certainly they made no visible attempt to do so on this occasion but packed their penalty area whenever Luton moved up in anything like force.

The man who threatened to upset the Southport plan of campaign was brilliant winger Graham French, the most dangerous forward on the field. But, time and again, he saw his work go to waste because of the shortcomings of his front line colleagues.

Recall of goalkeeper Tony Read to the attack was a failure, despite the fact that he was unlucky with a first-half header; and Derek Kevan just could not shake off the close marking.

Defensively, Luton were seldom in any sort of trouble, but they had a slice of luck when Colin Alty sent the ball crashing against a post and then missed by inches. But defeat for them would have been an unjust result.