

Rioch finds the way for Luton

By **GERALD SINSTADT**

Luton 2, Port Vale 0

A TEAM growing over-confident of promotion against a club dependent on the charity of others if they are to play League football at all next season — the portents were not promising. In the event, Port Vale's professional pride made a game of it, though not a very attractive one.

Luton began with the panache of a side who have conceded only one home point this season. Slough tested Sharratt from 20 yards, French got in a header, Rioch shot against the bar—all this in the first three minutes.

If Port Vale harboured any thoughts of adventure, these events quickly extinguished them. By weight of numbers rather than by organisation they managed to smother much of the persistent probing of Rioch, Allen and Buxton.

To achieve a breakthrough, either bravery or a stroke of inspiration was needed. Rioch provided both. Midway through the first half, he outpaced James in a determined 50-yard run before releasing a perfectly timed pass for Buxton to run the ball into the net.

Twenty minutes into the second half, Rioch struck again. A loose ball bounced to his right foot. Half a dozen defenders covered the goal, but not one could move before the ball flew just inside the angle.

This was a goal of stunning majesty and the remainder of the game seemed even more drab by comparison. Only Chapman provided the barest hint of a Port Vale goal, but his best effort was well held by Read, driving to his right.

Luton: Read; Dougan, Jardine, Slough, Branston, Moore, French, Buxton, Allen, Rioch, Whittaker. Sub.: McDermott.

Port Vale: Sharratt; James, Sproson, Poole, Asprey, Wilson, Mahon, Goddard, fellow, Boulton, Chapman, Cullerton. Sub.: Sive.

Referee: J. W. Clarke (Studley).



Ian Buxton, in triumph,
after putting the ball in the
Vale net for the Town's
first goal last Saturday. —
GG5421K.