

READING'S SPIERS SENT OFF

By Christopher Martin

Luton 2, Reading 1

SOME matches are enacted mainly in midfield, others in the penalty area. This was decidedly a "goalmouth" game. But what it gained in excitement, it lacked in sophistication.

The action began immediately. From a free kick taken by French for Luton after three minutes, Slough hit a shot which was blocked but then thundered home the returning ball as Brown tried vainly to recover from his abortive dive.

French celebrated his part in this opening scene by clearing not only the bar but also the stand with his next shot. Bacuzzi, muscular and assured, and Silvester, with a delicacy of touch in one so heavy, caught the eye for Reading, whose offside trap sometimes disconcerted the Luton forwards.

Errant ball

Lewis, however, was always persistent and skilful. His reward was to score from the penalty given to Luton just before half-time when Keith Allen was sent sprawling by Yard's tackle. Allen's long run had been made possible by McDerment's energy in keeping an errant ball in play.

In the second half Luton's dominance increased, with both Allen and French hitting the post. The crowd bayed for another penalty when Allen again bit the mud as Brown dived at his feet, and shortly afterwards Bacuzzi had his name taken for felling Buxton.

Then, after 71 minutes, Spiers committed a mean foul on the break-away Lewis and, arguing, was sent off, his head bowed against booing.

But it had the right effect on Reading, for soon afterwards Harris headed a free kick across the goal to Yard, who took his chance gratefully. Later, with five minutes left, only an instinctive save by Davie foiled another stabbing header by Harris.

Luton: Davie; Dougan; Bannister; Slough; Branston; Moore; French; Buxton; Allen; K.; Lewis; Harrison. **Sub.:** McDerment.

Reading: Brown; Bacuzzi; Spiers; Thornhill; Hitchcock; Yard; Allen; D.; Collins; Sainty; Silvester; Harris.

Referee: C. Thomas (Treorchy).