

LUTON HOPES ALIVE

By BILL MEREDITH

Luton 2 Crewe 0

LUTON, unbeaten at home and still optimistically chasing the promotion rainbow, made hard work of beating Third Division strugglers Crewe at Kenilworth Road last night.

However, despite the rather narrow winning margin, Luton at least had the satisfaction of gaining revenge for a 2-0 defeat at Crewe a month ago.

Luton's trouble last night was a lack of general order and finishing power in attack. They seemed to be missing the cool control and organising ability of Rioch, their injured young forward.

But it was a former school colleague of Rioch's who probably saved Luton's faces from becoming as red as the Crewe shirts.

Slough storms clear

Alan Slough, who was at Stopsley School with Rioch, showed more snap than any of his forwards and scored the vital opening goal in the 43rd minute when Luton were beginning to look just a shade desperate.

Slough stormed through in great style to hammer his shot past the startled Mailey, who gave a fine display in Crewe's goal.

Crewe relied mainly on a mass defence and some of their tackling was inclined to be over-zealous. Gannon was booked after a first-half clash with French and after the interval the referee noted the names of French and Ratcliffe after the linesman had drawn his attention to a scuffle.

When Crewe did come out of their defensive shell it was the diminutive Tarbuck who caused Luton most concern. Once he beat three defenders in a brave run, only to see his shot deflected for a corner.

But all Crewe's defiance was swept aside in the 79th minute. Once again the alert Mailey got in the way of a Lewis shot, but Allen followed through to nod home Luton's second goal and clinch a welcome, if not altogether convincing, victory.

Luton.—Davie; Dougan, Bannister, Slough, Branston, Moore, French, Lewis, Allen, Keen, Jardine.

Crewe.—Malley, Lowry, Leigh, Stott, Barnes, Gater, Ratcliffe, McHale, Hollett, Tarbuck, Gannon.