

Luton end Fulham challenge

69/70.

Fulham 0, Luton Town 1

Luton Town are still in the fight. They made more room for themselves in the cluster at the top of the Third Division by ending Fulham's recent barnstorming challenge at Craven Cottage last night.

The sort of goal that presented the game to Luton has always been the rule rather than the exception at Craven Cottage. From a needlessly defensive throw-in, Moreline, 18 yards out, expansively pondered an unnecessary back pass, Webster came out to receive it, and McDonald had time to write a thank-you letter as he strolled between them to run the ball into the empty goal.

From his directors' box, the Fulham chairman, Mr. Tommy Trinder, raised his brown trilby in apparent despair—but the gesture must have included a tinge of professional appreciation.

His men picked themselves up and boisterously shrugged off the giggles from the largest league crowd of the season. Brown and Lloyd held the midfield and the old double act of Conway and Callaghan made things uncomfortable for the Luton back line. But with

Earle and Halom being easily controlled by Slough, Bannister and Branston, all Fulham's first half threats were shouted from long range, except once when Callaghan brought a splendidly instinctive save from Starling.

However, if not particularly menaced, Starling was kept the busier goalkeeper. Webster's main problems came from his own colleagues who, though holding off Luton's rather insipid attacks easily enough, seemed more intent to spend the evening by practising their famous back passing: on at least half a dozen occasions Webster was full length in the mud scrambling after balls played from his own defence.

Fulham kept up their spirited pressure until the end, but by this time Luton had left McDonald and French upfield on their own and resolutely packed their defences. And who could blame them—with the Second Division becoming, by the minute, an ever increasing possibility.

FULHAM.—M. Webster; M. Pentecost, D. Moreline, S. Brown, R. Matthewson, F. Callaghan, J. Conway, V. Halom, S. Earle, B. Lloyd, L. Barrett.

LUTON.—A. Starling; J. Ryan, J. Bannister, A. Keen, T. Branston, J. Moore, A. Slough, V. Busby, M. McDonald, K. Allen, G. French.

Referee.—C. Thomas (Treorchy).