

HARDEST SO FAR — STOCK

70/71
By Peter Corrigan

CARDIFF 0, LUTON 0

THESE two promotion-seeking rivals fought like heavyweights — slugging it out toe to toe and flinching from nothing.

Cardiff's biggest crowd of the season were roused to the sort of excitement that usually goes with a glut of goals.

Luton manager Alec Stock, happy with a point, said:

"It was certainly the hardest game we've had this season, but we expected to fight for everything we got. We had to defend a lot but it could have gone either way."

Cardiff continually carried the conflict into Luton's penalty area, but there the attacks perished.

If it wasn't centre-half Nicholl heading the ball away, it was keeper Read adding to a long string of fine saves.

Luton were prepared to fight in their own territory and that committed marksman Macdonald to a lone battle against the Cardiff defence.

Ruthless

But Cardiff skipper Don Murray, playing his 100th consecutive League game, had too much experience and strength to allow Macdonald more than a rare glimpse of Cardiff's goal.

The ruthless aggression that stopped Macdonald was also used by Luton's Roger Hoy on Cardiff's chief schemer, Gibson.

It was the sort of game that suits Cardiff's Mel Sutton. And his performance showed it.

Cardiff's new man Leighton Phillips was almost as persistent, and his work on the edge of the box brought Cardiff nearest to scoring.

But it was after one of his near things that Luton nearly celebrated a break-away goal.

Full-back John Ryan thundered a shot from 25 yards out on the right flank. It beat Eadie but rebounded from the angle of the post and bar.

CARDIFF: Eadie 6; Carver 7; Murray 7; Harris 7; Bell 7; ★SUTTON 9; Gibson 7; Phillips 8; King 6; Clark 6; Woodruff 7.

LUTON: ★READ 9; Ryan, John 7; Nicholl 8; Slough 7; Bannister 7; Hoy 7; Kean 7; Court 6; Ryan, Jim 6; Macdonald 6; Givens 6.

Ref.: I. Smith (Accrington) 8.