



HAS ON BUS

LUTON players claimed that Cardiff's goal on Saturday should never have counted because Bobby Woodruff, top left, kicked the ball out of goalkeeper Willie Carrick's hands after he had dived on Andy McCulloch's header.

YOU CAN DO BETTER THAN THIS, LUTON

Top right, John Moore stands over his goalkeeper in disbelief as (from the left) Bobby Thomson, Alan Slough and John Ryan look for help from a linesman. But the delight on McCulloch's face shows that the referee had decided in favour of the Cardiff centre forward.



Derek Hales salutes his debut goal

LUTON's Cup hangover blossomed into the boozer's lament on Saturday. They haven't done a thing right since that win at Newcastle and they let both Cardiff and their promotion hopes escape from them at Kenilworth Road.

There's an old saying in football that you can't win everything, and Luton are finding this to be a true adage. But I think they will be back on the champagne on Saturday after their fifth round FA Cup tie at Bolton.

Luton can do a lot better than this. They can do a lot better than they did at Brighton last week. They can rise to the big occasion.

Let us not forget that their rhythm was rocked by two enforced changes. Willie Carrick came into goal for the injured Keith Barber, and his inexperience was underlined by some indecision.

But we know he can do it. We saw it in his League debut at Swindon last September. He will want to prove his point next Saturday, and after the Luton coaching staff has concentrated on his aerial work, I am sure he will be a different player.

Miss

Carrick's problem seems to be one of selection of which crosses to punch and which to catch.

Derek Hales won't forget his first League match. He banged Luton into the lead in the 11th minute and then let Cardiff off nine minutes later with the miss of the season.

After Butlin had hit the post the ball bounced kindly to Hales a couple of yards out. He panicked and launched it over the top into the Oak Road choir.

That was the turning point for Luton. Until then the Cardiff defence had looked as wobbly as the Michelin Man. Luton set them up for the kill but failed to deliver the knockout punch.

Even so Hales made an

impressive debut, and he is sure to be in the party that goes to Bolton.

Timed

He and Butlin complemented each other as leaders of the attack, and with a bit more luck they would have had a collection of goals between them.

Butlin hit the wood twice and had a perfectly timed header fingered over by Irwin. The Cardiff keeper also did well to save shots from Jimmy Ryan and Aston.

Slough had a marvellous first half, giving a classic show of graft and skill. But he set himself too hot a pace and could not, understandably, keep it up.

Hindson showed well in patches, but with only he and Slough as recognised midfield men in the side, Luton began to lose out in this department, and Cardiff elbowed their way back into the match.

Signal

The power of McCulloch and the guile of Woodruff and Vincent, who was once on the verge of a move to Luton, put the Welsh side back in contention, and I could see their equaliser coming long before its 50th minute arrival.

Luton complained that Woodruff kicked the ball out of Carrick's hands, but the Luton goalkeeper looked a bit slow in going down to

McCulloch's header from Vincent's corner. But it counted to signal a couple of verses of Cwm Rhondda from the Celts in the crowd.

From its raggedy start the Welsh defence grew stronger and stronger, and Luton's attack found it harder and harder to penetrate.

Hales had the ball in the net again towards the end, but he was adjudged offside.

Aching

Moore and Garner had fair games in the middle of the Luton defence, and there was some good tackling from Thomson and John Ryan, who was back in the defence for flu-ridden Don Shanks. But pulling him out of midfield and putting in an extra attacker left the Town a bit stretched in the middle.

It was good to see Viv Busby back in the side - if only as substitute. How he must have been aching to go on and have a go.

The match did not provide a

ALL THE MATCH DETAILS

LUTON: Carrick; John Ryan, Thomson, Slough, Garner, Moore, Jimmy Ryan, Hales, Butlin, Hindson, Aston. Sub: Busby.

CARDIFF: Irwin; Dwyer, Pethard, Phillips, Murray, Morgan, Kellock, McCulloch, Woodruff, Showers, Vincent. Sub: Rees.

Referee: Mr M. Lowe (Sheffield).

HALES (Luton) 11 mins

WOODRUFF (Cardiff) 50 mins

ATTENDANCE 10,442

high standard of entertainment, and seemed to lack pace and thrust. I just wish that for both the lad himself and the crowd, that Hales's second chance had gone in. Then, I think, Luton would have murdered Cardiff.