

It's Christmas or bust —says Mal Allison

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MALCOLM ALLISON'S problems reached staggering proportions as Crystal Palace slumped to their fifth home defeat of the season. But what probably surprised manager Allison was that there was no great demonstration from the loyal Palace crowd of nearly 20,000. He said: "I don't kid myself about what I have to do. I know exactly what I want. I need another mid-field man and a forward.

"I've got to build a team that will stay in the Second Division and draw the crowds. I must do it by Christmas."

"The first goal resulted from a situation on which I worked yesterday but the players reverted to their old bad habits.

"You can't leave anybody unmarked in the Six-yard box. But I did feel they generally showed better form."

Allison could at least find

Crystal Palace 1 Luton 2: by HAROLD PALMER

satisfaction with the form of his two latest captures. Roy Barry was commanding in the air and Derek Jeffries showed thought in his use of the ball.

Bobby Tambling was full of energy despite a year out of the first team.

Much of the blame must fall on young goalkeeper Paul Hammond. He did not have the assurance to come out for the ball at the right time and this led to a chant: "We want Jackson," referring to Johnny

Jackson whom Hammond has replaced.

Peter Anderson put Luton ahead with a diving header six minutes into the second half.

Don Rogers levelled seven minutes later from Tambling's centre but Barry Butlin nodded Luton's winner—and Palace's £600,000 worth of talent had lost for the seventh time in nine games.

CRYSTAL PALACE. — Hammond; Mulligan, Taylor, Cannon, Barry, Jeffries, Cooke, Poses, Whittle, Tambling, Rogers. Sub: Swindellhurst.

LUTON. — Horn, Shanks, Thomson, Anderson, Faulkner, Garner, Hindson, Ryan (John), Butlin, Finney, Astle. Sub: Holmes.