

AFTER an unlucky first half, a jam-packed home ground saw Luton crumble under the pressure of big league Leicester to lose out on the Cup tie glory this afternoon.

Luton had several dangerous looking moves, but when it came to the crunch, they just could not put the ball where it belonged — in the net.

Leicester's Steve Earle was the terror of the Kenilworth Road side, with two fine goals giving his team an opening into the FA Cup sixth round.

What a treat it was to see Kenilworth Road bursting at the rivets for this afternoon's Fifth Round FA Cup Tie. For once the noise at Luton was so deafening I couldn't hear my copytaker down the road at the office.

What a day it was for Rod Fern. The former Leicester man kept his place in the side to face his old colleagues keeping Aston on the substitute's bench.

Leicester were at full strength with Frank Worthington and Steve Whitworth passing fitness tests a couple of days ago. Both had been doubtful at the start of the week.

Luton played some electrifying football in the first few minutes, with Anderson prominent, and Leicester looking a bit hurried in defence.

A corner by Leicester was whacked across by Weller, and Garner did a good job in clearing. If the early minutes were anything to go by we were in for a real cracker.

In the fifth minute Luton very nearly went ahead. A corner from the left, won by Butlin, was nodded on in the penalty area, and Fern charged in to thump the ball just over the crossbar with his head.

A strong run by the speedy Glover on Leicester's left was well checked by John Ryan.

Luton kept powering forward and their fans were given another treat when Husband sent Anderson speeding through on the left. He tried to cross, but won a corner.

Jim Ryan put it over from the left, and England goalkeeper Shilton dropped it under pressure. He was very lucky indeed to catch West's

73/74 Luton 0 Leicester 4 By ROGER DUCKWORTH

shot that lacked a bit of pace, but appeared through a forest of legs.

But in spite of all their splendid attempts, Luton found themselves a goal behind after 18 minutes.

A clever ball from Birchenall in midfield was chased up the left by full-back Rofe. He crossed quickly shaking off a tackle by Husband, and Earle turned the ball low past Horn on the volley.

It was a beautifully taken goal and came right out of the blue.

Foul

A couple of minutes later a terrific run on the right by Weller almost brought Leicester another one. He went as if to cut inside, but sent Garner the wrong way and found space before shooting just wide with his right foot. The ball ended in the middle of the crowded Kenilworth Road terrace.

That the Town should find themselves behind at this stage was a bit unlucky. The pressure they put on in the first quarter of an hour deserved more than this. But Leicester hit them cleverly on the rebound, and for a time the fire in Luton's play went out.

In the 28th minute Leicester's Cross was booked for "going over the top" to foul Husband.

From the free kick, which John Ryan thumped a long way into the Leicester goalmouth, Luton again went

flat. There was nobody there, and the ball went straight into the hands of Shilton who was waiting patiently.

Leicester began to play some real classy football, and John Ryan was forced to foul Worthington out by the left-hand corner flag.

But in the 33rd minute Luton were again desperately

MATCH DETAILS

LUTON TOWN: Horn, John Ryan, Thomson, Anderson, Faulkner, Garner, Jimmy Ryan, Husband, Fern, West, Butlin.
Sub: Aston.

LEICESTER CITY: Shilton, Whitworth, Rofe, Earle, Moore, Cross, Weller, Sammels, Worthington, Birchenall, Glover.
Sub: Stringfellow.

Referee: Mr David Smith
Earle (Leicester) 18, Earle 48
Worthington (Leicester) 60
Weller (Leicester) 86
Attendance: 25,712
Receipts: £15,000

unlucky. A cross by Thomson was headed on cleverly by Jim Ryan and Butlin went in hard to shoot at goal from just outside the six yard box. Goalkeeper Shilton was there just as quickly and made an amazing save from within a yard of the Luton player.

A neat pass by Jim Ryan out

to Butlin on the right promised much, but the Luton move went flat when Butlin's intended centre went behind for a goal kick.

But Luton could not get through Leicester's defence. They tried and tried, and a goal looked to be on the way when Anderson raced through the middle. But again Cross was there, and the First Division side stayed in control.

In the 41st minute the expertise of Shilton again saved Leicester when he managed to get across to a fierce left foot shot from Anderson and gather it at the second go. This was Luton's best shot of the match so far.

A minute later Jimmy Ryan tried a low one, but this time Shilton did not have to bother as it was going wide of the left-hand post.

A huge clearance by Horn was cleverly heeled on by Butlin, and his centre was headed behind by the alert Whitworth.

In spite of the Luton cheers, the corner was half cleared before a shot by West went over the top.

HT: 0-1

Leicester so nearly went further ahead straight from the kick off. In a brilliant move through the middle, Sammels made all the running and took a gem of a return pass from Earle at full speed, and his shot scraped the crossbar with Horn spread-eagled.

Luton weathered the storm, but they couldn't seem to get into top gear for some minutes. There was no doubt about it they were feeling the pressure.

Leicester did go further ahead three minutes after the break, when Glover nipped out to the left with the ball and crossed for Earle to score his second goal. It was a terrific effort which went in off the far post and gave Horn no chance.

A minute later Earle charged through the middle all on his own and looked as if he was going to make it a hat-trick, but he fed the ball out to Glover on the left, and John Ryan got in with a smart tackle to foil the affair.

Luton's first serious injury came in the 52nd minute, when Garner had to have

treatment after being tackled on the edge of Luton's penalty area. He hurt his right leg, but was able to carry on.

A brilliant chipped pass by Earle into the penalty box was chased by Worthington and Sammels, and John Ryan was forced to make a hurried pass back to his goalkeeper. It almost beat Horn who had to spring to his left to catch it. But Luton were beginning to look on the wrong end of a beating.

Luton almost pulled a goal back in the 56th minute. A good pass from Anderson put Jim Ryan clear on the right and his cross was missed by Husband, Fern and Butlin right in the goalmouth.

Right on the hour Worthington more or less made it safe for Leicester with a splendid headed goal. A weak clearance by Thomson was taken up on the Leicester right wing by Weller. He made progress and crossed accurately for his centre-forward to head Leicester's third.

A couple of minutes later it might have been 4-0 when Worthington screamed a shot in after a good headed pass from Earle. Horn made the save of the match to keep it out.

Luton tried to hit on the rebound, but a left footer from Butlin was caught on the dive by Shilton.

A run on the right by Jim Ryan ended with a hard cross, but Butlin missed it by a foot as he launched himself at goal.

Obviously sensing that they had won, Leicester began to play some pretty football, doing more or less what they liked, an approach which led to some frustrated tackles from the Luton players.

There was a murmur of approval from the Luton crowd when John Aston began to warm up. But there were only 13 minutes left, and one felt it was far too late for any Luton switch to do any good.

A cross from the left gave Jim Ryan a chance with a header, but he showed his anguish when he put the chance straight into Shilton's arms.

Aston went on for Fern in the 79th minute.

Leicester were yards on top in the second half, and this was underlined when Weller scored their fourth goal four minutes from the end.



Anderson gets a bit of close attention in the Leicester box