

FIGHTING FULHAM JOLT LUTON'S HOPES

By ROGER HALL

73/74

Fulham 2 Luton Town 1

THE prospect of grandeur does not rest easily on the shoulders of Luton Town, whose performance at Craven Cottage last night was not that of a team with high promotion hopes.

Fulham deserved victory, their fourth in succession, if only for the determination of their second-half pressure. Maybe programme notes suggesting they could still make a late run are not just a wild dream.

They had only themselves to blame when Luton took the lead in the 57th minute. Aston's corner was headed high by Husband, and as the ball descended, the defence were in a hopeless tangle, leaving Mellor powerless to stop it crossing the line.

But Fulham showed their spirit as, straight from the kick-off, Busby and Lloyd menaced the Luton goal, with Lloyd beating Horn in the 58th minute with a fine, low shot.

Defence bemused

It was now all action as both sides strove for the winner. Butlin got the ball in the Fulham net, but Aston was ruled offside. Barrett hit the post with the Luton defence bemused.

It took all the generalship of Mullery to calm down the Fulham attack, in which Barry Friend, playing his first full League game, promised great things. Their just reward came in the 80th minute, when Lloyd drove home Barrett's excellent cross.

Fulham:—Mellor; Fraser, Strong, Mullery, Lacy, Dunne, Friend, Slough, Busby, Lloyd, Barrett.

Luton:—Horn; Ryan (John), Thomson, Anderson, Faulkner, Garner, Ryan (Jimmy), Husband, Butlin, West, Aston.