

IT is impossible to predict how teams will conduct themselves in the final crisis. Oxford, who have done so much in recent weeks, surrendered to Luton like a tired and defeated team.

As Oxford's two remaining games are away from home, this defeat is probably fatal to their chances.

Briggs was always industrious and efficient but he and Burton, who made some fine saves when Luton dominated the opening half, are the only Oxford players who will want to remember an unhappy day.

For a team in their predicament, it was surprising to see their players so reluctant to make space to receive a pass.

This meant that time and again the ball had to be released to a colleague already under pressure.

Luton might have had a crushing lead before half-time.

The game had barely started when a 40-yard pass from West set Husband clear, but he hesitated and allowed Shuker to rob him.

Chambers netted but had controlled the ball with his hand, Husband hit the bar, and Burton saved superbly from Fuccillo and dived at Futchers feet.

But when, after 22 minutes, Colin Clarke lost the ball in mid-field, Luton had a man over and

Gloom for Oxford

By MAX REESE
Oxford Utd. 1, Luton 3

Buckley hit a spectacular shot from 25 yards.

Oxford had an unexpected goal a minute before half-time when Barber moved hesitantly to a long ball from Briggs and Derek Clarke headed in.

This goal failed to give Oxford the expected encouragement and Luton, relaxed and confident, stayed in control.

After 78 minutes Oxford were destroyed by a freak goal when three defenders stood and watched Fuccillo's centre as it bounced unimpeded into the net.

A minute from the end Ron Futchers hit a post and Husband scored from the rebound.

Oxford: Burton; Taylor, Shuker; Lowe, C. Clarke, Briggs; Houseman, Foley, D. Clarke, Gibbins, Tait. Sub: Aylott.
Luton: Barber; Ryan, Buckley; Fuccillo, Price, P. Futchers; Husband, Chambers, R. Futchers, West, Aston. Sub: Pollock.
Referee: B. James (Surrey).