

CRASH—IT'S A WARNING TO CHELSEA



Husband... third goal

By Malcolm Folley: Luton 4 Chelsea 0
LUTON last night sent the chill warning to Chelsea that promotion is by no means a formality.

And Chelsea's inexperience was at times as clear as the crisp, white surface at Kenilworth Road as they crashed to their heaviest defeat of the season.

Luton outmanoeuvred them in every phase of the game and after manager Eddie McCreadie said: "We looked unsure about the conditions, but to be honest I did not think it should have been played."

"That is not sour grapes, for the referee was aware of my opinion before the game began."

"These sort of conditions put players at great risk, Ray Wilkins, Graham Wilkins, Gary Stanley, Ray Lewington and David Hay all have bad grazes. It was fortunate it was not worse."

Division II placings

Fencing

"But I don't want to detract from Luton's performance. They adapted better than us and fully deserved their win."

McCreadie recognised, along with Chelsea's supporters, who were penned behind £5,000 worth of fencing installed to prevent a repeat of the riot on their previous visit 17 months ago, that it would be unkind to belittle Luton's performance.

They waltzed gracefully across the surface, while Chelsea slipped and skidded with all the aplomb of skiers equipped with diving boots for footwear.

The evening became a nightmare for Chelsea's reserve goalkeeper John Phillips, who was playing his first senior match for 10 months.

He began by retrieving the ball from his net before he had even touched it—and ended the game by conceding an 88th-minute penalty.

Assurance

Nothing in those intervening 87 minutes went right for his side. The initial breakthrough, after 71 seconds, was created by Pasquale Fucillo, who completed a move which totally disorientated Chelsea's lumbering defence.

Brian Chambers, who played on the treacherous surface with the assurance Franz Klammer shows on the downhill slopes of Europe's mountains, collected the second goal in the 13th minute with a volley which reduced Phillips to an on-looker.

The only mystery of the night was the fact that Luton had to wait until the 57th minute to claim their third goal when Jimmy Husband turned on a pass from Alan West to send the ball into the net via the inside of a post.

With Chelsea's stunned supporters already beginning their exodus, Phillips brought down Paul Price. Left-back Steve Buckley completed the keeper's miserable return by placing his penalty to the spot Phillips had vacated in a vain attempt to salvage something from the wreckage.

		Home			Goals			Away			Goals		
	P	W	D	L	F	A	F	A	F	A	F	A	Pts
Chelsea	22	8	2	0	23	13	4	4	4	13	17	30	
Bolton	21	8	1	1	19	9	4	3	4	18	18	28	
Wolves	20	6	1	3	24	11	4	5	1	26	15	26	
Bristol	21	5	2	3	14	11	4	6	1	18	12	26	
Nottm F	20	6	3	1	31	15	3	4	3	11	8	25	
Sheff U	21	4	5	2	16	12	3	3	4	10	15	22	
Millwall	19	5	2	3	17	9	4	1	4	14	16	21	
Oldham	19	6	3	1	19	11	2	2	5	6	16	21	
Birmingham	20	5	2	2	14	7	3	2	6	7	20	20	
Charlton	18	6	1	2	25	14	1	4	4	12	18	19	
Luton	20	5	2	2	16	10	3	1	7	16	19	19	
Fulham	21	5	3	3	20	13	1	4	5	11	18	19	
Stamford	21	4	5	2	19	16	2	2	6	15	22	19	
Bristol R	21	5	3	3	19	17	2	2	6	11	18	19	
Hull	19	5	3	1	17	7	0	5	5	5	16	18	
Carlisle	22	4	5	2	17	14	2	1	8	8	25	18	
Notts Co	18	3	2	4	8	11	4	1	4	18	20	17	
Cardiff	20	4	3	4	15	17	2	2	5	13	17	17	
Grimsby	20	3	6	2	16	14	1	2	6	8	17	16	
Plymouth	20	2	5	4	14	13	1	4	4	10	19	15	
Oxford	18	2	2	4	8	9	2	4	4	10	15	14	
Hereford	19	2	3	4	14	20	1	2	7	13	24	11	



Winter wonderland... at least for Luton, and here Paul Fletcher is seen in action with Chelsea's Butch Wilkins