

PEARSON HITS

OFF-KEY

LUTON 78/79

By A Special Correspondent

Newcastle ... 1 Luton ... 0

LUTON, who started the season so well with six goals on the opening day, were never in this game. They missed two chances, but these were the only ones that came their way.

They hit rock-bottom form and must improve considerably if they are to stay in the top half of the Second Division table.

Jim Pearson, who cost Newcastle £75,000 when they bought him from Everton, went a long way towards repaying that fee on Saturday.

His moment came in the 22nd minute, when he headed home the only goal of the match. And if that goal sets Newcastle off on a successful run, it will make Pearson worth every penny United paid for him.

Certainly Newcastle showed all the signs of a successful team, without finishing off their moves with the goals they richly deserved.

After eight months of misery since their last League win at St James's Park, the cheers from the crowd at the end must have been sweet music to their ears, but it was no more than they deserved.

Gone was the haphazard, bubbling football of last Wednesday night. Instead, they were confident, skilful, and prepared to run at the opposition.

It brought only one goal, because most moves broke down at the last second, but it gave an optimistic picture for the future.

Newcastle.—Mahoney; Kelly, Barker, Cassidy, Bird, Blackley, Suggett, Pearson, Withe, Hibbitt, Connolly. Sub: Walker.

Luton.—Aleksic; Stephen, Aizlewood, Donaghy, Turner, Price, Hill, West, Stein, Hatton, Moss. Sub: McNichol.