

HAMMERS PAY PENALTY

80/81



DAVID MOSS

WEST HAM'S familiar failing in front of goal, plus fine goalkeeping by Luton's Jake Findlay, prevented the Cup holders building up a three-goal lead in a blistering first half. How different it was after the break. The Hammers took the lead after 57 minutes, but then relaxed, lost control and clumsiness gave Luton two penalties which they gratefully accepted.

Delighted Luton manager David Pleat summed it up: "We held on when West Ham came at us and in the second half we slowed it down and won."

West Ham's John Lyall admitted that his side paid the penalty for "sitting back" on a one-goal lead. "We became negative and suffered because of it," he said.

His £800,000 signing from QPR, Paul Goddard like so many others in the West Ham side, impressed in the opening half though he took a knock which led to his withdrawal once Hammers took the lead.

"He has a bruised Achilles' tendon, but could be fit for Tuesday's game at Bristol City," said Lyall.

Goddard was cool and sharp. He had a cracker of a shot from 20 yards turned round the post by Findlay, once hit a post and fitted in well.

Luton, who just missed promotion last year, had a

West Ham 1 Luton 2: by SYDNEY SPICER

useful midfielder in Raddi Antic, a Yugoslav international. Very strong on the ball and persistent, he made the only on-target Luton shot of the first half. But what a shot!

From 30 yards he let fly and Phil Parkes had to launch himself at full stretch to flip it round the post.

For the rest, it was mostly Hammers putting Luton under pressure. Pat Holland shot inches wide of the far post on one occasion and David Cross headed inches over from a pinpoint cross by Holland.

West Ham's assault reached a crescendo in the final minutes before the interval and with the defence in a tangle oddard hit a post and Cross shot wide of an open goal.

Holland won a penalty for West Ham when challenged throughout by Tony Grealish on a run from the centre circle, he was brought down in the box and Ray Stewart scored from the spot.

Then came the sorry slump. The incisive thrust of the first half was never recaptured and the game stuttered along. A foul by Alvin Martin on David

Moss brought a 75th minute penalty for Luton and Moss gave Parkes no chance from the spot.

And, when Billy Bonds brought down Brian Stein four minutes from the end, Luton snatched victory, Moss ramming home his second spot kick.

Luton will be making a promotion bid again this season. As for West Ham they have the same problems which made last season so exhausting.

Goddard is likely to supply part of the answer, but they dearly need another marksman up front.