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GODFREY INGRAM last night took 20 minutes to emerge as the most likely candidate to solve Luton's growing scoring problems.

Named as substitute in a team weakened by injuries to two key players, Ingram helped the Town through to tomorrow's third round League Cup draw.

But, and much more important, his short-term appearance presented manager David Pleat with the belated opportunity to give him an extended run in the first team.

Ingram went on after 70 minutes for debut boy Seamus Heath, the replacement for David Moss who missed the match with shingles.

And, in those 20 minutes, Ingram could have helped himself to two goals as he showed a refreshing ability to enter the penalty area with more frequency than any other youngster with claims for a first team place.

Pleat refused to speculate that Ingram's chance has finally arrived but he will be hard pressed to ignore the skills of a player who, on the ball, can match Brian Stein's ability to slip past defenders with comparative ease.

The game itself was something of an anti climax as the Town started with a two-goal lead from the first leg.

Despite Reading's admirable spirit and determination to plug away, there was never any real suggestion they had the overall ability to threaten the Town's lead.

Jake Findlay was restricted to one supersave as Luton surged forward continuously in the first half, showing the old problem of not taking advantage of the chances created.

Steve White was given

another game in the number nine shirt as Pleat ended the hectic three-game spell of 17-year-old Frank Bunn who was rested, while Mark Aizlewood deputised for Paul Price who dropped out with a stomach bug.

Aizlewood proved the value of strength in reserve with a steady performance at the back and that, coupled with the effective midfield, clearly emphasised that Pleat has no problems in those departments.

Stein set the pattern of the game as early as the sixth

minute when his rising angled shot almost deceived Steve Death and then Ricky Hill smashed a tremendous shot against the bar.

The ball cannoned down to the midfield player who hit a second shot just over the top for what would have been a tremendous goal.

Then Raddy Antic took advantage of another intelligent build-up when Reading were penalised for a foul. His free kick dipped over the bar.

Pressurised Reading had to wait until the 15th minute for their first chance when

Striker could come in out of the cold

80/81 (FLG)

Luton Town 1 Reading 1 By ERIC HARRIS

Kerry Dixon, their signing from Dunstable, took advantage of Richie Bowman's low free kick but responded by knocking the ball on to the roof of the Oak Road terrace.

Another of the Town's best early chances arrived after 19 minutes when Stein broke brilliantly with Tony Grealish running in support on his left. Grealish shot wide and had also run into an offside position.

In the next minute, Stein capitalised on White's good work with a hard low shot which forced Death to produce another fine save as the Town threatened to take an early lead.

But, four minutes later, Reading almost scored the goal which could have made the tie extremely difficult for the Town. Cheetham and Wanklyn opened a rare gap in Luton's defence and left Dixon in position for a shot.

He pushed the ball to Findlay's left but the keeper illustrated his consistency this season with a fingertip save.

Five minutes before the break, young Heath showed his potential with a peach of a pass to White who failed to control the ball and the opportunity was wasted. Then, almost immediately, Death pulled Heath's cross down from under the bar as Reading went in at half time wondering how they had survived 45 minutes' pressure.

But within five minutes of the start of the second half, Luton went in front although it took a defender to score the goal.

Antic completely foxed Reading's defence with an excellent free kick for Mike Saxby to beat Death with a powerful header.

Hill and Heath again went close for the Town before Reading hit back with a tremendous goal after 63 minutes. Mal Donaghy fouled Earles and Hetzke struck a 25-yard free kick into the top corner.