

PENALTY BLUNDER FLOORS HATTERS

81/82 (CLC)

WREXHAM'S Race-course Ground, the scene of Luton's latest Second Division victory on Saturday, last night proved to be their League Cup graveyard.

A 1-0 second round, second leg victory in cold and bleak North Wales was not enough to erase Wrexham's 2-0 first leg lead after David Moss had uncharacteristically missed a 47th minute penalty.

Luton cannot have any complaints about missing tomorrow's third round draw, for Wrexham showed total commitment by refusing to sit back and defend their lead.

The Town however, did retain their unbeaten away record thanks to Steve White's 89th minute goal and Luton were left to reflect on three superb saves by Eddie Neidz-wiecki which were largely responsible for them being dumped out of the competition.

Nudged

That penatly miss was agonising. A successful conversion would have given Luton every chance of going through but Moss made a rare blunder and failed to achieve any width with his kick after being nudged off the ball by Steve Dowman.

The original penalty decision was dubious and only a strong signal from his linesman persuaded referee Geoff Parkinson to point to the spot.

Moss, Luton's deadball expert, drove the ball far

Wrexham 0 Luton 1 by ERIC HARRIS

too close to the keeper's left and allowed Niedz-wiecki to block the effort with his legs.

That costly miss emphasised Luton's bad luck throughout the game. Apart from that save, Niedz-wiecki raced out of his area to concede a free kick by handling the ball in the first half after Ricky Hill had broken dangerously.

Then, shortly before half-time, the keeper threw himself full length to grab — and hold — Moss's curling free kick.

That wasn't the end of Niedz-wiecki's heroics. Seconds before White's superb solo goal, substitute Godfrey Ingram forced him to trip over a dipping drive from the edge of the box.

The Town's ploy of teasing crosses was unsuccessful because Wayne Cegielski was in domineering form at the centre of the back four.

Luton manager David Pleat sent on Ingram in the second period after the Town's repeated efforts to pull back a goal had evaporated.

MATCH DETAILS

WREXHAM: Niedz-wiecki, Jones (Fox), Bater, Dowman, Cegielski, Hunt, Hill (A), McNeil, Edwards, Vinter, Carrodus.

LUTON: Findlay, Stephens, Goodyear (Ingram), Horton, Saxby,

Skipper Brian Horton dropped back from mid-field with Ingram operating as an auxiliary striker — but his appearance was not enough to suggest the Hatters could find the resources to go through.

There was an early chance after only seven minutes when Moss bent a free kick around the defensive wall after Hill had been fouled. It was another off target effort and one which was to prove extremely costly later.

Sliced

Then Mick Vinter, who was fouled by Lil Fuccillo, pushed his free kick to Joey Jones, and Jake Findlay was forced to make a smart save to prevent Wrexham from increasing their aggregate lead.

After Niedz-wiecki's first important save from Hill, Wrexham should have opened the scoring in the 33rd minute when Dixie McNeil sliced the ball over the top from two yards out.

The start of the second half signalled another desperate Luton attempt to get back into the game and, after Moss's penalty

Donaghy, Hill (R), Stein, White, Fuccillo, Moss.

REFEREE: G. Parkinson (Rugeley). **GOAL:** White (89). **BOOKINGS:** White (foul on Dowman), Niedz-wiecki (hands). **ATTENDANCE:** 3,453.



DAVID MOSS spot kick blow

error, Fuccillo made another expensive mistake by shooting wide.

But Wrexham were always looking for another goal and it could have arrived when Kirk Stephens nudged McNeil's effort off the line with his head.

Findlay made another good save from Frank Carrodus before Ian Edwards headed over the top from a corner two minutes from the end.

But, with a minute left, the Town's persistence was rewarded when White — standing on the 18-yard line — beat the keeper with an excellent shot to record his 11th goal of the season.

It was ample reward for Luton's determination — but not enough to see them through against an aggressive Wrexham.