



WHAT the Luton players saw . . .

DEREK LLOYD became the latest referee this season to drop himself into the middle of a simmering controversy, his performance yesterday overshadowing everything else about this game.

Lloyd's decision to give Ipswich a 12th-minute lead from an incident which looked blatantly offside had Luton manager David Pleat half-joking afterwards: "He came on the wrong day. He's a Sunday League referee."

It was the one moment when Pleat dropped his guard. He was determined to try to stay cool and abstain from any criticism of the official.

He said: "I have to respect referee's decisions even though some were strange and it's very hard at times.

UNFORTUNATE

"They make errors the same as players. It stood out a mile and sometimes I'm sure referees accept they've made a mistake. It was unfortunate, but you have to support referees and you have to accept these things."

Lloyd, a training officer from Worcestershire, refused to analyse the reasons behind his verdict afterwards, saying: "You'll have to speak to the Football League."

But when Alan Brazil the Ipswich scorer, was asked about his goal he said: "That's a million dollar question. I wasn't thinking about it.

"Seemingly the ref's saying Luton's Ricky Hill played the ball back. If Paul Mariner put me through then I was probably offside, although we're not sure of the positioning of their full-backs. All that was in my mind was to try to get the ball into the net."

Luton's England man Hill

SUNDAY

Ref out of his league says Pleat

82/83

By FRED BURCOMBE
Luton 1 Ipswich 1

added fuel to the fire afterwards by saying: "I didn't touch it."

Video recordings strongly seem to prove it was Mariner's final touch before Brazil put the ball between 'keeper Jake Findlay's legs and into the net.

There were heated Luton protests and David Moss was booked.

Later in the match Lloyd took the names of Brian Stein along with Ipswich pair Russell Osman and Steve McCall.

The caution on Stein was puzzling to say the least.

Ipswich boss Bobby Ferguson saw the linesman's yellow flag fluttering before the Brazil goal but didn't have a clear view of the Brazil position. But he had no complaints about Luton's penalty equaliser in the 58th minute when Mariner recklessly brought down Kirk Stephens.

Paul Cooper made a distinguished effort to keep out Stein's spot kick but couldn't prevent it

reaching the corner of the net.

Pleat revealed afterwards that central defender Mal Donaghy had bravely played most of the match with a broken nose to revive memories afterwards for Terry Butcher, the Ipswich centre-half.

The last time he stepped on to this Kenilworth Road pitch he left in an ambulance streaming blood from a nose injury which threatened his career.

Butcher was excellent yesterday, having young Luton forward Paul Walsh under his control.

I thought Ipswich should have made the game safe in the first half when they looked far more accomplished. And in the final 15 minutes they had further chances to ensure a victory.

Luton did better for a spell in the second half and Pleat was delighted with his side's resolve, saying: "I thought we competed well, pushed out better and closed down space in defence."

LUTON.—FINDLAY 7, Stephens 3, Money 6, Horton 6, Goodyear 5, Donaghy 6, Hill 6, Stein 6, Walsh 5, Fuccillo 6, Moss 5.
IPSWICH.—Cooper 7, Burley 6, Gernon 7, Mills 7, Osman 6, BUTCHER 8, Wark 6, McCall 7, Mariner 6, Brazil 7, Gates 6.