

# LUTON TURN TABLES

83/84

Watford ... 1, Luton ... 2

**DAVID PLEAT**, the Luton manager, watched his side climb to fifth place in the First Division at Vicarage Road on Saturday afternoon and reflected on what a difference a year has made to his attractive team, writes **Colin Gibson**.

When Luton crashed 5-2 at Watford last season they were fighting for survival while Watford were heading for second place in the First Division. Now the roles are almost reversed.

Luton's victory keeps them in touch with the leaders while injury-hit Watford find themselves third bottom, a position **Graham Taylor**, their intelligent young manager, could not have thought possible at the start of the season.

But while Mr Taylor is not despairing, Mr Pleat refuses to be carried away with his side's heady placing. He said: "To just stay in contention we have to play to our maximum every week. Only the top teams normally challenge for titles and we are still one of the little lads."

## Still much to do

"People are getting excited because we have won a few games but if you look at the results you will find that we have beaten only the teams you would expect us to beat. We have lost at places like Manchester United, Liverpool and Forest and at home to Spurs."

Still, Luton have shown that they have learned from their season among the relegation candidates. Their defence is tighter but if anyone thought their attacking ambitions had been compromised they were proved wrong within 73 seconds.

**Bardsley**, making his debut for Watford, gave **Stein** too much room to turn and was punished with a fierce cross-shot which left **Sherwood** with no chance. Recovering from that lapse **Bardsley** showed character and promise. His cross gave **Callaghan**, the only real force in Watford's disappointing attack, the chance to equalise with a diving header in the 31st minute. But battle as Watford did, with **Rostron** and **Jobson** fighting hard, Luton always looked capable of winning.

And seven minutes from the end **Stein's** mis-hit centre was headed out by **Bardsley**, under pressure from **Walsh**, to **Bunn** who struck his shot well enough to beat **Sherwood**.

**Watford**.—**Sherwood**; **Bardsley**, **Price**, **Jobson**, **Sims**, **Franklin**, **Callaghan**, **Johnston**, **Reilly**, **Rostron**, **Barnes**.

**Luton**.—**Sealey**; **Stephens**, **Turner**, **Horton**, **Elliott**, **Donaghy**, **Hill**, **Stein**, **Walsh**, **Aylott**, **Bunn**.