

LUTON ARE BERATED BY PLEAT

83/84

By ROGER MALONE

Aston Villa 0, Luton 0

AN away draw against Aston Villa, Milk Cup semi-finalists, would usually bring comments from the visitors' camp that they were far from displeased—and had “battled well for our point.”

Not so David Pleat, Luton's manager, who clearly sets higher standards. “I never understand why managers praise their teams for ‘battling’ because that is the least you should expect from professionals. I expect more than that, and we did not provide it.

“I do not rate this a good result because we were never bright and lively, particularly in midfield where we failed to supply the service that Walsh, Stein and Aylott were crying out for.”

Certainly, Walsh and Stein, potential England forwards, hinted with their attractive dribbling skills—and Aylott with his physical qualities—what they might have achieved with a quality service.

Withe missed

Usually, though, Horton, Parker—who missed Luton's best chance—and Bunn could not combine containing Villa's midfield with setting up an attacking service.

So McMahon, Mortimer, and Curbishley established a commanding midfield platform for Villa. However, without the suspended Withe to lead their attack, Villa's moves lacked bite. They must be relieved that Withe's suspension will be completed in time for the two Milk Cup legs against Everton.

Aston Villa. — Spink; Williams, Gibson, Evans, Bremner, Mortimer, Curbishley, Shaw, Rideout, McMahon, Walters.

Luton.—Sealey; Stephens, Thomas, Horton, Elliott, Donaghy, Parker, Stein, Walsh, Aylott, Bunn.