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Aylott goals add to Ipswich plight

By A SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

Luton Town 2, Ipswich Town 1

STRUGGLING Ipswich were pushed into deeper relegation trouble at the foot of the First Division with another defeat, their ninth in the last ten games, at Kenilworth Road last night.

Trevor Aylott struck twice — one from a penalty — in each half to present Ipswich manager, Bobby Ferguson, with another mammoth headache to augment the club's mounting financial problems.

Luton, previously without a home victory since Dec. 18 and struck by the absence of key mid-field players Ricky Hill and skipper Brian Horton, created most chances in a game noted for drab moments. Hill is likely to miss the rest of the season because he needs a second operation on a troublesome hamstring injury.

But there was little doubt the home side deserved their well-earned victory which enhanced their lingering hopes of winning a place in Europe next season.

Strange goal

There was little consolation for Mr Ferguson who saw his team outplayed most of the game and there must now be a question mark hanging over Ipswich's ability to avoid a drop into the Second Division.

However, for David Pleat, Luton's manager, there was the bonus of a much-needed victory achieved by a weakened team.

But it took a strange goal, described by Mr Ferguson as "a joke" to mark the start of Ipswich's downfall.

In the 39th minute, Paul Walsh — one of the most exciting young strikers in British football — fed Aylott who lobbed the ball over keeper Paul Cooper's head.

"It was a bad blow for us and I blame Cooper entirely for it," said Mr Ferguson. "He thought the ball was dipping over the bar."

If that represented a tragedy

Staff jobs to go at Portman Road

The Ipswich crisis deepened yesterday when it was revealed that several members of the Portman Road staff had been offered voluntary redundancy in an effort to reduce crippling debts.

Ipswich, £1.5 million in the red and reported to be losing £8,000 a week, are parting company with groundsman Stanley Prendergast, 63, who will take early retirement after 50 years' service, while physiotherapist Tommy Eggleston and others are thought to have been approached about voluntary redundancy.

for Ipswich, there was worse to follow in the 53rd minute when Russell Osman brought down Frank Bunn to allow Aylott to beat Cooper for the second time to increase Luton's lead.

That was the turning point of the game and the incident which finally killed Ipswich, although Trevor Putney scored his first goal of the season seven minutes from the end to give Ipswich faint revival hopes.

It wasn't enough and perhaps Mr Pleat put his finger on Ipswich's main problem by adding "if we sell our best players we will be in the same position as them within two years."

It was announced later by the Ipswich manager that striker Alan Sunderland is to have his loan period, from Arsenal, extended for a second month.

Luton Town. — Sealey; Stephens, Thomas, Antic, Elliott, Goodyear, Donaghy, Stein, Walsh, Aylott, Bunn.

Ipswich Town. — Cooper; Burley, Barnes, Putney, Osman, Butcher, Wark, McCall, Turner (Dozzell, 61), Sunderland, Gates.