

RICKY MAY MISS REST OF SEASON

THE sweet taste of Luton Town's first league victory at Kenilworth Road in 1984 was soured by the news that Ricky Hill could be out for the rest of the season.

As the Hatters were preparing for the 2-1 home win over Ipswich Town, Hill broke down with a recurrence of an old injury.

The midfielder has calcification of the hamstring, which means

he could face another operation — he underwent one last summer — and miss the final third of the league programme.

Manager David Pleat's disappointment was offset as Luton halted their slide and went back above neighbours Watford in the table.

The return of David Moss as substitute also cheered the manager.

But Pleat was being cagey about possible replacements for Hill, or the other quality midfielder he so desperately wants.

"I would love to think there might be

someone coming in before the transfer deadline," he told the Herald.

Asked if anyone would be leaving Kenilworth Road, he answered: "We just don't know, do we?"

But he cautioned: "If we start selling our best players we'll be in the same position as Ipswich within two years."

He could continue the trend of promoting from within. Young Tim Breaker was set for a debut in place of injured skipper Brian Horton, before the guiding influence of Hill was lost and Pleat fell

back on experienced players.

Raddy Antic came in, Mal Donaghy moved over and Frank Bunn, absent for the last three matches, returned.

But the Hatters' mix and-match outfit, with 19-year-olds Elliott and Thomas plus young Clive Goodyear making Kirk Stephens the old man of the back four, were still too good for Ipswich.

Deserted by the Dutchmen Thijssen and Muhren, then Brazil and now Mariner, the sinking Suffolk ship still boasts some expert hands.

But even Wark, Butcher, Gates, Osman and McCall wore the look of losers.

Unhappy Alan Sunderland, who will be staying another month on loan at Portman Road, it was announced, missed a gift chance

in the seventh minute.

From Gates' through pass he shot tamely against Sealey's legs from 15 yards.

There was little else to warm the 8,776 crowd on a bitterly cold night, until Trevor Aylott scored what Ipswich

manager Bobby Ferguson later called a "joke goal".

Taking a 39th minute pass from Walsh inside the box, Aylott half turned and spun a shot which seemed to have cleared the bar, but dipped in over little Paul Cooper.

Eight minutes after half-time, Aylott sent in Bunn, who made a meal of his tumble when Osman finally caught up. But the penalty was given and Aylott finished clinically.

The travelling fans enjoyed brief moments of hope five minutes from time when John Wark's pass across goal was blasted high into the net by Trevor Putney. But the rivalry ended there.

LUTON 2 IPSWICH 1

Aylott 2, (1 pen)

Putney

By DOMINIC BIGGS



● Trevor Aylott's penalty that beat Ipswich on Tuesday