

W Brom 4, Luton 0

WEST BROMWICH and Luton finished equal on points last season but too close for comfort to the relegation zone, and Luton may struggle again on the evidence of this often one-sided match, writes **Geoff Beane**.

They were uncompromisingly played into the ground by a slick, confident Albion, whose commitment, immaculate passing and finishing must have delighted their manager, Johnny Giles.

Having survived an anxious moment when Elliott was only inches away from touching home a Grimes free-kick, Albion soon proceeded to give Luton a good deal to think about. They moved the ball about imaginatively at a rare old pace, and it was not long before Regis tricked two defenders to put a rising shot only a yard wide, and Dibble had to go to beat away another try from Thompson.

It came as no surprise, therefore, when Albion took the lead in the 26th minute, Grealish, a former Luton player, turned in a devastating ball for Hunt to dive in and head his second goal of the season.

By now Luton were often looking vulnerable against the left flank link-up between Hunt, Statham and Morley, but again it was from the right side that Albion went further ahead in the 43rd minute. This time it was Whitehead who supplied the cross and Regis the header.

With a lot to do in the second half, Luton began to play with more urgency, though not before Cross, a substitute for Regis, had broken through and banged a fierce shot off the crossbar.

Thompson followed up with a header against the bar and soon Luton were in disarray again as Cross turned in another Whitehead centre in the 66th minute. Thompson came up with Albion's fourth from another right-wing raid which spreadeagled a struggling defence five minutes later, and an unhappy Luton's torment was complete.