

Quality backed by quantity

84/85

Luton 3, Watford 2

AFTER competing on even terms for half of this thrilling local derby at Kenilworth Road yesterday, Watford were swept aside by a torrent of attacking football and a marvellous goal, writes Timothy Collings.

Indeed, Watford might have been ahead long before Luton, who slugged it out during a scrappy first half of four goals and many incidents, began the second with renewed vigour and purpose.

Quite dramatically, the game swung completely. Luton's way, Watford's resistance weakened and, on the hour, Hill, who played extremely well, created the break through for Steve Elliott.

The talented midfielder turned and made space—as he did all

afternoon — before releasing a perfect through ball on the right of the penalty area. Elliott took it in his stride and planted his shot past Coton with such force the new Watford goalkeeper could hardly blink.

In the end, Luton were worthy winners of a pulsating contest.

A fierce wind, an excited, partisan crowd and the obvious tensions of a meeting between these struggling clubs did not augur well, but Luton, in particular, overcame the conditions with some ease.

They forced two quick corners to set the pace in the opening seconds, but Watford were first to score after eight minutes,

when Reilly rose above a sea of heads to nudge Callaghan's left wing corner over the line.

At this stage, Luton were struggling to find a way through the Watford defence, and it came as a surprise when Jobson, under pressure from Bunn, hooked a long-range equalising own goal over the stranded Coton 13 minutes later.

As the tempo built up, Donaghy was booked for a foul on Barnes and Parker shot narrowly over before Blissett put Watford back in front after 28 minutes with a precise finish from Reilly's flicked pass.

On this occasion, Watford's lead lasted only 45 seconds as Bunn moved onto an astute angled ball from Stein to beat Coton with a low drive inside the post.