

The winner—after 267 minutes



● Watford players Tony Coton and Steve Terry are helpless as Wayne Turner fires home Luton's winner.

TOPSY—TURNER!



THE world turned upside down for Wayne Turner on Saturday.

He woke up on the morning of his 24th birthday "feeling terrible," a victim of flu.

But a matter of hours later he was being carried off the Kenilworth Road pitch shoulder high by ecstatic fans.

"Brilliant, just magic," said Wayne in his finest hour, still suffering from the remnants of the bug.

The clock showed 267 minutes of this protracted fifth round tie had elapsed when Turner chased after a penetrating through ball from Garry Parker to fire Luton into the quarter finals for the first time in 12 years.

That moment, and the special treatment afforded to the local lad after the game, was deserved compensation for Turner, who has been forced to play second fiddle since the arrival of Welsh international Peter Nicholas.

But with Nicholas cup-tied the birthday boy had his chance and sealed a gritty display with his first goal of the season.

"I don't score many, so when I do it's got to be something special," said the utility player who has settled down as a central midfielder.

Saturday's game was written off by Fleet Street as a scrappy affair and certainly it was short on flowing, cultured soccer. But most of the authors of those reports had not followed this marathon

Wayne's a wizard

LUTON 1 WATFORD 0
By GRAHAM PUNTER

from its inception.

Had they done so they would perhaps have been less keen to condemn the culmination of three titanic struggles in six days, a trio of blood and thunder excitement that proved familiarity breeds commitment.

Certainly this was never a shop window for skill or finesse but few people would expect that from any fifth round tuppence, let alone the third encounter between two derby rivals who also happen to share similar concerns about relegation.

But for the fan who appreciates the qualities of fitness, character and durability, then this match was to be commended.

The first two encounters had been slogged out with unchanged sides. But on Saturday both managers tried to produce aces to unsettle the opposition.

Graham Taylor had three cards up his sleeve.

Most significant was the surprise inclusion of England's John Barnes who had been out with hamstringing trouble.

Welsh international Kenny Jackett was back after injury and Tony Coton, a virus victim, was recalled in goal.

David Pleat named Winger David Moss, who hadn't played first team football for more than two months, as substitute and gave creative player Garry Parker his chance in preference to speedy Ray Daniel.

Taylor's gamble nearly won the day because the two best efforts on the first half both fell to Watford and both to Barnes.

Luton's saviour on both occasions was Les Sealey, first using his feet and then punching to good effect. Young Andy Dibble must be wondering when he will regain his first team place.

Both sides had cause to appeal for penalties as Barnes and later Mitchell Thomas appeared to

It's safety first for Pleat

WITH unbridled praise ringing in his ears David Pleat cooled the cup fever by making clear his priorities.

"Most important is staying in the First Division," he said. But he obviously enjoyed the act of revenge after last year's cup defeat.

"It's nice to win against your neighbour who passed you by on the way last year. We have

LUTON: Sealey, Breacker, Foster, Donaghy, Thomas, Hill, Turner, Parker, Nwajiobi, Harford, Stein. Sub: Moss.

WATFORD: Coton, Sinnott, Terry, McClelland, Rostron, Taylor, Lohman, Jackett, Callaghan, Blissett, Barnes. Sub: Bardsley. Crowd: 15,586.

handle but neither incident resulted in a spot kick.

Not for the first time Foster and Donaghy were supreme in defence keeping the Watford threat well under control as Luton showed the patience — that comes of First Division experience — required to contain and strike when the opportunity arose.

When Turner buried that chance 57 minutes into the game it put Luton ahead in the tie for the first time and they never looked likely to lose the advantage.

No-one worked harder than Harford during the three games and it would have been a travesty had he finished on the losing side.

become a little bit more resilient.

Graham Taylor, as cheerful and pragmatic in defeat as he is in victory, said: "That's what cup football is all about. I don't think the Watford players could have done any more in terms of their desire to win and their approach.

"Last year it was Luton's turn to go out; this year it was our turn."