

LUTON'S fishing-loving goalkeeper, Les Sealey, went home moaning about the one that got away.

Sealey looked to have made the catch of the day as he went down low to save a shot from Bowman. But the ball squirmed through his hands and over the line.

Sealey joined Luton from Coventry—and a few Luton fans would like to send him there after his mistake ended his team's unbeaten League record on their plastic pitch.

Really, though, the rest should be blamed after failing to bury Coventry.

The team who put seven past Shilton last month and three past Clemence last week should have thumped this boring lot.

The League appointed computer consultant John Moules as referee so that he could keep up with the goals.

Instead he counted bookings—six in all, five for Coventry in a niggly, spoiling per-

By ROY COLLINS

Luton 0, Coventry 1.

formance. And there was more niggles between the managers.

Coventry's Don Mackay tried to justify his team's performance by saying: "Defence is a part of the art of football."

Luton's David Pleat hit back: "There's no excuse for unnecessary 40-yard backpasses and the crowds won't tolerate it."

LUTON: Sealey 5—Breacker (inj) 6, Foster 7, Donaghy 7, Thomas 6—Hill 6, Stein 6, *NICHOLAS 8, Preece 6—Harford 6, Nwajiobi 6. Sub: Parker.

COVENTRY: *OGRIZOVIC 9—Borrows 7, Rodgers 7, Peake 7, Adams 6—Bennett 6, Bowman 6, Gynn (withdrawn) 6, McGrath 5—Gibson 6, Evans 5. Sub: Downs.

Ref: J. Moules (Essex) 6.



● Coventry hero Steve Ogrizovic foils Ricky Hill.

Luton lose that record

Luton 0, Coventry 1

Report by Graham Punter

SIX players were booked and Coventry survived a second-half onslaught to end Luton's unbeaten League record on synthetic surfaces.

A blunder by 'keeper Les Sealey gave Coventry a surprise lead and a frantic fightback was not enough to rescue the Hatters.

Despite injury doubts about Steve Foster and Mick Harford, Hatters were able to field their strongest side and the one which beat Spurs at White Hart Lane last week.

Wayne Turner, hero of Luton's cup run last season, before his transfer to Coventry, failed a fitness test on his injured thigh and missed a nostalgic return to Kenilworth Road.

After three minutes, Coventry striker Evans found his name in the book after a high kick left Foster clutching his head.

The first chance of the game came two minutes later

when a through ball from Nicholas sent Nwajiobi homing in on Ogrizovic but the Coventry 'keeper threw himself at the Luton striker's feet to deny Hatters the lead.

Gibson appealed optimistically for a penalty, claiming Foster handled as the Luton skipper once more stifled a Coventry breakaway.

The Coventry 'keeper's courage was put to the test again when once more he was forced to hurl himself at Nwajiobi's feet, this latest chance having been created by Hill.

Hard-working Coventry were frustrating Luton and their antics were creating a scrappy game. They were more than willing to resort to 30 yard pass backs to the 'keeper, creating a session of slow handclapping from the crowd.

A poor back pass from Foster nearly let in Evans, but this time it was Sealey's chance to be brave as he foiled his old team mates.

A slick move involving Foster and Preece nearly gave Luton the lead after 25 minutes. The ball was played through to Stein and a fierce drive was brilliantly tipped over by the 'keeper.

But against the run of play, Coventry took the lead after 35 minutes when a speculative 20 yard shot by Bowman somehow squirmed under Sealey's body. The effort appeared to have taken a slight deflection.

Borrows became the second Coventry player to be booked when he fouled Preece.

Luton almost got back on terms five minutes before the interval when a fierce curling shot by full back Breacker was pushed to safety by the Coventry 'keeper.

Luton stormed into the attack as the second-half began and put Coventry on the rack. Nicholas had a drive tipped over, Adams cleared off the line from a Harford header and then Harford's lofted shot went the wrong side of the bar.

As Coventry's overworked defence grew more frustrated, Bowman was booked for

arguing about a throw-in.

Then in an astonishing incident after 75 minutes, 'keeper Ogrizovic was penalised for taking too many steps and so conceded a free kick 13 yards from the goal line.

The 'keeper was booked for disputing the decision and then fell to the ground, apparently pole-axed by a missile thrown from the crowd. When the free kick was eventually taken, Foster's shot was deflected for a corner.

Mick Harford became the fifth player to be booked when he was adjudged to have fouled the 'keeper and then Harford was himself the victim of a foul which earned Rodger a booking.

Luton: Sealey, Breacker, Thomas, Nicholas, Foster, Donaghy, Hill, Stein, Harford, Nwajiobi, Preece. Sub: Parker.

Coventry: Ogrizovic, Borrows, Gynn, Bowman, Rodger, Peake, Adams, McGrath, Evans, Gibson, Bennett. Sub: Downs.

Luton 0 Coventry 1

By ROY DALLEY

● Coventry manager Don Mackay wants the back pass outlawed from soccer — yet he still fiercely defended his side as they killed this match as a spectacle by back-passing.

● "If there is a law against it, why shouldn't my players do it? They came to Luton on a run of three defeats and were frightened of taking risks. But defending is an art and we did it well."

● A couple of 40-yard passes by the Coventry defenders back to keeper Steve Ogrizovic had the Kenilworth Road fans jeering, and Luton manager David Pleat admitted: "Coventry killed the game a little bit."

● They scored after 35 minutes when keeper Sealey let a shot from Bowman slip through his hands and went on to collect five bookings — 'keeper Ogrizovic, defenders Borrows and Rodgers, goalscorer Bowman and striker Gareth Evans. Luton's Harford was also booked, yet it was never a dirty match.