

Bold Foster rules the roost

85/86

THERE was little to encourage Bobby Robson in the performances of the pretenders to his Mexican-bound England squad at Vicarage Road yesterday, writes **Robert Alexander**.

As Watford slumped to their first home League defeat of the season in a surprisingly tepid local derby, only the dependable defensive skills of Luton captain Foster caught the eye.

In his conspicuous headband, he dominated the air and coolly marshalled the Luton defence to such effect that Watford's reshaped forward line was reduced to desperate measures long before an exciting climax raised home fans' hopes of a lucky draw.

Watford 1, Luton 2

But, overall, with Barnes, Hill, Stein and Harford subdued on a wet pitch, under overcast skies, there was precious little to raise the pulse or stimulate any World Cup dreams.

Luton, an inconsistent but high quality team, were below their fluent best, but still too good for a Watford side missing Blissett, West and Callaghan and looking for its first win in seven games.

Luton's opening goal came after a sterile opening 29 minutes when Stein burst through, was blocked by Coton and Thomas converted the rebound with a powerful and accurate drive from a narrow angle for his first senior goal.

Luton then relaxed, Watford rallied and, after a passage of poor passing by both teams, they finally equalised when Talbot forced the ball home after a looping Sterling header into unexpected space in the 83rd minute.

The equaliser stung Luton from their slumbers and four minutes later they clinched the points, Terry hitting a spectacular own goal under pressure from Hill to end aptly an afternoon strewn with errors and witnessed by the Minister of Sport, Dick Tracey.