

Magic Mick

Luton 2 Newcastle 0 by WILLIAM PIERCE

85/86

ON A DAY when two new signings made debuts and a rookie teenager clinched the victory that lifted Luton to seventh in the First Division, 10,000 Kenilworth Road fans still had to take their hats off to former Newcastle old boy Mick Harford.

While Billy Whitehurst, Newcastle's £220,000 striker suffered an ineffective baptism and Andy King, the striker Luton have brought back after 12 years away for £10,000, found himself substituted, Harford provided both with a lesson in positive, powerhouse striking.

Harford lashed home his 10th goal of the season to provide Luton with their customary early advantage before the opposition could get used to the pace of the plastic pitch.

Towering

Later, he finished inches off the mark with three towering headers before 19-year-old Mark North, substitute for the tiring King, put Newcastle out of their misery with his second goal in only three senior appearances.

Luton boss David Pleat said: "Harford must be in the England frame somewhere. Like Whitehurst, he uses his weight, is almost unmanageable in the air and has incredible touch."

Big Mick proved that by shooting his 10th goal of the season as early as the seventh minute before heading just wide and then putting in two more efforts, one hit the bar

and the other was cleared off the line.

Referee Danny Vickers condemned both sides to a late kick-off by ordering Newcastle players off the pitch to change their grey "away" strip to a tangerine set of shirts borrowed from Yuton to avoid a colour clash on a murky afternoon.

And while Harford refused to allow the delay to prevent him giving his team their flying start, Newcastle ran around for a long time look-

ing like they hardly recognised each other.

Despite three refugees from the plastic pitch at QPR in their side, Newcastle clearly did not relish Luton's synthetic surface, although manager Willie McFaul apparently praised its truency.

In fact, we had only Pleat's word for that because McFaul cashed off straight afterwards on a trip to Ireland where, despite his £220,000 lay-out on Whitehurst this week, he is still looking for new players.