

Disrupted Ipswich show

courage

DURABLE and determined Ipswich Town courageously covered up the cracks in their depleted ranks to hold on gallantly for a hard earned point at Portman Road on Saturday.

Ipswich were given the lead by Nigel Gleghorn, the impressive £1,500 bargain buy from non league football, after 10 minutes. Then the strong willed Suffolk side were hit by an injury to defender Ian Cranson which in the words of manager Bobby Ferguson left him "almost unconscious on his feet as he tried to get out of the dressing room for the second-half."

By Dave Allard

Also hindered by an early injury to full-back Yallop, Ipswich had to reshuffle after the break with target man striker D'Avray trying out a new centre half role as the home team closed ranks.

Lively Luton, a team that through enterprising play have made their old relegation battle days seem like a bad dream, came forward in waves and duly equalised eight minutes from time through Mark North.

But considering that Luton manager David Pleat said of his men "that was the best I can remember us attacking in numbers," it must be regarded as a gratifying performance by Bobby Ferguson's young braves in a match where, considering the difficult surface, there was plenty of entertaining football.

The battling qualities of the home team were warmly appreciated by a bumper gate of 16,155 who are really getting behind the team in their bid to rise clear of relegation.

Ferguson said, "It can only strengthen the soul and character when you have to battle like that with things going against you. Luton had a lot of the game but I was pleased with the way that we

Ipswich 1, Luton 1

weathered the storm. I was proud of the qualities we showed in a match where we were continually being disrupted."

A game that attracted the worst sort of headlines in the Sunday newspapers because of the unsavoury Mick Harford-Alan Sunderland incident, really heralded the arrival of former fireman Gleghorn as a favourite with the home crowd.

The 23-year-old Geordie's first home goal came after ten minutes following a foul by Stacey North, suprisingly no relation to Luton scorer Mark, on Wilson.

Dozzell, who did not have one of his better games on the frozen midfield, rolled the ball out to Gleghorn on the left and the clever ball player with the occasional look of an Arnold Muhren about him, advanced on a sleeping Luton defence to hammer a low left foot effort under the body of Sealey.

Soon after Town were denied a penalty when Gleghorn cut into the penalty box from the left only to be manhandled by Breacker from behind.

"A definite penalty," said Ferguson whose side also came close to getting another goal when Brennan made a brilliant run forward from his own half of the field to bring out a superb save from the advancing Sealey.

It was at the end of a first period in which the quicksilver Stein missed scoring opportunities, that Cranson sustained the injury which failed to see him appear after the break.

Harford, earlier booked for "feet up" at Brennan, went into Cranson in an aerial challenge but after treatment on the field he walked off fully expecting to return.

Ferguson explained, "The

doctor looked at his nose injury and said he would be O.K. but just before he was due to go out he suffered a reaction, looking almost unconscious on his feet. There was no way he could play on.

"I reshuffled the team but when we were not looking too clever I decided to put D'Avray alongside Butcher at the back and he did a fine job."

Even though they were pinned back in their half for the vast majority of the time, Ipswich should have increased their lead when D'Avray touched the ball past Sealey only for it to be scooped off the line by a Luton defender.

Wilson made it a double miss when he blasted wide after the ball had been rolled to him by D'Avray and after this it was generally a case of one way traffic with



● NIGEL GLEGHORN cracks home his first senior goal at Portman Road for Ipswich Town with a low left foot shot in the tenth minute. Goalkeeper Sealey is well beaten and Thomas (number three) and Hill look on. (Pictures by Owen Hines).

the devilish attacking left-back play of Thomas being a joy to watch.

Shortly after a Brazilian-style burst of Thomas produced a killer cross that

McCall did well to head from underneath the crossbar, Luton scored their equaliser.

Little winger Preece centred from the left and

Mark North got behind the Ipswich defence to beat Cooper, the Ipswich goalkeeper who in the first half had produced a brilliant save to defy Stein.

Home debut making Stockwell impressed with his work-rate in a good all round team effort against the odds in a contest where Luton found the pitch more suited to their style as they now play their home games on a synthetic surface.

Ipswich extended their unbeaten home run to four matches and, even though wins are desperately needed, this must be considered a good point gained in difficult circumstances.

The teams

IPSWICH: Cooper; Yallop, McCall, Gleghorn, Cranson (sub. Sunderland 45 mins.), Butcher, Stockwell, Brennan, D'Avray, Wilson and Dozzell.

LUTON: Sealey; Breacker, Thomas, Nicholas, S. North, Donaghy, Hill, Stein, Harford, M. North and Preece. Sub. Johnson.

Dutch international midfielder player Romeo Zondervan has a chance of returning to the Ipswich team for the New Year's Day home match with Watford at Portman Road.



● LUTON goalkeeper Sealey spreads himself brilliantly to stop a shot from Brennan after the Ipswich midfielder had made a strong run upfield.