

Stein is the show stealer

By NIGEL CLARKE

C. Palace 1, Luton 2

ENGLAND boss Bobby Robson last night went to Selhurst Park to give the World Cup once-over on Luton centre forward Mick Harford.

But it was Brian Stein, a Robson reject after just one international against France two years ago, who launched Luton, semi-finalists last year, on another march to Wembley with a brilliant goal in the eighth minute.

He rose to meet a cross from left back Mitchell Thomas to guide a magnificent header wide of goalkeeper George Wood.

And Stein afterwards admitted: "I would love a second chance for England. All I can do is keep scoring and keep playing well."

Stein's goal was his 14th of the season, and he has now caught up with Harford, also on 14, whose aggressive centre forward play has pushed him forward as a contender for international honours. But he was overshadowed by Crystal Palace's giant centre half Micky Droy.

Stein played superbly on a skating rink pitch in a first half display that put Luton firmly in charge.

But palace were always in there battling through front pair Andy Gray and Ian Wright.

Luton had chances to add to their score when Stein, and then Mark North went close, before David Preece got the clinching goal in the 85th minute.

There was still time for palace to make one last despairing comeback and two minutes later Kevin Taylor smashed a 20 yard shot home to give them something

TALK OF THE TOWN



GOAL: Stein puts Luton ahead.

Picture: MONTE FRESCO

THE DRAW

Sunderland v
Man Utd or Rochdale

York v
Birmingham or Altrincham

Man City v Watford

Everton v
N Forest or Blackburn

Hull or Plymouth v
Brighton

Middlesbrough or
Southampton v Wigan

Sheff Utd or Fulham v
Gillingham or Derby

Portsmouth or A Villa v
Millwall

Chelsea v Liverpool

W Ham v
Ipswich or Bradford

Sheff Wed or WBA v
Orient

Peterborough v
Carlisle or QPR

Arsenal v Rotherham

Luton v Bristol Rov

Huddersfield or Reading v
Bury or Barnsley

Stoke or Notts Co v
Oxford or Tottenham

Ties to be played

January 25