

Magic, Mick

85/86

MICK NEWELL lit up his Luton home debut by scoring one goal and creating another and then he made it clear that he's no £85,000 stop-gap.

Manager David Pleat bought free-scoring Newell from Third Division Wigan when injuries took Mick Harford and Meka Nwajiobi out of his attack.

And although the 19-year-old Newell had a blank day at Chelsea last week, he took

Luton 2 Villa 0: by WILLIAM PIERCE

only 16 minutes to put the skids under dismal Villa before paving the way for Brian Stein's clincher in the second half.

Newell said: "The goal eased my nerves and I was pleased with my general performance. I'm ineligible for the FA Cup game next week but I'm determined to earn a regular place after that.

"I know I've been bought mainly because Mick Harford is injured and I couldn't expect

to replace an excellent player like him when he is fit. But I'd love to play alongside him and I think I'm capable of doing so."

Harford has vowed to return for Saturday's Cup-tie against Bristol Rovers — just three weeks after knee surgery.

But meanwhile Luton boss Pleat is delighted with the man who filled his boots yesterday and said: "He is still settling in but he is a great prospect."

Villa boss Graham Turner kept his players locked in the dressing room for more than an hour after this latest flop on a ground where his club have never won a League match.

Virus

Pleat also revealed that centre-half Steve Foster, once with Villa, had to climb from his sick bed to play—recovering from the same virus which kept out winger David Preece. Yet Foster comfortably outshone Paul Elliott, the defender Villa bought from Luton for £400,000 two months ago.

Elliott actually saved his team in the first five minutes, heading away Stein's cross from under the bar. But 11 minutes later Villa were left totally without cover when a Paul Birch error allowed Stein to set up Newell's opener.

Newell repaid the compliment for Stein 15 minutes from time, helped by Villa full-back David Norton who should comfortably have cleared the cross.