

Southampton 1, Luton 2

A POT of paint and a measuring tape were summoned by referee Les Shapter after he had ignored a linesman flagging for offside and awarded Southampton a penalty for Thomas's foul on Wallace. The delay while the markings were restored disturbed Armstrong's concentration and he shot weakly and much too close to the goalkeeper, writes **Max Reese**.

So Southampton failed to avenge a rather large defeat at Luton in the autumn, and they deserved better than to lose both points to Stein's late goal soon after Armstrong's spot-kick miss.

They were also checked more than once by a linesman who seemed to write his own script, even signalling an offside when a defender passed the ball back to his own goalkeeper.

Centre-half Wright was twice at fault under Luton's early pressure, causing Shilton to stretch high to collect a rash back-header and then in the 28th minute he lobbed another weak back pass at which Harford and Shilton arrived simultaneously. The corner was not cleared and Newell flashed a low shot into the net.

With the defenders pushing forward Southampton made more chances after half time, but with Jordan still some weeks off full fitness their forwards are too easily outjumped by tall defenders.

Armstrong did put them level after 63 minutes but following the penalty incident their spirits inevitably drooped and Luton took advantage.

Southampton: Shilton, Forrest, Dennis, Case, Wright, Bond, Holmes, Cockerill, Moran, Armstrong, Wallace.
Luton: Sealey, Breacker, Thomas, Nicholas, Foster, Donaghy, Hill, Stein, Harford, Newell, Preece.

Referee: L. Shapter (Torquay).