

# Battling Harford earns Luton another crack

Luton 2, Arsenal 2

85/86 (FAC)

**LUTON and Arsenal must meet at Highbury in mid-week to settle their battle for an FA Cup quarter final place. A 15,000 crowd at Kenilworth Road was thoroughly entertained by a marvellous game, in which all the goals came in the first-half.**

On a bitter afternoon, Ricky Hill gave Luton a great start but quick goals from Ian Allinson and David Rocastle gave Arsenal the lead, only for Mick Harford to level just before half-time with his 17th goal of the season.

Surprise selection Rob Johnson, the Bedford boy who asked for a transfer this week, had a great game for Luton.

The match was being televised live to Scandinavian viewers and the atmosphere as the teams kicked off was absolutely electric.

The Hatters, though, drew first blood when Hill shrugged off the attentions of two Arsenal defenders before coolly slotting the ball past Lukic.

It was the important breakthrough David Pleat's side needed and it signalled a period of intense pressure on the Arsenal goal. Stein intercepted a poor back pass from Sansom and slid the ball through to Harford whose first-time shot was inches wide.

Preece was obstructed just outside the Gunners penalty area and Hill curled his free-kick inches over the cross-bar. Arsenal came back to win a series of corners from which Thomas was twice called upon to clear off the line.

Sealey pulled off a marvellous save in punching

**LUTON:** Sealey, Johnson, Thomas, Nicholas, Foster, Donaghy, Hill, Stein, Harford, North, Preece. Sub: Parker.

**ARSENAL:** Lukic, Anderson, Samson, Williams, O'Leary, Keown, Allinson, Rocastle, Nicholas, Woodcock, Rix. Sub: Mariner.

## Report by Andy Roberts

away a curling free kick from Rix, but he was powerless to stop a drive from Allinson in the 16th minute which bounced off a post and into the net to bring Arsenal level.

It was a goal the visitors deserved and the excitement continued when in the 28th minute Arsenal took the lead. Woodcock centred from the left and Rocastle had the simplest of tasks to head the ball past Sealey.

Williams was penalised for chipping away at Stein's ankles and when Hill's free-kick bounced loose in the penalty area, Stein's swift shot on the turn was deflected

for a corner which was held by Lukic.

Harford's persistence deservedly paid off in the 40th minute when sheer strength brought the scores level. Thomas's lofted cross was met by Harford who, as the ball fell, thumped it home with ease to the joy of the crowd.

North inadvertently almost gave his side the lead when his attempted pass to Stein sliced off the edge of a boot and almost caught Lukic napping. Luckily for the goalkeeper, the ball ended up behind his goal.

Johnson, having an impres-

sive game, did enough to put off Rix as Arsenal swept forward impressively in the 54th minute.

The Hatters were still looking slightly nervous at the back and at one point played a dangerous passing game across their own penalty area. Johnson was again required to clear in hasty fashion.

Neat approach play from the Gunners produced an opening courtesy of a surging run from Allinson, who battled his way to the by-line before squaring the ball. Rocastle looked certain to put his side in front again, but that man Johnson was again on hand



Rob Johnson



Mick Harford