

# PLASTIC PADDING

By REG DRURY

QPR 1 Luton 1

THIS wasn't quite the game managers Jim Smith of QPR and David Pleat of Luton were hoping their teams would turn on.

Both clubs have been under pressure because of criticism of their plastic pitches.

And Pleat admitted: "We

## Wicks pitches in <sup>85/86</sup> to warm up Jim

would have preferred to serve up an exhibition of attacking football to shoot down the critics."

In fact, it was a dour struggle with the result just right.

Luton were by far the better footballing side, but failed to create the chances their approach play promised.

They finally finished up happy to salvage a point

after Rangers had taken an interval lead.

QPR could thank Steve Wicks for crossing over in front. He made two decisive headers exactly when they were needed.

As early as the eighth minute Wicks somehow reached the ball to clear off the line after Mick Harford's header had beaten home keeper Paul Barron.

Pleat added: "It was a fantastic effort."

Then in the 36th minute Wicks nodded down a Warren Neill free-kick to catch the Luton defence napping.

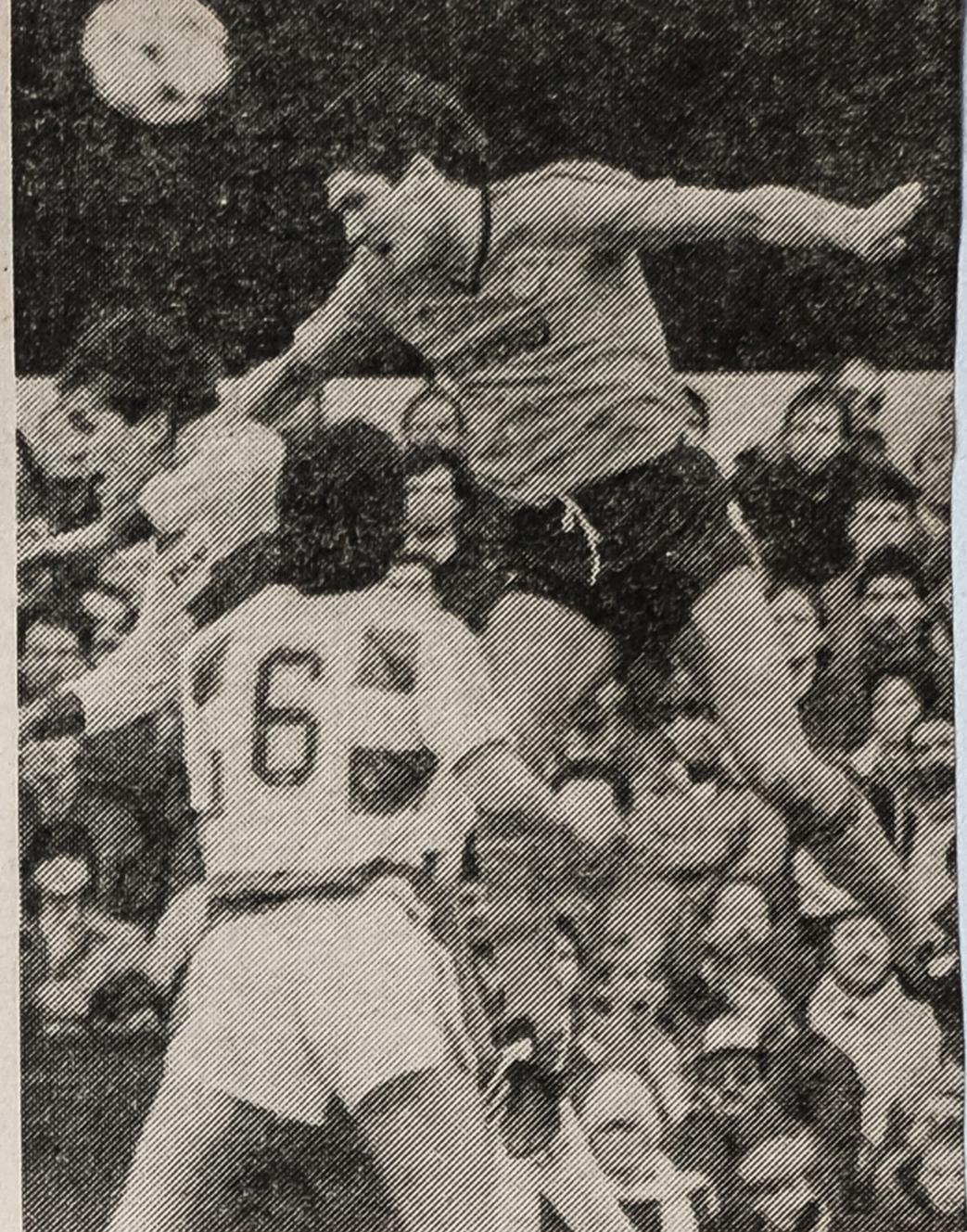
John Byrne was on the spot to turn smartly and glide the ball inside the far post.

The visitors claimed the reward they richly deserved after 62 minutes.

Harford nodded on a David Preece free-kick and Mick Newell touched the ball past the hesitant Barron.

**QPR:** Barron, McDonald, Dawes, Neill, Wicks, Fenwick, Fillery, Allen, Bannister, Byrne, Fereday.

**LUTON:** Sealey, Johnson, Thomas, Nicholas, Foster, Donaghy, Hill, Newell, Harford, North, Preece.



■ AERIAL POWER-Harford soars above QPR