

LUTON FAIL TO CASH IN

QPR 1, Luton 1

85/86

THOUGH proving better equipped, collectively, than disappointing Queens Park Rangers at the techniques demanded by artificial pitches, Luton missed the opportunity to improve their position in the leading group in the table.

Without Stein's class alongside the trustful Harford, moves built on Foster's control of defence, and the progressive ideas of Hill and Thomas, too frequently broke down.

In Wicks, Rangers had the individual making the two most telling contributions. He headed off his own line to deny Harford an early score and then set up the home side's 35th-minute goal, bravely putting his head down among the flying boots to steer Neill's free kick into inviting space where Byrne finished perfectly.

Wicks often kept an effective rein on Harford, but the would-be England striker, unlucky not to be making his international debut in Israel this week, proved that outstanding players are never totally subdued.

Harford's exciting demonstration of how to beat his markers in the air and then direct a long-range header with precision enabled Newell to glance home the 63rd-minute equaliser.

Overall, however, instead of a convincing argument in favour of synthetic pitches from the two sides who use them, the entertainment faded.

QPR.—Barron; McDonald, Dawes, Neill, Wicks, Fenwick, Fillery, Allen, Bannister, Byrne, Fereday.

Luton.—Sealy; Johnson, Thomas, Nicholas, Foster, Donaghy, Hill, Newell, Harford, M. North, Preece.