



FIGHTBACK THAT FLOORED LUTON

Bosses tight- lipped

BOTH managers kept Saturday's Press conference brief and good-natured, lest they should reveal their hand for last night's replay.

David Pleat was naturally disappointed at surrendering a two goal lead.

But he was pleased with the character shown by his side after such a gruelling programme during the previous seven days.

Howard Kendall was "delighted" still to be in the draw for the semi-final.

LUTON 2 EVERTON 2

FA Cup sixth round

THE same tenacity that enabled Everton to hang on and ruin last season's Wembley dreams returned to haunt Hatters on Saturday.

Dead and buried at 2-0 down, Kendall's commandos came back to life, to battle their way level.

It's easy to say that no professional side should surrender a two goal margin, especially at home.

But then it's not every day they come up against the league champions in the kind of mood that should ensure they wear the crown for another season.

Luton, ranks depleted by injury and bodies bruised and brains numbed by two titanic encounters with Arsenal within three days, were struggling for pace and sharpness.

In the final, decisive clash with the Gunners, Luton fired on all 11 cylinders and the result was a joy to behold.

On Saturday a few cylinders looked in need of a decoke and the unit overdue for a service.

But there were some lasting impressions.

By
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PUNTER**

Not least was the possibility of one day seeing Harford knocking the ball down into the path of Lineker, a lethal proposition despite being well handled by Donaghy, for the good of England.

The omens were promising before the game.

There was no Sheedy and no Mountfield, scorers of the semi-final goals, in an Everton side that showed four changes from the 12 on duty at Villa Park 11 months earlier.

Hatters, amazingly, had just six of their semi-final side in Saturday's line-up.

From the start



● Mark Stein (left) on his way to goal as the battle rages.

Everton looked the more likely to succeed, enjoying that half-yard of space as Luton's tired legs produced some loose marking.

But when Harford pounced for his 19th goal of the season, poaching from close in after Southall blocked

Hill's effort 21 minutes into the game, revenge for last season was in the air.

Then when Mark Stein raced through the offside trap, coped with Southall's block and then scooped his second chance into the net, the dream began to translate

into reality.

Could that Stein goal book a semi-final place as brother Brian had done with his winner against Millwall in the sixth round last time?

Against most teams, even modern day Liverpool and Manchester United, it surely would have.

But Everton were not prepared to lie down.

Sandwiched between the Luton goals had been an effort by Lineker cleared off the line by Donaghy and a mis-directed header by the England striker.

It was notice of more to come and two minutes after Luton's second, Everton struck when Sharp headed home a free kick.

Andy King, given little room to create by his former club, had to leave the fray with a broken nose before Everton

substitute Heath seized on a half-chance to ram home the equaliser.

As at Villa Park, the Luton hearts sank.

But whereas on that occasion Luton deserved victory because they were the superior side, on Saturday that was not the case.

And towards the end it was Luton who were hanging on as Sealey saved bravely from Lineker twice in the final six minutes.

Luton: Sealey, Johnson, Foster, Donaghy, Thomas, Hill, Nicholas, Preece, King, Harford, Stein (M). Sub: North (M).

Everton: Southall, Stevens, Van den Hauwe, Harper, Pointon, Steven, Reid, Bracewell, Richardson, Lineker, Sharp. Sub: Heath.

Crowd: 15,529.



● Mick Harford (No9) slots in the first goal.