

DEBATABLE

OXFORD

PENALTY

By **BILL MEREDITH**

Luton T. ... 1 Oxford Utd ... 2

THERE WAS no controversy about Oxford's victory; nobody could deny the full value of their third successive away League win.

But certainly there was argument about the legality of Oxford's crucial equaliser from the penalty spot just after half-time.

It was a penalty all right when Nicholas floored Aldridge, who took the kick himself. Aldridge ran up to the ball, appeared to check and feint to send Luton 'keeper Sealey the wrong way, and then calmly slotted the ball home.

Maurice Evans, Oxford's manager, was quite happy about it. "I don't know anything in the Laws which makes that wrong," he said. David Pleat, Luton's manager, was not so happy. Neither was his captain, Foster, who chased the referee, Colin Downey, of Hounslow, to complain.

Now well clear

But the goal counted and Oxford went on to secure a crucial victory which takes them well clear of the relegation zone.

Earlier, Preece had put Luton ahead with a classic, curling free kick after 16 minutes. But that was the last seen of Luton as a genuine attacking force.

Aldridge scored that penalty equaliser and then Charles grabbed the winner on the hour when Luton's Donaghy, Breacker and Sealey got themselves in a terrible tangle.

Oxford pulled a master stroke when they hired Luton's plastic pitch for £100 during the big freeze for a full-scale practice. Consequently, they had no hang-ups about the surface. Now the Milk Cup finalists are playing with all the confidence of a Wembley side who can avoid relegation.

Luton.—Sealey, Breacker, Thomas, Nicholas, Foster, Donaghy, Hill, M. Stein (North 72), Harford, Newell, Preece.

Oxford.—Judge, Trewick, Slatter, Phillips, Briggs, Shotton, Houghton, Aldridge, Charles (Thomas 65), Hebberd, Rhoades-Brown.