



CLASSIC . . . Luton's Steve Foster outjumps the Everton defence to head home

Pleat's protest

Luton 2 Everton 1: by WILLIAM PIERCE

LUTON manager David Pleat delivered a damning verdict on Everton which was every bit as shattering as the two late goals that toppled the champions.

Steve Foster, Luton's giant captain and never-say-die defender, launched both scoring headers which ended Everton's 19-match unbeaten run after earlier deflecting a Kevin Richardson shot into his own net.

But it was Pleat who rubbed salt into the gaping Everton wounds with some scathing after-match remarks.

Pleat's team had four men

booked in a fierce battle, and the manager made no attempt to disguise his disgust at what he clearly felt was an outrageous injustice.

He stormed: "A few players were going down as if pole-axed, having a little breather, wasting time and then getting up and walking away."

"The PFA union have got to look at their players and say that if anybody is making it difficult for referees and conning them, they must be sorted out."

Pleat's anger at the end of a vigorous encounter came from the fact that referee Ray Lewis had the names of Foster, Peter Nicholas, Rob Johnson and Mitchell Thomas in his book—but no Everton players.

At one point the Luton boss raced to the touchline to argue

with a linesman, but admitted later that he had apologised for this action.

Pleat added: "I was out of order, but I'm angry because it is a stigma to have so many players booked. We are not an over-physical side, but I have David Preece lying in pain in the dressing-room after an off-the-ball incident which the referee did not see."



"Surely it is wrong that he has refereed us three times this season when there are 85 names on the League's referees' panel."

"It is about time the system was overhauled and the good referees from the North come here more regularly while the good referees in the South go North more often."

Everton boss Howard Kendall, a target for Barcelona, refused to be drawn into the controversy. But he was clearly upset about the way his side threw away the game to enable Luton to gain revenge for the FA Cup defeat just 10 days earlier.

Kendall said: "Two set-

pieces did us after we had dominated the game. It was a poor display by our standards."

Everton centre-half Derek Mountfield added: "The last 10 minutes were a joke. We don't deserve to be up at the top after that."

A joke it certainly might have been as far as Foster was concerned. He might not have seen any humour in the fact that the referee comes from a little Surrey village called Great Bookham, but Foster laughed last and longest in the final 10 minutes.

He was left totally unmarked to head in a Ricky Hill free-kick in the 81st minute and then piled on the agony for the champions by nodding home a Preece corner five minutes later.

Foster admitted afterwards that team-mate Mick Newell made the final touch.

Until then Everton had looked like clinging on to Richardson's fortunate goal in the opening seconds of the second half. In the middle of all the mayhem over the bookings, they were again indebted to their brilliant goalkeeper Neville Southall and also a post which stopped a fine header from Mick Haford.