

STEIN SENT OFF

West Ham 2 Luton 0 : by ALAN HOBY

86/87

ENGLAND manager Bobby Robson had a ringside seat at sunlit Upton Park as his England defender Alvin Martin was sent off following an 80th-minute punch-up with Luton's Brian Stein.

The Luton striker was also sent for an early both by referee John Dealin.

After he had showered and dressed, Martin, West Ham's

skipper, said: "I knocked the ball away, Brian came in behind me and things just flared up. Everyone else ran in and made it look a lot worse.

"It was just an instant reaction. If we had time to think about it, it would not have happened. But the others, coming in, turned it into something it wasn't."

Martin (an honest guy but

why does he get into these scrapes?) added: "Last time I was sent off I held up my hand and said I was to blame. But this time it was just a reaction. I don't blame the ref. He had an excellent game."

Said referee Deakin: "It was just an isolated incident, but when blows are thrown and land on opponents then the referee has no choice but to send the players off."

It was all really such a pity as at the time West Ham were motoring to a decisive win, and Luton 'keeper Les Sealey had to work overtime against the ever-eager Tony Cottee and co.

The scoresheet says Cottee scored West Ham's first goal (42 minutes), but, really, he only deflected that fine midfielder George Parris's rocket from a Kevin Keen corner.

And in the second half the aggressive Tony Gale soared to another Keen corner and clinched it with a superb header.