

Hatters lose 86/87 their heads

THE HONEYED taste of sweet revenge lay warm and welcome on the League champions' eager palate last night. For Liverpool overcame the dual challenge set by the elements and Luton to claim what they consider to be their rightful place at the top of the First Division.

Everton can dislodge them today if they win at Watford. But Liverpool's satisfaction at being on top of the heap by three clear points was intensified by the beating of Luton.

A howling blizzard swept Anfield from start to finish, chattering the teeth for the whole afternoon.

But at least Luton turned up this time. Perhaps, at the end, they wished they had not bothered as an eight-game unbeaten League record went out of the window.

In January they failed to arrive for a third-round Cup replay—snowed in at Heathrow. It was an omission which incurred wrath all round and led to a disciplinary fine.

Still smarting

Luton eventually won the tie. And still smarting from a 4-1 drubbing at Kenilworth Road in the autumn, Liverpool had a score to settle.

Settle it they did, with a fine performance in appalling conditions. Players slipped. Carefully weighted passes stuck in the snow.

And Luton not liking it, lost their cool—if that were possible on such a bitter day. They had four men booked

by **PETER WELBOURN**
Liverpool 2 Luton 0

—three of them in a single flare-up towards the end.

Ashley Grimes was cautioned for fouling Craig Johnston, Les Sealey for hurling the ball at the Liverpool player, and substitute Rob Wilson for expressing his dissatisfaction at the decision.

They joined Mick Harford in the roll of dishonour. He had clattered Jan Molby in the early stages.

Had it not been for Sealey and sterling defensive display by Steve Foster and Mal Donaghy, the margin of success would have been far greater.

Liverpool went in front after 17 minutes and never looked back. Steve McMahon set Ian Rush free and Sealey could only parry the shot.

Nigel Spackman had a go and so did Rush, for the second time. His shot was handled on the line by Tim Breaker and Molby had no trouble in finding the bottom corner from the penalty spot.

Five minutes before half-time, McMahon again set Rush loose. As Foster appealed for offside, the Liverpool striker's centre was turned into his own net by the unfortunate Donaghy.



Snow soccer at Liverpool as Brian Stein battles with Craig Johnston