

Sour smell of success

LUTON's climb to third place, the highest in its history should, as David Pleat who built the foundations before moving to Spurs observed, be good for the game.

But while Kenilworth Road's artificial pitch skinned the knees of Waddle and contributed to a groin strain which puts Hoddle out of the England squad, the crowd unmercifully baited first Pleat and then left-back Mitchell Thomas, simply for moving on to better themselves.

Thomas indeed betrayed the emotion he was feeling when in the fifth minute he needlessly chased a ball that was going out, lost his balance on the unusual surface, and gave the ball straight to the advancing Luton players. It was fed via Hill to Harford whose right-foot shot gave Clemence no mercy at the base of the post.

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by Rob Hughes

Hill too may soon leave Luton, whose manager John Moore admitted yesterday he has not the money in wages to offer to compare to "the big six". But for now Hill was the hero, outplaying the whole range of internationals and making the second goal after 54 minutes with sublime footwork. His crafty pass went to Stein, who found Newell in space behind Stevens for another unforgiving finish.

Late in the game Hill crowned his afternoon by bewildering Thomas, Mabbutt and Waddle before speeding down the right wing to cross the ball to the far post where Darron McDonagh scored his first goal for Luton.

In between Spurs managed

only the briefest of competitive patches, involving the introduction after 57 minutes of Ardiles. The sun for a few minutes shone out of Spurs; Ardiles took control, and Hoddle supplied the pass for Waddle to beat Luton's offside trap and goalkeeper Sealy.

So, as Pleat says, the championship looks Merseyside bound. So what harm can it be to have Luton in pursuit? Only that Sealy was one of four players booked for fouls, and Harford, their captain, was lucky indeed to remain on the field after vicious kicks at Stevens and then Thomas. No way to the top.

Weather: hailstorms. **Ground:** plastic.

Goals: Harford (5 min) 1-0. Newell (54 min) 2-0. Waddle (62 min) 2-1. McDonagh (86 min) 3-1.

Luton: (4-4-2): Sealy; Breaker, Donaghy, North, Grimes; Hill, B Stein, Nicholas. **McDonagh:** Newell, Harford.

Tottenham Hotspur: (4-5-1): Clemence; Stevens, Gough, Mabbutt, Thomas; Claesen, Hoddle, P Allen, Hodge (sub Ardiles, 57 min), Waddle; C Allen.

Referee: D Ellery, Harrow.