

Luton's big man floors champs

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Luton 2 Everton 1: by IAN STAFFORD

LUTON manager Ray Harford marvelled at his namesake, Mick, after the big centre forward set up Luton's first home win of the season as League champions Everton again toiled on an artificial surface.

"Mick plays to his strengths," he said. "He's a great physical player who possesses immense qualities. There are not many players about like Harford and I couldn't put a price on him."

Harford played his usual Jekyll and Hyde match, being lucky not to be dismissed for the second time this season but staying on to play an important part in Luton's goals.

But it was Everton who took the lead, pouncing on a defensive error. Mal Donaghy's fifth minute attempted clearance nearly flew into his own net, but Les Sealey's superb save left the ball invitingly in front of Neil Pointon, who rammed the ball into the net.

Luton equalised in the 18th minute, with Harford nodding down an Ashley Grimes cross for Brian Stein to drive a low half volley firmly home from the edge of the box.

Tripped

Everton continued to live dangerously and were fortunate not to concede a 47th minute penalty when Alan Harper tripped Stein.

But Luton found a 54th minute winner, a carbon copy of their first goal, when Harford again knocked back a Grimes cross for Ricky Hill to shoot into an empty net from 10 yards.

Although Trevor Steven and Watson both went close, Everton again failed to collect any points from Kenilworth Road's plastic pitch, 10 days after losing on QPR's artificial surface.

Colin Harvey, Everton's manager, said later: "We are pleased we've got these games on plastic out of the way."