

Smith scores again but Luton hit back

By Brian Oliver

Luton Town1 Arsenal1

ALAN SMITH recorded his 13th goal of the season and maintained his record of having scored in every League game as Arsenal took a point from an exciting rematch of last season's Littlewoods Cup Final.

For an hour, it looked likely to be all three points, for the adventurous visitors — and revenge for their defeat at Wembley — but Luton responded well after a surprise equaliser from Black and, in the closing stages, had Arsenal resorting to time-wasting.

It was a brave performance from Luton and especially Foster, their captain. He was off the field for 15 minutes to have eight stitches in a cut between lip and nose and, later, needed five more after suffering a leg wound. He has had 36 stitches this season.

Luton were weakened in mid-field when influenza prevented Steve Williams facing his former club and injury robbed them of McDonough seven minutes before half-time. Arsenal scored while Foster was off the pitch and, after his return, they restricted the skilful Smith to only one more scoring chance.

"He was very brave to carry on like that," said Ray Harford, the Luton manager who was impressed enough with Arsenal to tip them for the title.

It was unlucky 13 on two counts for Luton in the 13th minute, when Smith scored his 13th goal of the season. The superstitious among Luton supporters also claimed a stitch in time saves nine.

Smith was undoubtedly helped by the absence of Foster, who was off the pitch being treated. The skilful Marwood broke past

Breaker on the left and crossed for Smith to meet the ball a yard off the ground and beat Sealey with a stunning volley.

The goal was greeted by loud cheers. Arsenal, despite Luton's restrictions, had fans behind both goals and in the main stand. They cheered loudly every time Marwood had the ball and were treated to a superb display of ball control from Smith, whose first time touches gave Foster and the Luton defence plenty of work.

Adams, the Arsenal captain, epitomised the growing confidence in his team when Wegerle threatened to equalise. The goal was unguarded but Adams confidently won a tackle and ran 10 yards with the ball despite the constant challenge of Wegerle.

Luton rarely threatened in the first half, though they thought they had scored minutes before the interval when Hill shot from 30 yards and Lukic watched the ball bounce off the inside of a post to safety.

Luton's equaliser in the 55th minute came as something of a surprise. Bould fouled Harford and Black scored direct from the free kick, 25 yards out.

After their goal Luton took control, Adams lost his composure and Harford set up scoring chances for Wegerle, who shot high, and Wilson.

Luton Town: Sealey; R Johnson, Breacker, McDonough (Oldfield, 38), Foster, M Johnson, Wilson, Wegerle, Harford, Hill, Black.

Arsenal: Lukic; Dixon, Winterburn, Thomas, Bould, Adams, Rocastle, Richardson, Smith, Merson, Marwood.