

Goalden Harford's deja vu!

STRIKER MICK Harford must have felt a sickening sense of deja vu as his Wembley delight turned sour again.

The striker netted the opener in last season's Simod Cup final before Hatters crumbled to humiliating 4-1 defeat.

And he was first on target on Sunday before Forest star Nigel Clough stole the limelight.

Harford had nothing but praise for the man who drove the nails into Hatters' cup final coffin.

There was little Harford could do but watch admiringly as Clough first cancelled out Luton's opener and then sealed victory with a crisp shot.

"He is a great player and quite unique," said Harford. "He is not like a normal centre forward — Clough plays in a no-man's land between the defence and the midfield so he does not get picked up."

Harford said he would love to play alongside him and added: "I have never played with someone that good who plays in that position."

The centre forward said he was pleased to score at Wembley again and unlike some observers did not feel Forest 'keeper Steve Sutton was to blame for the goal: "It was a good, firm header from a close range and I do not think he had much chance."

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• Take that — mighty Mick Harford powers home Hatters' goal as the Forest defence looks on.

SEALEY SHOOT

Cloughie hits Ray with a smacker

RAY Harford's consolation prize after losing his grip on the Littlewoods Cup was a kiss from controversial rival manager Brian Clough.

That was the Forest manager's unorthodox response when the final whistle confirmed his side's 3-1 win over the Hatters at Wembley on Sunday.

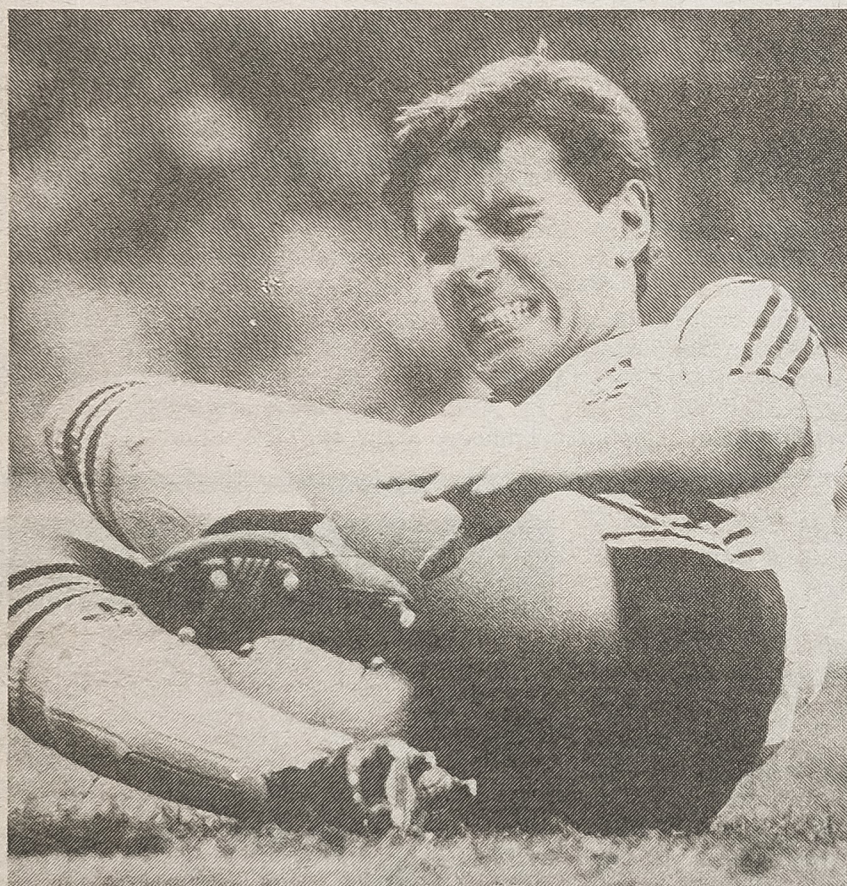
But it came as no surprise to the Luton manager, who was still able to joke afterwards: "He's kissed me four times today!"

But Harford was quite serious about the match: "It was the first goal that killed us. I thought we played quite well for an hour."

"Over 90 minutes we had better chances."

Harford, who said he believed Neil Webb's strike for Forest's second goal was offside, added: "The game plan was to take the sting out of them. We tried to play the way they play."

Black's agony!



• Ouch — Kingsley Black lies in agony.

THE toast of Wembley 12 months earlier, it was a different story this time for 20-year-old Kingsley Black, who ended the final shedding tears of sorrow.

The young Luton lad caused a sensation by playing a leading part in last season's victory against Arsenal.

But Sunday's contrasting fortunes left the young player saying: "I feel I let a lot of people down."

Turning to his one clearcut scoring chance sent through by Mick Harford, Black said his heel was caught as he prepared to shoot, adding: "If I'd gone down we might have got the penalty."

HOT-HEADED KEEPER Les Sealey hit back at snipers blaming him for Hatters' cup final misery with the amazing claim: "I would do the same again."

The fiery keeper was lashed by his boss and his team-mates for the impulsive lunge at Steve Hodge's feet that gifted Forest a lifeline back into the match.

But an unrepentant Sealey stormed: "I had a split second to decide what to do."

"I thought I could get to the ball but realised at the last moment that I was going to be half a yard short."

"I tried to get out of the way but Hodge crashed into me. It was a penalty — but you have to make your mind up in a split second so I do not regret going for the ball."

Annoyed boss Ray Harford had a different view on the episode: "He should not have gone for that ball — and must take the blame for the goal," he said.

Harford added that Sealey had done the same thing against the same player when Forest visited Kenilworth Road in the league just three months ago.

And skipper Steve Foster joined in the ver-

LUTON 1 NOTTM FOREST 3
By MICHAEL WEINSTEIN
and STEVE KINGHAM

bal assault on Sealey saying: "It was a ridiculous challenge — Hodge was going nowhere. We had held them comfortably until that point."

Even mild-mannered Scot David Beaumont said: "The keeper should have let the ball just run out of play."

The penalty was the turning point in a game that Hatters had previously controlled with some style.

Boss Harford's troops lost their self belief and resorted to a long-ball game when the intricate

passing that had silenced Forest in the opening period would have been a better bet.

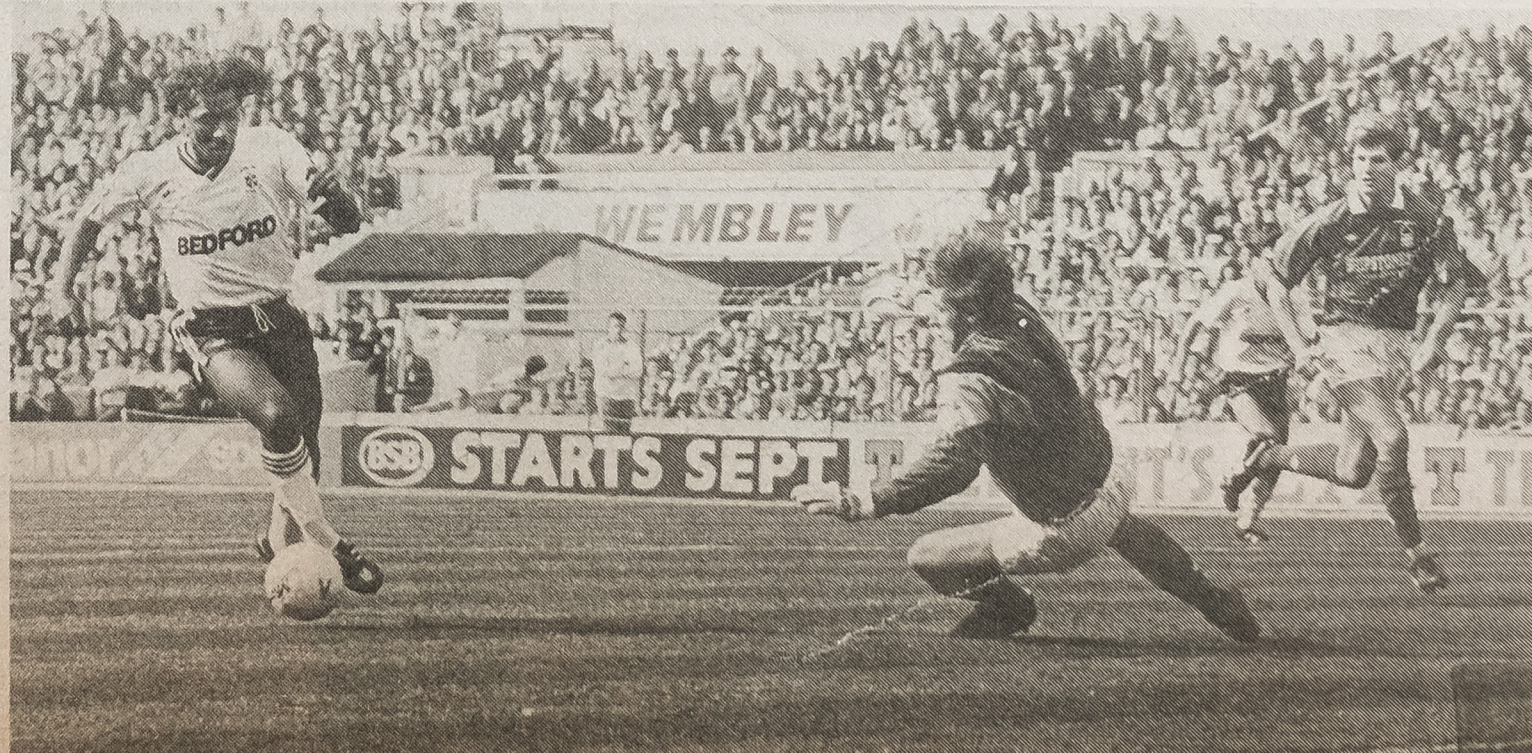
Hatters' neat first-half football saw them dictate the game and Forest keeper Steve Sutton had to be at his best after just 13 minutes when full-back Ashley Grimes fired in a rocket shot from fully 25 yards.

The keeper was left for dead after 27 minutes when Ricky Hill glided past him — but the midfielder pushed the ball a fraction too

Heartbreak Hill



• On the way — Ricky Hill evades Terry Wilson.



• Steaming in — the maestro bears down on diving Forest keeper Steve Sutton.