

Relief as Luton hang on

Luton 1 Leeds 0

by Gordon Burnett

THE EDUCATED left foot of Lars Elstrup and the fingertips of goalkeeper Alec Chamberlain put a smile back on the face of Luton.

But the pain they inflicted on Leeds was much greater than the bug which has plagued Elland Road this week.

For there is no doubt Howard Wilkinson will feel mightily aggrieved at losing his unbeaten record.

True, Luton can point to the industry of Jason Rees who buzzed around Kenilworth Road like a bee on overtime.

There was a lot to admire too in the culture of Elstrup and Kingsley Black and the willingness of Iain Dowie.

Yet Luton did their utmost to keep their composure under the severest pressure. The game scarcely had time to draw breath before it was won and lost in the opening minutes.

That was when Elstrup went forward on the left and curled a teasing ball to the far post where Black came in from nowhere to head past an astonished John Lukic from the acutest of angles.

Dowie might have had another but he shot straight at Lukic and while Luton dictated the early pace Leeds were obviously and ominously settling to the job in hand.

Luton lived dangerously in the opening minutes of the second half when first Vinny Jones — in for his first game of the season — cleverly laid on a gilt-edged chance which Lee Chapman blazed against Chamberlain's legs. Then the Leeds striker headed another chance just wide.

On the hour Chamberlain brought the house down with a quite remarkable save which kept Luton alive. And for all their hustle and bustle, Leeds just could not crack them in a frantic finale.

LUTON: Chamberlain, Breacker, James, Rees, Beaumont, Dreyer, Elstrup, Preece (w'drn 60, sub Johnson), Dowie, Hughes, Black (w'drn 88, sub Nogan).

LEEDS: Lukic, Sterland, Snodin (w'drn 71, sub Speedie), Batty, Haddock, Whyte, Strachan, Jones (w'drn 64, sub Varadi), Chapman, McAllister, Whitlow.

REFEREE: T. Foakes (Clacton).