

SHILTS SENDS 'EM PACKING!

IT'S not often David Preece can feel aggrieved at not getting on the score-sheet.

The midfielder's name has never been one to strike fear in the opposition keeper's mind.

But were it not for 41-year-old Peter Shilton, Preece would have netted two spectacular goals and sealed a well-deserved third successive win at the Baseball Ground for Luton.

Shilton, making his 150th appearance in a Derby shirt, made a mockery of his decision to quit the England team with magnificent saves either side of Derby's killer second goal.

A dejected Preece told the Herald & Post: "I had two shots which I thought were goals."

"I don't score many in a season but I should have had two and that would have won us the game."

Preece is convinced he'll get off the mark soon. "With our style of play, which is back to the way David Pleat used to approach games, I should get more goals. Two wide men gives the midfielders more room to get forward."

"These days the main thing in the First Division is to score first. I'm convinced that who ever does that will not lose the game and should really win. Then if you go two-up, eight times out of 10 you'll win."

It was a disappointing day all round for Preece as he conceded

DERBY 2 LUTON 1
By MICHAEL WEINSTEIN

DERBY: Shilton, Sage, Cross, Williams, Wright, Forsyth, Micklewhite, Saunders, Gee, Ramage, Callaghan. Subs Pickering and Francis.

LUTON: Chamberlain, Johnson, Harvey, Williams, Beaumont, Dreyer, Elstrup, Preece, Dowie (Nogan 71), Hughes (McDonough 77), Black.

● **REFEREE:** A Buksh.

● **ATTENDANCE:** 15,008.

90/91

a first-half penalty that shot Derby into the lead.

Preece was left with no alternative but to handle Michael Forsyth's close-range effort off the line.

He said: "It was definitely handball but it's just an instinct. I would do the same thing even if it meant a red card — you don't have time to think because it happens so fast."

It's fast becoming a cliché, but Luton, with only one point from the last three games,

should have taken more from this game.

There were chances for at least a point against Sunderland two weeks ago and Luton should have taken all three against Everton last week.

Preece admitted: "We should have taken four if not six more points than we've got and now we've got to go to Anfield to put it right!"

Luton's biggest problem is their ineffectiveness in front of goal and that was blatantly obvious after



● **Ouch — Iain Dowie is sent tumbling by Michael Forsyth.**

just 11 minutes.

Richard Harvey sent Lars Elstrup galloping into acres of space with a magnificent ball out to the left wing but when the Dane crossed, Iain Dowie and Ceri Hughes twice got in each others' way with the goal beckoning.

Derby, second from bottom in the First Division and with out flu victim Mick Harford in their line up, were rocking.

Elstrup juggled a Preece free-kick before turning in an instant and lashing in an angled shot that shaved the cross bar.

But Luton failed to punish Derby and the midlanders grasped the initiative with shots by Phil Gee and Craig Ramage and a Mark Wright header that dipped just over the bar.

Luton failed to clear Derby's second corner and when Forsyth lashed in a shot, Preece handled on the line and Dean Saunders thumped home from the spot.

Micklewhite came close with a shot on the stroke of half-time but

Derby should never have got within range of the goal after Geraint Williams had wrestled his Luton namesake Steve to the ground before setting up the chance.

Luton's equaliser came just seconds after Derby had twice come close.

Saunders turned quickly and crashed a shot onto the bar and Gee should have done better when he flung himself at the rebound but headed wide.

Luton swept up field and Dowie found Elstrup who flew down the right wing and crossed for Kingsley Black to side foot home from five yards.

Preece's first effort came on 62 minutes when he belted in a shot from the edge of the box which Shilton palmed away.

On-loan winger Nigel Callaghan fired a spectacular winner from 25 yards which left Alec Chamberlain grasping at thin air.

But it was Shilton who stole the limelight when he saved acrobatically from Preece's second effort 60 seconds later.