

Stewart double act tops the bill



■ HOT SPUR: Paul Stewart nets the clincher

Tottenham 2, Luton 1

By KEN MONTGOMERY

PAUL STEWART kept his head in this explosive Christmas cracker to give Spurs their most amazing win bonus of the season.

White Hart Lane's hard-man striker headed both goals in a game where referee David Elleray sent off Tottenham's Nayim and Pat Van Den Hauwe and Luton's Ceri Hughes.

Mayhem

He also booked Nayim and Steve Sedgley, and Luton's Darron McDonagh, Iain Dowie and Mervin Johnson.

In the end, nine-man Spurs deserved to beat ten-man Luton, who seemed mesmerised in all the mayhem and magic that turned the match into the biggest pantomime in town.

It was slapstick. It was crazy. But it was spell-binding stuff for a crowd of just over 27,000.

Luton, playing in bright blue strips, with a snowflake effect, hit Spurs with a blizzard of good early football.

And in the 12th minute Kingsley Black turned away from goal, dragged the ball out to the left, then crossed for Dowie to thump Luton into the lead.

When Nayim was the first of the three players to be sent off - for foul and abusive language - it looked as if Spurs' goose was cooked.

But Paul Gascoigne made a magical left wing run in the 35th minute, beating Steve Williams,

Hughes and Kingsley Black.

Gazza's cross was perfection, and there was cool-hand Stewart to head Spurs level.

When Van Den Hauwe was dismissed for a scything, sinister tackle on Dowie, it looked odds-on Luton once more.

Fire

But White Hart Lane has never been a happy hunting ground for the Hatters, who had won there only three times in 21 previous visits.

That man Stewart was perfectly positioned to use his head again in the 58th minute, and his close-range nod home from Gascoigne's right

wing corner was enough to pull the Tottenham chestnuts from the fire.

Hughes got his marching orders a minute later for a late, late foul on Lineker.

Spurs used substitutes Paul Allen and Vinny Samways late in the proceedings for Paul Walsh and Lineker, while Luton replaced Lars Elstrup and McDonagh with Sean Farrell and Dave Beaumont.

But even without Lineker, Stewart was the man who kept his head when so many around him were losing theirs.

MAN OF THE MATCH
Stewart (Spurs)

TOTTENHAM. - Thorstvedt; Thomas, Van den Hauwe, Sedgley, Howells, Mabbutt, Stewart, Gascoigne, Nayim, Lineker, Walsh. Subs: Allen, Samways.

LUTON. - Chamberlain; Johnson, Harvey, Williams, McDonough, Dreyer, Elstrup, Preece, Dowie, Hughes, Black. Subs: Beaumont, Farrell.