

Held by ten men

ARSENAL 2 LUTON TOWN 0

THE CONTINUED inability to attack well when they were working harder on defence was the Town's downfall at Highbury as they completed six hours of soccer without scoring.

They could not even make the breakthrough after Arsenal were down to ten men for the last 35 minutes, after Anders Limpar was sent off for elbowing Mark Pembridge in the face, in off-the-ball retaliation, as he seemed to see it, for an earlier challenge.

The Town made better use of the less crowded midfield, with Pembridge and Kingsley Black at last doing more in attack than defence, but the only real chance they created ended with Philip Gray heading into the outstretched arms of David Seaman when the better bet would have been a downwards header.

The Town had already gifted Arsenal their first win of the

season through two defensive errors, in the 18th and 49th minutes.

They spoiled what would otherwise have been a solid defensive pairing as Trevor Peake made his debut alongside Graham Rodger, with John Dreyer reverting to left back.

Match details

TOWN: Chamberlain; Beaumont (Jackson 61 mins), Rodger, Peake, Dreyer; Pembridge, Preece, McDonough (Farrell, 67 mins), Black; Stein, Gray.

ARSENAL: Seaman; Dixon, Linighan, Adams, Winterburn; Rocastle, Davis, Thomas, Limpar; Merson, Smith. Unused subs: Pates and Cole.

GOALS: Merson, 18 minutes, unmarked in the middle of the penalty area to collect a deflected cross by Lee

Dixon; Alan Smith, 49 minutes, from Merson's flick-on at the end of a long clearance by the goalkeeper.

OTHER STRIKES: Town two wide and four saved; Arsenal seven saved and eight wide. Corners: 4-3 to Arsenal.

SENT OFF: Anders Limpar, 55 minutes, for off-the-ball elbow in Mark Pembridge's face — the wound needed five stitches.

BOOKED: David Beaumont for a foul on Winterburn shortly after the red card. He was then subbed to avoid the danger of the ref being pressured into a second sending-off.

REFEREE: Peter Foakes, Clacton. Had no option but to dish out the third red card seen in the Town's first four games of the season.

ATTENDANCE: 25,898, and the big Town following was brilliant, and very patient.

ENTERTAINMENT: It can't be highly rated without the occasional Town goal.