

# Royle blues as Oldham's awaydays go off the rails

91/92

JOE ROYLE left Luton pointless and unhappy after a 2-1 defeat maintained his men's chalk-and-cheese record.

Oldham's manager blamed his defence for going to sleep in the last five minutes and letting in veteran Mick Harford for two goals which made a mockery of Oldham's performance over the previous 85 minutes.

Ian Marshall had steered home a 52nd minute header to put Oldham ahead and in charge. That forced Luton into major changes in tactics and personnel.

Rick Holden had been pulling them apart with his dangerous crosses to Marshall and Graeme Sharp. But once Luton had brought in two substitutes and turned on the pressure in midfield, the state of the game changed dramatically.

Royle was angry at the way Luton were allowed to pull off an improbable win. He said: 'Our lads thought it was easy after going one up.'

Oldham have lost all four away games and Royle is wary of having to rely on home points for survival.

Luton manager David Pleat knows the feeling, with Luton also looking good at home and ineffective away.

He said: 'A manager has to worry about chalk-and-cheese teams. I know that and we have to do something about it.'

## Inspired

'But Oldham will be all right. Marshall and Sharp are as good as anything in the air in the First Division and they will get goals.'

At least Royle had the consolation that his team will not often meet Harford, who was inspired from the first minute of his second debut for Luton.

Royle said: 'He's a great player but we made trouble with poor defending.'

The 32-year-old Harford gave credit to Pleat for having the faith in him.

LUTON: Harford (85, 89 min).  
OLDHAM: Marshall (52).



MARSHALL . . . head start