

Accusations are rife as Cardiff go out

By John Ley

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LUTON Town reached the quarter-finals of the FA Cup in the heat of an ultimately hostile tie and one which ended with claims of cheating from both Eddie May, the Cardiff manager, and his chairman, Rick Wright.

The contention surrounded the winning goal, scored by David Preece, after linesman Brian Rice had decided that Luton's Ceri Hughes, though standing five yards offside, was not interfering with play before the goal was scored.

The goal, in the 70th minute, came when John Hartson headed forward for Preece. Hughes was running back, avoiding involvement and, after glancing at Rice,

referee Roger Dilkes played on, allowing Preece to go on and score.

Only four minutes earlier Cardiff, of the Second Division, had equalised through Phil Stant after Scott Oakes had given Luton the lead.

The winning goal resulted in one supporter attempting to confront Preece. Rice appeared to be struck by objects and at the end of the game police had to use dogs and horses to keep supporters on the terraces. Later a steward had to go to hospital after

having ammonia squirted in his face, allegedly by a Luton supporter.

And at least Luton 10 fans were treated for burns in hospital after a canister of gas was hurled at them as they were leaving the away closure at Ninian Park.

If that was unpleasant, the recriminations afterwards were distasteful; Cardiff's officials would have been better to have kept a dignified silence.

Instead May said: "We've been cheated and I don't care if that

93/94 (FAC) gets me into hot water. The decision has cost the club and the players a lot of money."

Wright, who sold leading scorer Nathan Blake to Sheffield United two days earlier, added: "We've been robbed, cheated, there's no other word for it." He then added, somewhat remarkably: "If the FA charge Eddie May for his comments and not the linesman then we'll fight it all the way, even to the High Court."

Cardiff: Grew (Kite 45); Brazil, Perry, Baddeley, Searle; Bird, Richardson, Millar, Thompson; Dale (Stant 54), Griffith. Subs not used: Adams.

Luton: Sommer; Linton, Peake, Dreyer, James; Telfer, Harper, Preece, Hughes; Hartson (Dixon 70), Oakes. Subs not used: Thorpe, Petterson. Booked: Harper.

Referee: R Dilkes (Lancashire).