

Fans turn on Luton board in cash row

06/07

LUTON chairman Bill Tomlins will today take the unprecedented step of publicly explaining where his board has spent around £9 million of transfer income — and he will need to be convincing.

Fury among Luton fans reached new heights as their side slid closer towards a return to League One following a sixth successive defeat.

Police rushed into the main stand at Kenilworth Road to quell supporters — many of them middle-aged — who turned angrily on the directors' box after substitute Matt Richards had scored Ipswich's second goal on 62 minutes.

At the back of the stand another 60 Luton fans tried to force their way past stewards to Tomlins and his fellow directors angrily chanting 'Where has all the money gone?'

Tomlins left his seat before the final whistle and organised a police escort from the ground.

The only hint as to what today's statement might include came in his programme notes in the wake of last week's sacking of manager Mike Newell for speaking out about the club's 'sell, sell, sell' policy.

He wrote: 'Until we relocate to a new stadium, we will always have problems attracting or holding on to players as our revenue base cannot compete with most clubs in this League.'

'Our football operating costs alone will this season exceed our total income (excluding transfers) and that is before we take into account all other operating costs.'

His board's policy, however,

LUTON

0

IPSWICH

2

By **GRAHAM OTWAY**

has left caretaker manager Brian Stein with what looks an impossible task trying to keep Luton in the Championship with a group of youngsters and loan signings but few players of any experience.

Saturday's skipper Steve Robinson, who was involved in a minor altercation with a shouting fan at the end of the game, issued a plea for everyone to get behind the team.

'Now is the time we all have to stick together. We have got a lot of young kids out there,' said the midfielder.

But, on Newell, Robinson added: 'I don't know the internal goings on, but we were 110 per cent behind Mike and it came as a shock to us.'

'It seemed that a player only had to have five good games here and they were gone.'

Ipswich goalkeeper Lewis Price brilliantly saved Clarke Carlisle's fierce drive early on, but the visitors were in almost total control once Alan Lee headed home a rebound off the woodwork in the 39th minute.

Victory took Jim Magilton's side nine points clear of the relegation zone and he said: 'It was certainly not a classic, but I was delighted with the way we were focused on the job.'

LUTON (4-4-2): Beresford; Keane, Carlisle, Barnett, Emanuel (Coyne 45); Foley (Runstrom 79), Robinson, Heikkinen, Bell; Idrizaj (Feeney 45), Talbot.

Booked: Barnett Robinson.

IPSWICH (4-4-2): Price; Wilnis, Bruce, De Vos, Wright; Roberts, Legwinski (Richards 26), Garvan, Williams; Lee (Haynes 73), Walters (Clarke 85).

Scorers: Lee 39, Richards 62.

Referee: Andy D'urso.

Man of the Match: Fabian Wilnis.