

Mick's happy return

85/86

MICK HARFORD has snapped back into England World Cup contention less than three weeks after a knee operation.

He scored the first of Luton's four goals and made a monkey of critics who predicted that it would harm his chances.

Harford's massive superiority in the Bristol Rovers' penalty area ensured that Bobby Gould's battlers were given no chance of repeating their Leicester upset.

Luton manager David Pleat declined to force Bobby Robson's hand on the Harford issue but he did

Luton 4 Bristol Rovers 0 By BILL DAY

admit that a poll of First Division managers would 'covet' his £500,000 rated striker, who increased his goal tally to 15.

Pleat shares rival manager Gould's confidence that Luton can emulate last season's long Cup run.

'We have a determination to go to Wembley, something we never had at any stage last season,' said Pleat.

Luton's hopes of reaching the fifth round were never in question after Harford flashed home a glancing header from David Preece's

corner in the 23rd minute.

Preece's promptings and Harford's manace were too much for Rovers, who fought a brave rearguard action around the mercurial skills of former England captain Gerry Francis.

Destroyed

Ricky Hill put Luton two up after 28 minutes and any Rovers hopes of forcing a draw were destroyed when Luton goalkeeper Les Sealey produced a remarkable save to foil Trevor Morgan's goal-

bound header in the 58th minute.

Six minutes later Luton were three up when Marc North, who was signed as a goalkeeper, turned poacher with a 20-yard bullet.

The rout was completed when Brian Stein forced Rovers' defensive hero Tim Parkin to turn the ball into his own net three minutes from the end.

Defeat left Rovers' manager Gould praising Luton's Cup-winning possibilities.

Wembley, then Mexico, that's some prospect for Harford after coming out of hospital.