

By **ROBERT STEEN**

Luton 3, Watford 2

MICK HARFORD should be tearing his hair out when England's World Cup squad is announced tomorrow.

After downing Watford with a ground-based hat-trick that took his season's tally to 25, Harford must know that only his "bad-boy" reputation has cost him a place on the plane to Mexico.

Superficially, the word is that lack of pace has counted against him in Bobby Robson's eyes.

But with the need to

MICK'S MAD

improve the image of English football abroad former amateur boxer Harford's total of 11 bookings and two suspensions this season will surely prove to have been the telling factor.

"Mick is the most expensive player this club has ever bought, and he has done all that could have been asked of him this season. But beyond that, it's not my place to say," said Luton manager David Pleat.

"I think it's too late for Mick," added Watford manager Graham Taylor, who

ruefully recalled signing Harford on a free transfer when he was manager at Lincoln.

Despite Taylor's insistence that his side conceded three bad goals, the scoreline did little justice to Luton's superiority.

Barnes was clearly pacing himself for Mexico and only the calm authority of another World Cup-bound player, Northern Ireland defender McClelland, prevented Luton from winning by a wider margin.

They were two up at the break thanks to a chip and,

a tap-in by Harford, but lost some of the initiative when Jackett converted a dubious penalty.

Then Harford restored their two-goal advantage with a stunning volley before a Sinnott header set up a deceptively riveting climax.

LUTON: Sealey 6—Breacker 7, Foster 7, Donaghy 7, Thomas 6—Nicholas 6, Hill 7, Preece 7—Stein 6, ***HARFORD** 8, Nwajobi 6.

WATFORD: Coton 7—Gibbs 7, Terry 6, ***MCCLELLAND** 8, Sinnott 6—Talbot 6, Jackett 7—Sterling 6, Allen (w'drawn) 6, West 6, Barnes 6. Sub.: Bardsley 7.

Ref.: D. Hedges (Oxford) 6.