

Triple top Hatter

MIGHTY Mick Harford's glorious hat-trick had namesake boss Ray purring: "He's amazing."

Harford's two cracking headers and sweetly struck left footer underlined his £1 million price tag and England claims.

And the striker — reputedly chased by half the clubs in England — was paid a glowing tribute by his boss for refusing to become unsettled by all the speculation.

"That's the great thing about the lad — he's got an unbelievable attitude," enthused boss Ray Harford.

"A lot of people would be causing a fuss — some would be sulking even — but Mick's amazing.

"He never even mentions it. He jokes about it sometimes but he's happy to let his football do the talking."

Wigan boss Ray Mathias declared Harford was the difference between Hatters and his Third Division battlers.

And he added of Harford: "He's proved tonight he's a great jumper and scored two great headers in the first half.

The only thing that had the home fans singing early on was the presence of 250 or so Wigan supporters.

Some of the more vociferous home fans had obviously had their night made by having



● Strikes two and three. Harford's second (left) and hat-trick (right).

LUTON 4 WIGAN 2 By PAUL SHERWOOD

someone to chant abuse at.

Jeers turned to cheers though after 25 minutes as tricky Micky Weir produced the perfect cross from the right and Harford leapt to thump his header home.

Cheered by now having a 2-0 aggregate lead, Luton started pushing forward more. Danny Wilson's slightly deflected 30 yard free-kick whistled past a post and from the resulting corner Harford's header was scrambled away.

After 35 minutes Harford produced an even better second goal, twisting in the air to send a right wing cross back past the bemused Wigan keeper and into the top right corner of the net.

Hatters were in rampant mood now and within three minutes had a third. Darron McDonough — replacing the injured Ricky Hill — smashed a 22 yard belter off Wigan keeper Redfern's right post.

But as the ball flew out it hit the unfortunate keeper on the back and went into the net.

Hatters went off the boil after the break, and

as Wigan fought back they got a consolation goal as Stewart Storer's corner was knocked in by David Hamilton.

And on 70 minutes Wigan made it 3-2 on the night when Hatters skipper Steve Foster slid in to take a cross away from Bobby Campbell only to put it past Les Sealey.

Harford wasn't finished yet though and two minutes later he combined with Foster and Ashley Grimes to set up the best goal of the game.

Foster passed the ball out to Grimes on the left and after the left back played a delightful one two with Harford he sent the big striker into the box with a sweet through ball.

In front of the Kenilworth Road end faithful Harford needed no further bidding and from 10 yards he literally smashed his hat-trick strike past the bemused Redfern.