

# STRIKER IAIN Dowie admitted he should have headed Hatters level after exploding into action against top cats Millwall.

The substitute came close to opening his league goal account in sensational style — with his first two touches.

But it was from his third effort — four minutes after the £40,000 signing from non-league Hendon had entered the fray — that Dowie thought he should have hit the net.

The bustling forward had already brought the best out of Millwall's Brian Horne when the keeper had to leap high to tip over his header from Danny Wilson's cross.

"It's a shame — I should have done better from Danny's cross — but I just did not get hold of it.

"I should have made more from the chance. I tried to glance it past the keeper but I didn't get enough on the ball."

Dowie has been off the first-team scene since the Littlewoods Cup quarter-final with Southampton in January.

But the departure of David Oldfield has given him a new lease of life.

"I was always vying for a place with Dave, but with him gone, now is my chance.

"I have been playing reasonably well in the reserves without scoring — but I feel really sharp.

"I was raring to get on against Millwall because I've missed not being involved."

Dowie's entrance came as Hatters battled to get back on level terms with a Millwall

## LUTON 1 MILLWALL 2 By MICHAEL WEINSTEIN

LUTON: Sealey, Breacker, Grimes, Preece (Dowie 71), McDonough, Beaumont, Wilson, Wegerle (Dreyer 87), Harford, Hill, Black. Attendance: 7,838.

MILLWALL: Horne, McLeary, Sparham, Hurlock, Thompson, Wood, Carter, Briley, Sheringham, Cascarino, O'Callaghan. Subs: Horrix and Salman.

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side that had already scored two wins over them this term.

Luton — minus the vital presence of skipper Steve Foster — were outgunned in the first-half.

Darron McDonough replaced Foster for his first game since injuring an ankle in October and Hatters fell behind to a well-taken brace from lightning Lions' winger Jimmy Carter.

Stand-in skipper Mick Harford had been only inches away from opening the scoring with two half-chances before Carter smashed his first past helpless Les Sealey.

And he had Hatters reeling in the 31st minute when Tony Cascarino latched on to a Steve Wood lob and was played onside by Ashley Grimes.

The striker bore-in on goal and Carter nipped in before Grimes to bury his weakly hit cross.

Hatters pushed four

men upfront after the re-start to peg the Londoners back and they were thrown a lifeline when Terry Hurlock held back David Preece in the box.

Sure-shot Wilson made no mistake from the spot blasting home his fourth penalty of the season.

Sealey rescued Hatters when Carter burst through looking for his hat-trick as the defence stood still.

Dowie's grandstand entrance — with 19 minutes left on the clock — set the crowd buzzing.

Horne had to be at full-stretch to halt Dowie's 20-yarder and from the corner he had to climb high to catch the striker's looping header.

McDonough — playing more confidently as Millwall were held at bay — came marauding forward shortly after Dowie's third chance and set up Roy Wegerle

for a 20-yard pile driver which just whistled over.

And that was Wegerle's last contribution as he stretched for the ball and pulled a hamstring.

John Dreyer replaced the striker releasing McDonough to midfield but Hatters could not make their late pressure pay.