

Luton take it to the wire again

91/92

Luton..... 2, Aston Villa..... 0 **Glenn Moore**

VICTORY, as deserved as it was important, insured that for the fourth year in succession Luton will be performing their high-wire survival act on the season's last day.

Aston Villa, who rarely extended themselves, next week play Coventry, who must be beaten if Luton are to survive yet again.

Should David Pleat repeat the Maine Road victory jig of a decade ago at Meadow Lane next week, where Luton play relegated Notts County, it will be because of the blossoming talent of Mark Pembridge, 21.

The Welsh international has been the force behind Luton's last-gasp revival and he showed again why he is destined to be in the Premier League next season, albeit probably not with Luton.

Pembridge supplied the crucial early goal, the mid-field player curling in a left-foot cross for the experienced Brian Stein neatly to glance home after 10 minutes.

The second, which the youngster scored himself, arrived at a similarly telling moment, three minutes into the second half, and it bore the hallmark of a quality player.

Receiving the ball from Oakes in an apparently harmless position 25 yards out, he cracked in a fierce drive that left Villa debutant Bosnich vainly clawing at the air.

Thereafter attention turned to the transistors and news of the others in the First Division basement.

Regis rolled back the years with a powerful turn and shot that went just over, while Oakes could have dispelled any lingering nerves when Pembridge, again, provided a glittering chance from the left only for his team-mate to miscue.

Bosnich made an useful debut for Villa, notably a pair of saves in the 34th minute from a Pembridge 30-yard free kick and a close-range Harford volley.