



■ Luton wing back Gavin McGowan shakes off the attentions of two Wycombe defenders yesterday afternoon

Taylor-made win a tonic for away fans

99/00

**Wycombe Wanderers 0
Luton Town 1**
By BILL COLE

FOR most of yesterday afternoon there was a distinct end-of-season air around Adams Park.

The Hatters however snapped the match out of its lethargy to keep up their remarkable undefeated record against the Wanderers.

The goal came courtesy of Matthew Taylor's effort in the 87th minute when he drilled in a low controlled drive after Liam George's shot had been pushed out to him by home goal keeper Martin Taylor.

The goal cashed in on a great earlier save by Ben Roberts and an athletic, headed goal-line clearance by Gavin McGowan which sent Luton's magnificent away support home happy for the summer.

Town were almost off to a flying start when Taylor made a splendid run down the left wing in the first minute.

He threw in a vicious curling cross that Wycombe's player-of-the-year Taylor managed to punch off Phil Gray's head.

He had to be brave to deny the Luton striker's determined aerial challenge. Stuart Douglas caused the most problems for the home defence before the interval forcing a hurried hacked clearance from Taylor.

Gray gave him a chance when the ball returned to the ground but Douglas could find neither pace nor direction with his strike and Douglas was later prevented from lobbing the home keeper by Jamie Bates' brave headed back pass.

Wycombe however probably had the best chance in the first period. The splendidly named Germaine McSporran beat a falling Marvin Johnson and raced clear.

He chose to shoot when he had a man running open on either side of him and Watts managed to close him down.



■ Matthew Taylor: Scorer

Sean Divine was through on goal when Roberts hesitated in coming out for a long ball but the keeper redeemed himself by blocking the Wanderers' top scorer's low drive.

Divine let fly a fierce drive that only just fizzed past Robert's near post and McSporran was gifted a chance by Matt Taylor.

The 18-year-old wing back tried to dribble out of his own area but McSporran, playing Ryman League football against the likes of Barton Rovers only 18 months ago got a foot in and went on to threaten the visitor's goal.

The Town keeper saved Taylor's blushes however with a great block that is becoming his trademark.

A turgid second half came to light with 20 minutes to play.

Paul McLaren's terrible pass pitted McSporran and Divine against a lone Johnson deep in Town territory. But an inspired interception by the Luton skipper rescued the situation.

Then it was Robert's and McGowan's turn to shine.

Substitute Andrew Baird's run down the left wing was blocked by Watts but it went back to Baird and he forced Roberts



■ Liam George: Provider

to make a great save at his near post to keep the score sheet blank.

From the resulting corner Robert's spilled the ball under probably unfair pressure and Jason Cousins fired in a couple of poor drives.

The first was parried by Watts but the second got through to the goal line where McGowan just about managed to stop it crossing for the opening goal.

The game with two sides having nothing to play for but pride, looked all over a goalless draw until four minutes from time.

Liam George introduced at half time for Douglas, without much success, made a jinking run on the edge of the area, found a yard of space and got in a shot.

Taylor pushed out his effort with a diving save at full stretch to his right, only for it to run onto his name sake on the Luton wing, who kept cool beyond his 18 years to hammer a low winner into the net.

Luton Town: Roberts, McGowan, Taylor, White, Watts, Johnson, Spring, Locke, McLaren, Gray, Douglas (George h/t). Subs unused Fraser, Ayres, Scarlett, Abbey. Attendance 5,379 (away support 1,075)