

Matt's the way to do it!

A LATE Matthew Taylor goal sent a thousand Hatters fans home happy after their side stole three points at Wycombe's Adams Park.

Luton are quickly becoming a bogey side for their Buckinghamshire neighbours and have not lost any of the eight meetings between the two clubs.

Taylor's 87th-minute strike maintained that record but only after on-loan keeper Ben Roberts had pulled off three fine saves and Gavin McGowan cleared off the line.

Wycombe boss Lawrie Sanchez was a founder member of Wimbledon's original 'Crazy Gang' and he was left hopping mad by the inability of his players to take advantage of the game's better chances.

Sanchez was pulling out his hair on the sidelines and even sent out his assistant Terry Gibson for the post-match interviews.

His frustration was understandable with home keeper Martin Taylor rarely tested before the Hatters winning goal.

At the other end, Wycombe's top scorer Sean Devine should have opened the scoring on 29 minutes when he was put clear through.

But Roberts capitalised on a moment's hesitation to narrow the angles well and block Devine's effort. Taylor then

matchfacts

● **WYCOMBE:** Martin Taylor, Chris Vinniecombe, Paul McCarthy (Jason Cousins, 24), Jamie Bates, Sean Devine, Jermaine McSporran, Mark Rogers, Dannie Bulman, Martyn Lee (Maurice Harkin, 79), Michael Simpson, Danny Senda (Andrew Baird, 63).

● **HATTERS:** Ben Roberts, Gavin McGowan, Matthew Taylor, Matthew Spring, Alan White, Julian Watts, Marvin Johnson, Adam Locke, Paul McLaren, Phil

WYCOMBE 0 LUTON 1

Gray, Stuart Douglas (Liam George, 46). Subs not used: Nathan Abbey, Stuart Fraser, James Ayres, Andre Scarlett.

● **Shots on target:** Wycombe 4, Luton 4.

● **Off target:** Wycombe 8, Luton 5.

● **Corners:** Wycombe 4, Luton 2.

● **Referee:** David Crick (Worcester Park).

● **Top Hatter:** Roberts – dependable.

presented Jermaine McSporran with an equally good opportunity.

The Hatters wing-back was dispossessed by McSporran after attempting to dribble past him in his own penalty area. Roberts was again alert to the danger and saved McSporran's shot with his feet.

Stuart Douglas wasted Luton's best chance of the half on 28 minutes, dragging an effort off target from 15 yards. It was an attempt that carried all the conviction and confidence of a player without a goal since January 3.

Taylor then had two hopeful long-range efforts either side of the hour – one a deflected shot easily gathered by his namesake in the Wycombe goal and the other rising well over.

Wanderers continued to look the most

likely winners of a tepid end-of-season affair and, on 81 minutes, Roberts produced his best save of the afternoon to push a fierce shot from sub Andrew Baird around his near post.

Two minutes later, Jason Cousins managed to fire past the Luton keeper but McGowan was on hand to clear off the line.

The lively Baird then sent a bobbling shot wide before Wycombe were caught napping by a classic counter attack from Lennie Lawrence's men.

Liam George, who replaced an injured Douglas at half-time, carried the ball to the edge of the area before having his low shot beaten out, but only as far as Taylor's lethal left foot.

The talented 18-year-old, a generous 20-1 for the game's first goalscorer with local

bookmakers, kept his cool to drill a low shot past covering defenders from 12 yards out.

Jubilant Hatters fans celebrated Taylor's strike in a frenzied fashion. The away supporters turned up in their droves for a pretty meaningless mid-table end-of-season affair and were rewarded with their club's seventh win on their travels this season.

Saturday's game also means the Hatters will end the campaign with a run of four victories from their last six away matches.

Luton boss Lawrence was delighted to reach his target of 60 points and 60 goals with a game left to play and there was even a rare chant of 'there's only one Lennie Lawrence' from the away end.

It might only have been in response to an earlier chorus of 'stand up if you hate Lawrence' but, nevertheless, it suggested that some section of the Hatters crowd have appreciated their manager's efforts this season.

A measure of the difficulties he has faced can be seen in the changes from last season's team at Adams Park.

Only Matthew Spring, Phil Gray and Marvin Johnson remain from the starting line-up in that game with Gray and Johnson both now considering their future under the Bosman ruling.



Lennie's verdict

We do well at Millwall, Burnley and now Wycombe every season. It looked all over as if it was going to be a draw. Julian Watts and Marvin Johnson defended very well and Ben Roberts was very good. The first goal was always going to win it. We sent a lot of people home very happy which was important.