

It's double delight for destroyer Williams!

HATTERS' old boy Martin Williams sent his former employers crashing to a 3-2 defeat with a deadly display.

Swindon striker Williams only managed two goals in 42 games for Luton but matched that tally in one afternoon on Saturday.

A spectacular overhead kick and powerful header sealed the Hatters' fate despite Mark Stein's first league goal since a summer switch from Bournemouth and Liam George opening his account for the season.

Chants of "what a load of rubbish" reverberated around Kenilworth Road as defeat to fellow strugglers Swindon plunged Ricky Hill's men into the bottom four of the Division Two table and left them without a win in eight games.

Afterwards, a disappointed Hill said: "The criticism is part and parcel of football. The fans pay good money to watch and will back the players as much as they can do.

"But they are frustrated just like we all are. It's basically down to me in terms of the personnel I put out and I have no qualms with that. But we are not experienced in terms of numbers and some of the young players are in the team when perhaps they should not be."

Hill tried his third different formation in four matches, employing his favoured 4-3-3 line-up for the first time.

He restored George to the starting 11 in his preferred position behind the front two and the former Republic of Ireland under-21 international responded with a performance full of skill and endeavour.

The Hatters looked a more potent attacking force than previously this season in the early stages and went ahead after 13 minutes. George cleverly lifted the ball over Swindon's defence and Stein collected it before shooting low into the corner.

Stein then volleyed wide and Robins keeper Bart Griemink almost fumbled an inswinging Matthew Taylor corner over his own goal-line as Swindon rocked.

But the visitors, who had gone close on eight minutes when Mark Ovendale beat out Gary Alexander's shot on the turn, got on level terms after 28 minutes.

Sloppy defending, poor marking and a failure to apply pressure on the man in possession allowed David Duke to skip past a Matthew Spring challenge and fire into Ovendale's bottom corner from the edge of the box.

Duke's goal provided Swindon with encouragement and filled Luton with anxiety. Shortly



TWO: Martin Williams.

afterwards, Alexander drilled a low shot wide before Williams netted his first on 41 minutes to fire his new team in front.

The bustling striker displayed great athleticism to send a brilliant bicycle kick crashing into Ovendale's top corner after Mark Robertson had sent a hopeful header into the home box.

That was a big body blow but Luton recovered to equalise two minutes later and complete an exciting first-half.

There was plenty of space in both penalty boxes before the break and this time George was the beneficiary.

Stein fed last season's leading scorer, who took the ball in his stride before slamming the ball into the roof of the net.

A buoyant George then

matchfacts

LUTON 2 SWINDON 3

● **HATTERS:** Mark Ovendale, Stuart Fraser, Julian Watts, Emmerson Boyce, Matthew Taylor, Matthew Spring (Adam Locke, 67), Peter Holmes, Andre Scarlett, Liam George, Tresor Kandol (Peter Thomson, 73), Mark Stein. Subs not used: James Ayres, Dean Brennan, Nathan Abbey.

● **SWINDON:** Bart Griemink, Juan Cobian (Mark Robinson, 63) Alan Reeves, Sol Davis, Marko Tuomela, David Duke (Danny Invincible, 68), Keith O'Halloran, Matthew Hewlett, Martin Williams, Gary Alexander, Mark Robertson (Alan Young, 58). Subs not used: Steve Mildenhall, Giuliano Grazioli.

● **Referee:** Paul Rejer.

● **Shots on target:** Luton 6 Swindon 5.

● **Off target:** Luton 7 Swindon 9.

● **Corners:** Luton 7 Swindon 1.

● **Star Man:** Liam George - his confidence is slowly returning.

sent an ambitious chip sailing wide on 48 minutes when he should have elected for a clear run on the visitors' goal. Spring also had a couple of long-range efforts and Stein directed a Taylor cross just off target as Luton searched for a third goal.

But it was Williams who grabbed the match winner. The Swindon forward had gone close with a far-post header seconds after the interval but made no mistake on 66 minutes. Taylor conceded a free-kick on the right and Robins' captain Keith O'Halloran floated in a cross that Williams rose to head powerfully past Ovendale.

Luton's only response was an 87th-minute rising drive from Peter Holmes that warmed the hands of Griemink.

It was a disappointing end to a game in which the Hatters had shown glimpses of the free-flowing, attacking football that characterised so many games at Kenilworth Road last season.

There were a number of good individual performances - notably from George and Taylor - but the team is still lacking cohesion and direction.

After Saturday's game the defence had also conceded 10 goals in three games and Luton's fans aired their displeasure at the final whistle.