

Forward thinking Kinnear

01/02

By James Lawler

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JOE KINNAR met his former employers Oxford United for the first time since taking over as Luton manager, but Saturday's ill-tempered affair at Kenilworth Road left him with things closer to home on his mind rather than past disputes.

Angered by the treatment he received during his short spell as director of football with Oxford, Kinnear had not been afraid to publicly air his views of chairman Firoz Kassam before the game. Afterwards, however, Kinnear turned his attention to his own side's frailties. The former Wimbledon manager is

well aware that if Luton are to bounce straight back up after relegation last season he needs to strengthen his back line and add to his strike potential. But Kinnear is confident that he will solve the problem this week.

"We need another injection," Kinnear said of his goal-shy side. "This game highlights the fact that we need more fire power.

"I've told the players that I need somebody that can get us 18 goals, irrespective of what price he costs. I'll have a new striker on Wednesday."

Luton front men Carl Griffiths and Steve Howard struggled, in stark contrast to Oxford's Andy Scott, who lashed in a 20-yard free-kick after just five minutes when

ex-Hatter Phil Gray went down on the edge of the area.

Luton, to their credit, equalised soon afterwards when midfielder Kevin Nicholls, back from suspension, stooped to head in from close range four minutes later. But the lack of a natural finisher cost Kinnear's side dear.

Kinnear, who is pursuing Sunderland's talented Michael Reddy and Dundee defender Chris Coyne, wants three new signings this week.

Luton Town: Emberson; Skelton, Perrett, Boyce, Johnson; Forbes (Hillier 45), Spring, Nicholls, Taylor; Griffiths (Douglas 60), Howard. **Subs:** Ovendale, Dryden, Hughes. **Goal:** Nicholls (9).

Oxford: McCaldon; Guyett, Bolland, Hattswell, Stockley; Thomas, Savage, Whitehead, Ricketts; Gray, Scott. **Subs:** Knight, Richardson, Folland, Brooks, Omoyimni. **Goal:** Scott (5).

Referee: Clive Penton (WoodinDean).