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LUTON secured a club record 28th league win of the season as they enjoyed a promotion party with their 11th straight victory.

Steve Howard reached the 20-goal milestone with two strikes as Joe Kinnear's already-promoted side turned on the style against high-flying Mansfield in a bid to go up as champs.

"It was marvellous to celebrate promotion with five goals," Kinnear said. "First and foremost this game was about trying to get the result for the fans and we did that."

"We felt we owed Mansfield one for the result up there earlier in the season and it is great to return the compliment like this. We will keep going and try to catch Plymouth."

Failed

The Hatters took the lead after 11 minutes when Frenchman Jean-Louis Valois slotted home from eight yards after fine work by Howard and strike partner Dean Crowe.

Mansfield hit back from the restart when Marvin Johnson's back-pass failed to reach home keeper Carl Emberson and Andy White rounded him and squared for Adam Murray to net an immediate equaliser.

But Luton restored their advantage after 21 minutes when Valois' speculative 30-yard free-



JOE COOL: Kinnear's men have clocked up 11 straight wins

Kinnear's Hatters go up in style

kick was turned home by Crowe before Kevin Nicholls added a third from the penalty spot eight minutes later.

Leading scorer Howard netted a fourth after 34 minutes when he headed home at the near post but Mansfield were offered a glimmer of hope four minutes before the break when veteran midfielder Scott Sellars delicately lobbed Emberson. But a

rampant Luton added a fifth two minutes after the interval when Valois' right-wing cross was pushed on to the head of Crowe by goalkeeper Kevin Pilkington and Howard slotted home his landmark goal.

Sub Chris Greenacre hit his 27th of the season for Mansfield in the final minute, but it wasn't enough to dampen the celebrations of home fans.