



■ Twin threat: Andrew Fotiadis (left) and Steve Howard – both on the scoresheet

A romp for Hatters as striker ends drought

ANDREW Fotiadis returned from the football wilderness as impressive Hatters recorded back-to-back victories for the first time this season.

The comeback kid missed a hatful of chances in the first half only to score his first goal in 13 months and Luton's second against a woeful Swindon side.

Steve Howard opened the scoring and Steve Robinson got his first goal for the club from the penalty spot to complete the rout.

Ex-Hatters player, now Swindon Town boss Andy King, returned to Kenilworth Road with his team a point clear of Luton in the league.

Joe Kinnear made one surprise change from the side that won at Huddersfield last Saturday, replacing Dean Crowe, without a goal in five games, with Fotiadis.

Luton were simply too good for the Robins in the first half, the only surprise was that it only stayed at 1-0.

As early as the ninth minute, Luton had their first attempt on Swindon's Dutch goalkeeper Bart Griemink. Sol Davis, playing against the club he left in the summer, took a left wing corner which found Matthew Spring unmarked at the back post. But the midfielder put his free header over the bar.

Luton then shook the Robins bar through Howard's 25-yard thunderbolt but the club's top goalscorer was not to be denied for long.

On 13 minutes Fotiadis chased a back pass, before a ricochet off defender and captain Andy Gurney fell to the striker, whose volley went straight at Griemink. The ball rolled kindly to Paul Hughes, whose cross was chested down by Howard before clinically getting his eighth goal of the season from 11 yards.

Fotiadis then gave his doubters more ammunition with two spurned opportunities –

the first a one-on-one where he chose power rather than precision blasting straight at the 'keeper, and then on 21 minutes a header from point-blank range produced a great save.

Luton lost captain Kevin Nicholls on 35 minutes with an achilles strain that may rule him out of the Aston Villa Worthington Cup tie on Tuesday night.

Spring assumed the captaincy and Peter Holmes took over in central midfield.

Hatters were rarely threatened but almost immediately after the enforced substitution a failure to clear their lines resulted in a free header for Frenchman Eric Sebin, who was way off target.

The second half started with the moment Luton fans thought would never come – a Fotiadis goal on 46 minutes.

The much-maligned striker repaid Kinnear's faith in playing him with a super strike. He more than deserved his goal.

A deep ball found Howard in the box, and his vision and close control gave Fotiadis that chance. He took one touch before hitting the ball sweetly on the half volley from ten yards out.

The high-octane opening 50 minutes ground to a halt as Luton seemed content to sit on their lead and Swindon had nothing to offer in attack.

Out of the blue on 63 minutes the visitors had by far their best chance. From a corner, a cutback from John Jackson found Matt Heyward in the box. Heyward, a defender by trade, had time to compose himself for a shot but he took too long and his shot was blocked by Boyce.

Robinson easily had his best game in a Hatters shirt and when lively substitute Crowe was rugby tackled in the box five minutes from, he stepped up to score from the spot.

It was the first of his Luton career since joining from Preston in the summer.

Kinnear was happy with the result, saying: "We got our just reward. I was disappointed it was only one at half time but after our second goal the game was all over."

It was the perfect tonic ahead of the glamorous cup tie at Villa Park on Wednesday night.



MATCH FACTS



LUTON TOWN (4-4-2): Emberson; Boyce, Perrett, Coyne, Davis; Robinson, Nicholls (Holmes, 35m), Spring, Hughes; Howard, Fotiadis (Crowe 77)
Subs (not used): Hillier, Neilson, Brkovic

Referee: Phil Joslin (Nottinghamshire)

GOALSCORERS

Luton: Howard (13), Fotiadis (46), Robinson (85 pen)
Swindon:

GOAL ATTEMPTS

Luton: 11
Swindon: 2

CORNERS

Luton: 4
Swindon: 4

BOOKINGS

Luton: Hughes (50)

ATTENDANCE: 6,393

HATTERS' STAR MAN:

Matthew Spring

Makeshift captain led by example

Nationwide Div Two results

Barnsley	1	Wigan	3
Cardiff	2	Crewe	1
Cheltenham	1	Notts County	4
Chesterfield	1	Blackpool	0
LUTON	3	Swindon	0
Northampton	2	Mansfield	0
Oldham	4	Huddersfield	0
Peterborough	5	Brentford	1
Port Vale	2	Bristol City	3
QPR	2	Colchester	0
Tranmere	1	Stickport	0
Wycombe	2	Plymouth	1

How they stand

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Cardiff	11	7	3	1	17	9	24
QPR	11	7	2	2	23	10	23
Oldham	11	7	2	2	19	6	23
Wigan	11	7	2	2	19	7	23
Chesterfield	11	6	2	3	14	11	20
Crewe	11	5	4	2	15	8	19
Blackpool	11	5	3	3	15	10	18
Bristol City	11	6	0	5	17	13	18
Brentford	11	5	3	3	12	13	18
Tranmere	11	5	1	5	12	15	16
Plymouth	11	4	3	4	17	17	15
Northampton	11	4	3	4	11	14	15
Port Vale	11	5	0	6	15	19	15
Stockport	10	4	2	4	10	7	14
Luton	11	3	3	5	18	18	12
Wycombe	11	3	3	5	15	18	12
Barnsley	11	3	3	5	11	17	12
Peterborough	10	3	2	5	12	11	11
Notts County	11	2	5	4	15	15	11
Colchester	11	3	2	6	6	13	11
Swindon	11	3	1	7	11	17	10
Cheltenham	11	2	3	6	11	16	9
Huddersfield	11	2	3	6	5	15	9
Mansfield	11	2	1	8	13	34	7