

Pirates take bounty at Kenilworth

Luton 1 Bristol Rovers 2

07/08

LUTON lost their 100 per cent home record as two Rickie Lambert goals gave Bristol Rovers a 2-1 win.

Rovers took the lead in the second minute in spectacular fashion. Lambert seized on a loose ball and hit a stunning volley into David Forde's top corner from 35 yards.

Luton equalised from the spot in farcical fashion after 16 minutes when Paul Furlong was brought down by Byron Anthony.

Matthew Spring was forced to retake his spot-kick twice by fussy referee Fred Graham, but finally his third successful conversion was allowed to stand.

Luton came close on 50 minutes when Chris Coyne headed Darren Currie's free-kick across goal and Furlong just failed to apply a decisive touch. Rovers replied with a Steve Elliott header from the corner, which Currie had to hack off the line.

Elliott then had a shot brilliantly saved by Forde. The keeper also kept out a Lambert header on 81 minutes but was then beaten from the resultant corner as Lambert headed home for the winner.

Pirates' boss Paul Trollope said: "It wasn't just the volley, it was the height the ball came down, dropping out of the sky.

"It was wonderful technique and a fantastic strike. He has scored some great goals for us and the two he got here count among them."

Even Luton boss Kevin Blackwell had to admire the quality of the execution.

He said: "It was a wonder strike and I'm sure it will be shown time and time again on television.

"As soon as it left his boot we knew it was in, it's just a shame it was against us and not for us."

Blackwell said: "It was a near faultless performance in the first half but I still don't think we did enough in the final third.

"Bristol Rovers knew they were coming to a fortress and sat back, trying to get something with a penalty or set-play and that's what happened."

Trollope added: "It was a well-executed away performance. We had to defend with shape and we did that.

"They had a lot of possession around the halfway line in the first half but when the ball came into the area we dealt with it well.

"Rickie gave us the perfect start with a great goal and we were disappointed with the penalty because it was a bit of a rash challenge from Byron.

"The second half we said if we could get a bit of possession and get at them we knew we could hurt them from set-pieces, and we went close three or four times before we got the winner."