

A point apiece was fair result, says Pilkington

Tamworth 1 Luton Town 1

GOALSCORING centre-back George Pilkington admitted that a point apiece at Tamworth on Saturday was probably the right result, writes Carl Field.

Pilkington's early headed opener was cancelled out by Des Lyttle on 68 minutes at the Lamb and halted Luton's nine-game winning run.

Reflecting on the result, he said: "I think we probably scored against the run of play in the first half and we didn't really perform as well as we could do, it was difficult going up the slope.

"Obviously they are more used to the pitch than we are and they played some good football, without really hurting us.

"After going 1-0 up I thought maybe second half we could have kicked on a bit but we didn't really start playing football until Kevin Gallen came on and it just wouldn't drop for us.

"The good winning run is over but obviously we've not lost and we just kick on to the next game now. The lads are all disappointed that we've not won but we've got to brush ourselves down and get on with it."

Luton took time to get into their stride, but grabbed the lead completely against the run of play on 15 minutes, when Keith Keane's corner found centre-back Pilkington, who headed home his sixth goal of the campaign.

"It's nice to reach the half dozen, I would have liked a few more and probably should have hit double figures with the chances I've had," said the defender.

"It's obviously nice to score but



GET IN THERE: George Pilkington makes his presence felt for the opening goal against Tamworth. Picture by Gareth Owen

I would have gladly sacrificed that for another three points today, but it wasn't to be."

Tamworth got their equaliser two minutes before the hour mark and, on the balance of play, it was fully deserved.

Luton failed to clear their lines after a game of head tennis inside their own box, which allowed Lyttle to score with a scuffed shot from 10 yards.

And Pilkington admitted he was disappointed in the manner in which they conceded the goal,

saying: "We had a few chances to clear it when it was bouncing around.

"I think me and Tom (Craddock) tried to clear it, the ball has hit his arm and bounced down to their lad, who has got the worst connection on it ever, but it's ended up in the back of the net.

"That's the way it goes in football sometimes. To be fair to them, they probably deserved a bit of luck, they worked very hard and did well defensively and got their blocks in."

The state of the pitch at the Lamb was always going to make it difficult for the Hatters to play their natural free-flowing football, but Pilkington wasn't using that an excuse for dropping points.

He said: "When we were walking round before the game, and from here, it looks lovely, it looks like it has a lot of grass on it – but it's very bobbly and very dry.

"It was tough for us to play the way we wanted to but we weren't 110 per cent at it today like we have been in previous weeks."

Stevenage's 2-0 win over Forest Green means the Hatters slipped four points off the pace in the race for the Blue Square Premier title on Saturday evening.

The result meant that, bar a late collapse from the Broadhall Way outfit, Luton will be contesting the end of season play-offs.

But Pilkington said the Hatters are not too bothered by what is going on elsewhere.

He said: "We've just got to concentrate on what we do, it's as simple as that. Their results and the way they play is out of our hands.

"All the manager keeps saying is to get as many points as we can until the end of the season.

"That's what we've been trying to do, and recent results speak for themselves."

It emerged after the game that striker Kevin Gallen felt his hip in training on Friday, so was not risked from the start.

Claude Gnaka, meanwhile, was substituted after 27 minutes with a hamstring problem.

For a full match report visit our website at www.lutontoday.co.uk