

10/11



LUTON TOWN 3

Pilkington 23, Kroca 38, Barnes-Homer 49

AFC WIMBLEDON 0



BY GEORGE, IT'S CAPTAIN FAN-TASTIC..

By Richard Brown



SUPER skipper
George Pilkington
pleaded with
Hatters boss
Richard Money
not to move him

from midfield after he ran the show in this emphatic win.

The versatile star, 28, is preferred at centre-half, but starred in the middle with the Hatters missing suspended ace Keith Keane. Pilkington put Luton ahead with a fine header from Andy Drury's 23rd minute corner. Dons defender Ismail Yakubu should have done better but the captain picked out the top corner with the Wimbledon man in front of him.

Luton, who moved up to third on the back of the easy three points against the leaders, never looked back after the opener.

They soon added a second when Czech central defender Zdenek Kroca somehow got his header in on goal with the long throw not properly defended with seven minutes of the first half remaining.

The away fans claimed their chances to get back into it. Steven Gregory hit Mark Tyler's crossbar a minute after the hosts doubled their own box.

Though Wimbledon had their chances to get back into it. Steven Gregory hit Mark Tyler's crossbar a minute after the hosts doubled their lead.

Danny Kedwell, the leading scorer this term, should have found a way through just before the break but the Luton keeper threw his face in the way of the striker's fierce



PHYSICAL: Luton scorer Matthew Barnes-Homer, right, gets to the ball ahead of AFC Wimbledon's Steven Gregory

shot. After the break Terry Brown's Dons team simply pressed the self-destruct button.

From their own throw 20-yards from their goal, they lost possession.

The excellent Taiwo Atieno eventually played in Matthew Barnes-Homer and the England C forward found Brown's bottom right-hand corner. Job done.

Realistically it was already game over but Wimbledon didn't give up hope.

Defender Yakubu twice watched his header fall into the grateful arms of Tyler.

Then Sam Hatton's free-kick was brilliantly saved by the glesman to preserve his clean sheet.

After the game, man of the match Pilkington urged the boss to

keep faith with him in central midfield.

He said: "I'm really enjoying my football and I love to play a bit further up the field."

"It's where I want to be but it's down to the manager - I'm happy to be kept filling in and we played very well. I think it works, so we'll see what happens."

Wimbledon manager Brown was annoyed with his teams inability to cope under pressure inside their own box after slipping to their second defeat of the season.

He said: "We couldn't cope with the direct play from their throws and their corners and that's the frustrating thing from our point of view."

"Luton hardly had to work for

MATCH STATS

LUTON v AFC W'DON

7	SHOTS ON TARGET	6
6	SHOTS OFF TARGET	6
7	CORNERS	9
4	OFFSIDE	9
17	FOULS CONCEDED	7
1	YELLOW CARDS	1
0	RED CARDS	0

STAR MAN: George Pilkington (Luton)

ATT: 7,282
ENTERTAINMENT: *****
REF RATING: Rob Whithorn 8/10

LUTON: Tyler 8, Newton 6, Blackett 6, Kroca 7, P. Murray 6, Gralapa 6, G. Pilkington 8, Howells 6, Drury 7, Barnes-Homer (Walker 88), Atieno 7. Subs not used: K. Pilkington, A. Murray, Asadu-Adigbo, Ono.
AFC WIMBLEDON: Brown 6, Atieno 6, Yakubu 5, Harris 7, Blackman 5, Jackson 5, Gregory 5, S. Moore 5, Mann 79, G. Minshall 6, Yusuf 56, G. Jolley 6, Wellhall 56, G. Kedwell 6. Subs not used: Turner, Nwagwu.

their goals and the least you have to do when coming to Kenilworth Road is make yourself difficult to break down.

"If we would have got the simple things right in our own box it may have been a different story but we have to be stronger from set plays."

"But we kept playing and your keeper has had a fantastic night. I don't know how we didn't score."

Luton manager Money was delighted with his team's ability to kill the game.

He said: "Certain games require a certain game plan and we carried out that very well."

"We got our goals just at the right time. There were good performances all over the pitch and we scored at great times."

HE'S THE MAN:
George Pilkington, left, celebrates with Jake Howells after scoring the first goal for Luton
PICTURES: Action Images

No glamour, but this team has got legs

WITH the M25 a late Friday afternoon treat, what better chance for the NLP to test-drive Premier Sports for ourselves?

I took the chance to check out their coverage in the company of AFC Wimbledon fans at a rammed Kingsmeadow.

Sam Elliott's TV View...

It seems I wasn't the only one whose original plans were stuck in second gear.

OK, let's be honest. Premier Sports are on a budget. That's obvious from the outset - the gantry acts

as their studio. And the obvious lack of cameras inside the stadium are a clear give away that this is a slow burner.

Unlike Setanta there's a lack of glitz and glamour, a lot to do with the absence of a certain blonde pitchside piece that used to light up

even the dullest match two years ago!

But they have done their sums and they are doing this properly.

But with the signature of Steve Bower, an excellent and well-versed commentator, their venture has legs.