

MATTY TO

11/12 (SAT)

Blair strikes at the death to

By Stuart Hammonds

EXTRA-TIME was looming and Luton fans, having seen Robbie Willmott level the tie for them late in the first half, had just started to tell everyone that whatever would be, it would be them going to Wembley.

The famous cup anthem was still rippling down from Kenilworth Road's main stand when York left-back Jamal Fyfield whipped in a wonderful cross from just in front of the most vocal of the home support and Matty Blair headed in from six yards. Fifty seconds remained. The Minstermen were going to Wembley. Que sera sera.

For manager Gary Mills, it will be a second chance to lead a team out at the national stadium – but first as a boss.

"To get to Wembley – there is no feeling like it," he said. "I've not been to the new ground and it means everything."

"I'm pleased for my assistant, Darren Goe, because he got Tamworth to the Trophy final but it was played at Villa Park."

"I've actually led a team out at Wembley before, but as a player. When I was at Leicester, I got injured and Brian Little asked me to take the side out for the 1994 play-off final against Derby to get into the Premier League."

"That was fantastic, but as a manager it'll be something else. I'll have that on my CV now but I only want to go there and win. I've lost there as a player and it's not nice."

The prize of a third trip to Wembley in three years seemed to be slipping from York's grasp when the Hatters came flying out of the traps to make it 1-1 on aggregate two minutes from the end of a first-half they dominated, inspired by a re-energised Keith Keane in midfield.

Willmott slotted home from ten yards after Danny Crow had capitalised on Danny Parslow's error to unsealably set the ex-Cambridge winger up.

But it was Mills' decision to withdraw striker Jason Walker, whose every touch – and there weren't many – was booed on his first return to Bedfordshire, and introduce wide-man Ashley Chambers at half-time that

THE RESCUE

send York into Wembley final

The ex-Leicester youngster was soon troubling Curtis Osano and he might have scored three in his first ten minutes on the pitch, the best chance coming in the 56th minute when he beat the right-back, centre-halves George Pilkington and Janos Kovacs and keeper Mark Tyler – but also the post.

Luton boss Gary Brabin took off striker Stuart Fleetwood midway through the half and replaced him with midfielder Adam Watkins.

The home fans' boos and chants of "You don't know what you're doing" told him what they thought of the decision, but their side started to probe once again and City keeper Michael Ingham had to turn Willmott's 20-yard curling free-kick around the post.

"I understand their frustration," said Brabin, "but Stu's been struggling with his ankle of late and we have to look after our players. It was certainly a toss-up between him and Crowy (to come off), but Crowy gives us more physical presence up front."

"We got back on top and created

chances to increase our lead, but fell for the sucker punch at the end."

Jamie Reed might have already restored the advantage he gave York a week ago when he flicked Blair's right-wing cross straight at Tyler with ten minutes to go.

But it was the latter who did just

that – giving Luton little time to recover – when he nodded Fyfield's perfect delivery past the Hatters' stopper.

"I've said to Jamal that was one of the best left-back performances I've seen for a long, long time," said Mills. "The cross was one of the best you'll ever see."

"Blair will keep running all day and he's got himself in there for another goal."

"There'll be a few sore heads tomorrow, the players will have Monday off and then we'll get ready for Southport next Saturday and making sure we're in those play-offs for another chance to get to Wembley."

STAR MAN: Jamal Fyfield (Luton)

ATE: 5,706

ENTERTAINMENT: *****

REF RATING: Andy Woolmer 7/10



HOPE: Robbie Willmott celebrates Luton's goal



QUE SERA SERA: Matty Blair scores York's crucial goal with just 50 seconds remaining



WE'RE GOING TO WEMBLEY: City players celebrate in the changing room after the game

MATCH STATS

YORK v LUTON

7 SHOTS ON TARGET	3
7 SHOTS OFF TARGET	5
10 CORNERS	1
4 OFFSIDE	3
15 FOULS CONCEDED	17
1 YELLOW CARDS	3
0 RED CARDS	0

LUTON: 4-4-2: Tyler 7; Osano 6; Kovacs 6; Pilkington 6; Taylor 7; Willmott 7; Keane 5; Lawless 6; Howards 7; Fleetwood 5; Watkins 6; 71, Crow 6. Subs not used: Blackett, O'Connor, Henry, Woolmer.

YORK: 4-3-3: Ingham 7; Chalmers 6; Smith 6; Parslow 7; Fyfield 6; Keane 5; Brown 24; 65, McLaughlin 7; Meredith 6; Blair 7; Walker 5; Chambers 46; 71, Reed 6; Blomfontein 50; 33. Subs not used: Mutsaers, Oig.

gave them a foothold back in the game.