

READ SAVES VITAL POINT

Cardiff 0, Luton 0: By TUDOR JAMES

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TONY READ, the goalkeeper Luton were prepared to let go on a free transfer last season, was the hero of this vital match.

Read, 26, was an impregnable barrier between the strong-raiding Cardiff forwards and the goal which never came.

And he brought this praise from manager Alec Stock: "He did some wonderful work and seemed to be enjoying every minute of it, giving the team a ring of confidence."

Like a well-paced battle between two heavyweight boxers, both teams stood toe-to-toe, slogging it out to the bitter end. A draw was a fair result, and a double boost to Luton's promotion hopes. "It was our most

valuable point of the season and certainly the toughest game since we gained promotion last season" said Stock.

Cardiff's biggest crowd of 26,689 went home disappointed. They are still smarting under the blow of losing £111,000 striker John Toshack to Liverpool.

Without him Cardiff failed to crack the iron-clad Luton defence, so well-generalised by centre half Chris Nichol.

Luton's powerful striker Malcolm Macdonald was always in the picture and he failed to add to his tally of seventeen goals this season only because Cardiff's Don Murray was at his devastating best

Luton's triple-tower defenders, John Ryan Nicholl and Alan Slough, kept the goal-hungry Cardiff forwards at bay, and the home side had a big scare after twenty minutes.

Stealing the ball from the converging defenders, Macdonald was robbed by Cardiff's best player, Mel Sutton, who almost turned the ball into his own goal.

The crowd rose to a thrilling fifty-yard sprint between Macdonald and Sutton before the Cardiff man almost arrogantly robbed Luton's crack shot as he sped for goal.

There was also a splendid Luton build-up before David Court missed a sitter. He fell in the goalmouth when a score seemed certain.

Luton full back John Ryan hit a thunderous shot which crashed against the post with Cardiff's goalkeeper Jim Eadie hopelessly wrongfooted.