

Rare Davies home goal is shrouded in mystery

BY FIONA FIRTH
AT SALTERGATE

IT was Kevin Davies' first home League goal in nearly two years - but nobody saw him score it.

In fact, no-one - not even the players and officials - saw much of anything as thick fog swirled into Saltergate.

But referee Phil Richards' eyes must have been playing tricks on him when he gifted Luton a penalty equaliser, for a "foul" which Chesterfield's Chris Perkins clearly - even in the gathering gloom - didn't commit.

Chesterfield were by far the livelier side, pinning back second placed Luton for long periods and creating some encouraging chances.

Inch perfect

They took the lead on 15 minutes after Chris Beaumont on the right hand edge of the box sent an inch perfect cross to the far post, and a shadowy figure moved in to head home.

As debates raged around the ground, it was a further 15 minutes before Davies was confirmed as the scorer - after a "runner" was despatched from the press box to check with photographers behind the goal. Soon after, Steve

CHESTERFIELD 1 LUTON 1

Goals: Davies (15) for Chesterfield; Thorpe (40) for Luton.

CHESTERFIELD: Mercer 7, Hewitt 8, Jules 7, Perkins 7, Williams 7, Carr 7, Beaumont 8, Davies 8, Gaughan 7, Patterson 6, Dunn 6. Subs: Howard for Gaughan (76). Unused: Lund, Lomas.

LUTON: Feuer 8, James 6, Patterson 6, Waddock 6, Davis 6, Johnson 6, Hughes 6, Alexander 6, Oldfield 6, Thorpe 7, Showler 6. Subs: Grant for Oldfield (80). Unused: Linton, Marshall.

Referee: Phil Richards (Blackburn).

Attendance: 3,731.

Bookings: Davis, Patterson (Luton).

Gaughan came agonisingly close to making it 2-0 when he beat Luton keeper Ian Feuer but his shot ricocheted off the inside of the post.

Luton looked tame by contrast with a free kick, blasted over the bar by Paul Showler, their only real threat before the controversial penalty.

That came on 40 minutes when Luton's Tony Thorpe appeared to push Perkins. The pair parted company then moved in close again and Thorpe took a dive. Perkins, with his arms by his side, appeared not to have touched him but the referee pointed to the spot and Thorpe scored - much to the quiet confusion of Luton fans, who were straining to see from the other end of the pitch.

An abandonment looked likely at the interval, with both goalkeepers and linesmen complaining

of poor visibility. Half-time was extended by 15 minutes and, when referee Richards made a 9pm inspection, the fog had lifted a little.

Chesterfield had the better of things in the second half with Feuer continuing to save Luton from going behind again. He blocked Davies on 58 minutes and seven minutes later the 6ft 7in keeper dived to his left to push away what had looked a sure-fire winner from Jamie Hewitt.

As the fog closed in again, Spireites kept up the pressure but could not get the breakthrough they deserved and were denied a penalty appeal in the closing stages when Steve Davis leapt on to Jonathan Howard in the area.

Manager John Duncan said afterwards: "We did well against a decent side who did not seem to do anything much on the night."



Kevin Davies forces a way through