

Cup dreams shattered by Hatters



POINTING THE WAY: Ipswich Town's Mick Stockwell has his shirt tugged by Luton defender Gavin McGowan at Kenilworth Road last night
Photographs: PROSPORT

**Luton Town 4
Ipswich Town 2**
(Luton win 5-4 on aggregate)
by **TONY GARNETT**

Town crash out after goal spree

IPSWICH Town went out of the Worthington Cup in a most amazing second-round second-leg tie at Kenilworth Road last night.

Seemingly comfortable with a two-goal overall advantage at the interval thanks to a strike by David Johnson in the 35th minute, Ipswich then found Luton just too hot to hold.

Andrew Fotiadis and inspirational skipper Steve Davis scored for the Hatters in the 52nd and 84th minute to take this dramatic tie into extra time.

In the first period James Scowcroft squandered a great chance of putting Ipswich back into the lead before a header from Steve Davis sent the Hatters fans delirious with delight in the ninth minute of extra time.

Ipswich decided to throw everything into attack for the final 15 minutes, bringing on Alex Mathie in a three-pronged attack.

Two minutes from the end it looked as though Ipswich had saved their bacon. An own goal by Steve Davis made it 3-2 to Luton on the night – and the away goal would have been enough to see Ipswich into the third round.

Davis was attempting to clear a cross from Danny Sonner and it must have been galling for him to see the ball beat his namesake Kelvin in the home goal.

The spirited Hatters refused to give up and in the very last minute Marvin Johnson, a powerful figure, rose at the far post to head Luton back into the lead and into the third round. It left Ipswich wondering just what had befallen them.

Kieron Dyer had a marvellous match and did not deserve to be on the losing side but Ipswich were knocked out of their usual smooth stride by the sheer enthusiasm of the Second Division team.

One thing is sure, no club will fancy a third-round trip to Kenilworth Road if the Hatters can reproduce the same sort of never-say-die spirit displayed last night.

Ipswich have the consolation that they will now be able to concentrate on winning promotion without distraction but there is no doubt that they will miss the revenue from potential ties in later rounds.

Ipswich had sprung two surprises before the start. Bobby Petta passed a late fitness test on the tight hamstring that was expected to keep him sidelined and Mark Venus also returned after hamstring trouble, taking the place of Jamie Clapham, who was dropped for the first time this season.

As the Ipswich players came out to have a look at the pitch

before the start in their smart club blazers, the sprinklers started and they dispersed in some confusion.

Ipswich began well enough with James Scowcroft high and wide from an angle following a cross by David Johnson and Matt Holland getting in a long shot which caused no real trouble for Kelvin Davis. There was more threat to Luton from a solo run by Manuel Thetis, who was unlucky to be caught offside.

The Hatters gained in confidence and in the 16th minute their highly-promising midfielder Matthew Spring unleashed a rocket of a low drive from 25 yards that Richard Wright dived to hold just inside his right-hand post.

Four minutes later there was another hiccup in the Ipswich defence when Thetis hesitated momentarily. Stuart Douglas saw his chance to burst forward but he put his shot wide of Wright's left-hand post.

It needed a marvellous instinctive save from Wright to block a close-range shot from Douglas in the 25th minute after a positive run by Fotiadis had led to a cross from the right. The ball flew out to Spring whose shot from the edge of the penalty area was too high.

Dyer had a free role and

combined well with Mick Stockwell down the right and in the 35th minute Ipswich broke the ice with another special goal from David Johnson.

A throw on the Ipswich right was picked up by Dyer, whose cross was touched on to Johnson by strike partner Scowcroft. Johnson let fly with a low drive through a crowded penalty area that beat Kelvin Davis via the inside of the foot of the keeper's left-hand post.

There were no substitutions at the interval and in the 47th minute Ipswich almost put the tie out of Luton's reach with a Venus header from a cross by Petta.

Two minutes later Douglas took a spectacular fall when challenged in the Ipswich box by Venus. For a split second it looked as though the referee had awarded a spot kick. In fact he called Douglas over and showed him a yellow card for diving.

It was hard to see from the Press box exactly what had happened but the referee was close to the action.

Kelvin Davis deflected an angled drive from Johnson but the loose ball flew just out of

the reach of Stockwell.

Luton pulled themselves back into the tie with a goal after 52 minutes. Fotiadis had a simple task to slide the ball into an empty net after Douglas had challenged Thetis and left the Ipswich defence in disarray.

Ipswich were showing plenty of urgency and a great move between Holland and Petta sent Dyer sprinting to the byline. He pulled the ball back for Johnson but there was no end product.

Another good Ipswich move in the 64th minute saw Stockwell provide a diagonal pass for Petta, whose cross ended with a header by Scowcroft being deflected wide.

Ipswich had a scare in the 67th minute. Firstly Sean Evers released Fotiadis down the right. He outpaced Venus

but Thetis saved the day with a lunging sliding tackle.

Then there was further Luton pressure with Wright making a reflex save to deal with a powerful close-range header from Steve Davis.

With 10 minutes to go Luton pushed their powerful skipper Davis into attack and this seemed to give them extra fire.

Thetis was booked for a foul on Douglas in the 82nd minute and two minutes later the Hatters scored a second to tie things up overall.

Douglas scored the goal after Davis had put him through with a splendid ball. The Luton striker drew Wright off his line and wrong-footed two defenders before firing home. So the tie went into extra time.

In the fifth minute

Scowcroft had a chance to put Ipswich back ahead. A run by Stockwell made the opening and Scowcroft, with six goals in his previous five games, could hardly believe that he had fired wide.

Luton's young substitute Jimmy Cox was booked and in the ninth minute of extra time Ipswich fell behind. A corner by Graham Alexander was headed home by danger man Steve Davis.

In the second period of extra time Ipswich thought they had pulled the rabbit out of the hat with a Steve Davis own goal.

The Luton captain's despair was quickly forgotten as his fellow central defender Marvin Johnson rose to head home his first goal of the season at the other end with extra time virtually over.



HOT-SHOT: Matt Holland fires in a shot during last night's exciting Worthington Cup tie

Worthington Cup, second round, second leg

Luton Town 4 Ipswich Town 2

After extra time. Aggregate score: 5-4

1 K Davis	7	SUBSTITUTES
2 Alexander	8	12 McIndoe
3 McGowan	7	Not used
4 Spring	7	13 Abbey
5 S Davis	8	Not used
6 M JOHNSON	8	14 Cox
7 McKinnon	6	(for Marshall, 68)
8 Evers	7	15 Bacque
9 Douglas	8	(for Fotiadis, 74)
10 Fotiadis	7	16 White
11 Marshall	6	(for McKinnon, 80)

GOALS	BOOKINGS
Fotiadis 52mins	Douglas (49 mins, unsporting behaviour)
Douglas 84	Cox (98 mins, foul)
S Davis 99	
M Johnson 119	

Match stats
Corners 7
Offsides 5
Fouls conceded 13
Shots on goal 11
Shots off target 19
Formation: 4-4-2
Weather: Autumnal

1 Wright	7	SUBSTITUTES
2 Stockwell	7	12 Mathie
3 Taricco	7	(for Stockwell, 104)
4 Tanner	6	13 Bracey
5 Thetis	6	Not used
6 Venus	6	14 Sonner
7 DYER	8	(for Taricco, 105)
8 Holland	7	15 Clapham
9 D Johnson	7	(for Petta, 78)
10 Scowcroft	6	16 Holster
11 Petta	6	Not used

GOALS	BOOKINGS
D Johnson 35	Thetis (foul on Douglas, 82)
S Davis og 118	

Match stats
Corners 8
Offsides 9
Freekicks 15
Shots on goal 7
Shots off target 17
Formation: 4-4-2
Pitch: Good

DATE: Tuesday, September 22, 1998 VENUE: Kenilworth Road
REFEREE: Mr Paul Taylor (Cheshunt) 8 ATTENDANCE: 5,655