

Lawrence takes heart as Luton snatch it, by George!

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Pressure mounts on Burns after new signings fail to impress

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LUTON manager Lennie Lawrence saw his side go joint top of the Second Division table after Liam George poached a winner in the closing minutes.

Two wins and a draw gives Lawrence hope for the long season ahead, in total contrast to Reading manager Tommy Burns who is already under pressure from the fans after one win and two defeats.

Last season Burns used 46 different players and in the current campaign he has used 19 already in his search for a winning combination.

On Friday Burns signed Peter Grant from Norwich and Neil Smith from Fulham. They both started the game and summer signing Nicky Forster came on as a second-half substitute to make his debut up front.

But in truth it was more of the same for the Berkshire's side's fans.

They saw their team start well, lose their way and then throw the points away with a defensive blunder five minutes from time.

Chris Casper, in for the injured John Polston, made a hash of an attempted clearance and the ball ran for a throw in.

Reading were caught napping by Luton's quick throw and when Michael McIndoe's cross came over from the left George got there first to squeeze his shot under the body of goalkeeper Scott Howie.

Local lad Andrew Fotiadis had



EQUALIZER: Martin Williams scored Reading's leveller only to see his side lose

earlier headed Luton in front nine minutes after the interval only to see Martin Williams, released by Luton as a youngster, hit Reading's equaliser two minutes later.

The warning signs were there for Reading to see as early as the 11th minute when Howie was forced to stretch to his full height to tip Matthew Taylor's free-kick over the bar.

Then Fotiadis created a chance for Phil Gray only to see him shoot

straight at Howie. Reading did have one or two chances of their own but Smith shot tamely wide on the half hour and Jim McIntyre did the same six minutes later.

Forster gave Reading some hope with a couple of lively runs but each time his shot was comfortably saved by Nathan Abbey.

At the close few in the crowd would deny that Luton deserved their victory.

Reading: Howie, Gurney, Hunter, Casper, Gray, Smith, Caskey, Grant, Scott, Williams, McIntyre. Subs: Forster, Van der Kwaak, Bernal, Haddow, Crawford.

Luton: Abbey, Doherty, Watts, Johnson, Fraser, Spring, McLaren, Taylor, Gray, George, Fotiadis. Subs: Sodge, White, McIndoe, McKinnon, Tate.

Referee: Steve Bennett (Orpington).