

BILL COLE reports. Pics IAN MILES

Andy's beauty gives Hatters a handy point

THE Hatters had the best of this match but had to settle for a point after a spirited finish just failed to produce a winner as they stretched their unbeaten run to four games.

The home side were outclassed in the first half, but typical of a newly promoted side, the Millers fought like mad after the interval and had their reward with a 65th minute equaliser from former Manchester United striker Mark Robins.

Town's early play had brought them a lovely sixth minute goal by Andrew Fotiadis, and they twice hit the woodwork in the second half and their grandstand finish certainly deserved more reward.

Town started in bright fashion and could have been two goals to the good before Fotiadis did open the scoring.

Matthew Spring burst through a group of defenders, the ball reaching Mark Stein who pulled a reasonable chance wide. Then Stein was very unlucky when he anticipated a near post cross from Matthew Taylor. He flicked a shot that flashed narrowly over the bar.

A minute later Fotiadis was on target. A square Peter Holmes pass was allowed to run into his stride by the young striker when Guy

Rotherham Utd 1
Luton Town 1

Branston over-committed himself. He took it on and slotted it into the bottom corner of the net in elegant style.

Spring and Taylor both had powerful shots straight at Ian Gray before a neat passing movement from the totally dominant Hatters took the ball the width of the pitch twice. A neat through ball found Stein who let the ball get away. He recovered to feed Andre Scarlett whose close range shot was blocked, and from the resulting corner a Fotiadis header grazed a post.

The move of the match came on 26 minutes when a spot on long ball from Adam Locke was headed on by Fotiadis to Stein who was most unfortunate to see a fine overhead kick drift wide with Gray beaten.

Rotherham at last found some space in attack. On 30 minutes Kevin Watson's shot was brilliantly blocked by an inspired Julian Watts, playing against his old club.

There was a sign of things to come when Robins got the better of Taylor and crossed for the big ex-Stevenage Borough striker Leo Fortune-West to somehow head wide.

It was injury time at the half before Robins forced Mark

Ovendale to make his first save of the game.

United came out firing on all cylinders having had a feet blistering half time talk from manager Ronnie Moore.

Fortune-West produced their best effort to date with a 20 yard shot that Ovendale dealt with well and the home crowd roared for penalties, when Scarlett appeared to handle and for a McLaren tackle.

The Millers equalised when a Paul Hurst shot was palmed away at full stretch by Ovendale only for master poacher Robins to cash in from a yard out.

Up at the other end good work by Tresor Kandol, on as a second half substitute for the limping Fotiadis allowed Taylor to cross dangerously only for Hurst to head over his own cross-bar when the ball could have gone anywhere.

In the two minutes of stoppage time, George selfishly hit the side, and then forced a desperate save from Gray. Kandol beat Gray with a shot that trickled inches wide of the far post.

Luton Town: Ovendale, Locke, Watts, Boyce, Taylor, Holmes (Brennan 65), Scarlett, Spring, McLaren, Fotiadis (Kandol 46), Stein (George 81). Sub not used Abbey, Sterling.

**Attendance: 4061.
603 away fans.**



■ Tresor Kandol (above left) challenges for the ball at Rotherham, while Matthew Spring (below left) is embroiled in a pushing match



Johnson looking for Cup return at Posh

LUTON face a difficult Worthington Cup tie at Peterborough on Tuesday, but manager Ricky Hill is optimistic about the outcome.

He said: "After the first leg draw at Kenilworth Road, it is a one-off game which we will approach like any other game.

"Let's see if we can create opportunities to score goals against a team which has proved itself to be a good side.

"They have adjusted quite quickly to life in a higher division where everyone, it seems, is capable of beating everyone else. There are wildly inconsistent results coming week on week.

"They are capable of stretching you with pace upfront, as they showed in the second half of the first leg.

"I am not going to be over-cautious. We start with a clean sheet and we just need to take a little bit of care when we have the ball in our possession because their strength is in their counter attacking."

Marvin Johnson could be fit after a hamstring injury and Stuart Fraser is due back at the club tomorrow after Scotland Under 21 team duty in Latvia, but whether either will force a change to the starting line-up against Posh is open to doubt.

"Johnson completed 75-80 per cent of a hard training session on Wednesday and although he left with a slight ache in the problem area, physio Clive Goodyear believes it hasn't damaged him in any way," said Hill.

"We will see if there has been any reaction before we decide the next step for him. Setbacks aside, both are will be in the reckoning for the local derby with

Northampton at home on Saturday.

"Northampton are certainly scoring goals. I have known Jamie for some years, since he was playing for the England under 21s with the likes of Sol Campbell, and I am aware of his abilities. He is of no great stature, but he is very bright, has quick feet and a good eye for goal. We will have to keep tabs on him and his colleagues."

Despite reports, the Luton manager has not spoken to two big front men. "I was approached by an agent about Ritchie Barker of Macclesfield, who I knew him as a young boy said Hill.

"He must have improved because he was not known as a prolific goalscorer at Sheffield Wednesday. He has got a lovely temperament, but may cost a lot of money. I haven't spoken either to him or his club.

"The same goes for Ade Adebola. I have a great respect for him, but whether he is within our budget, considering the sort of money he must be getting at Birmingham, is extremely doubtful.

"I am still looking for another front player to compliment Mark Stein, Andrew Fotiadis, Liam George and Stuart Douglas - a target man if you like, because Tresor Kandol isn't experienced enough to start games at the moment.

"He showed that he can handle himself in the first team arena at Wycombe. He still needs to learn more about his general play and off the ball moves, but he came on and caused them problems.

"He is making strides in the right direction and if he takes on board the advice he is offered, his future is bright. We feel the all-round improvement he has shown warrants an extension his contract until the end of this season at least."



■ Mobbed: Andy Fotiadis enjoys the aftermath of his goal at Rotherham