

Steve Phillips — Made some very good stops, without ever needing to be too spectacular **7**

Scott Murray — Dangerous in spells, though seldom hit top form; he supplied the cross for Brown's second **7**

Joe Burnell — Fought well but will be disappointed at finding himself exposed too frequently **5**

Louis Carey — Best of the centre-backs, but found himself backtracking for much of the time **6**

Matt Hill — Kept the left side of defence fairly tight, though found himself stretched too often **5**

Mickey Bell — Produced the occasional threat but didn't see too much of the ball in his customary left berth **5**

Simon Clist — Struggled to take command of the midfield, though he did make one terrific goal-line clearance **5**

Brian Tinnion — Not as influential or clinical as he has been, though got forward well on occasions to try his luck at goal **6**

Aaron Brown — STAR MAN **7**

Laurenco Da Silva — Showed promise although his distribution, perhaps not surprisingly, was awry at times **5**

Lee Peacock — Put himself about well up front but didn't trouble keeper Mark Ovendale too often **6**

Ratings are compiled on the assumption that a professional footballer earning his money is worth a five. The marks are a reflection of the opinion of our reporter at the match.

Star Man

AARON BROWN — Like his team-mates has had more creative days generally, but deserves the plaudits for his two goals and supply of City's third



Substitutions

Kevin Amankwaah (for Burnell, 46 mins) **5**
Tony Thorpe (for Da Silva, 54 mins) **6**
Neil Maddison (for Clist, 60 mins) **6**
Not used: Danny Coles, Albano Correia

Opposition file

Luton (4-4-2)

Mark Ovendale **5**
Paul Shepherd **6**
Richard Dryden **6**
Emmerson Boyce **7**
Marvin Johnson **6**
Petri Helin **6**
Matt Spring **7**
Paul McLaren **7**
Matthew Taylor **6**
Liam George **6**
Steve Howard **5**

Substitutions

Stuart Douglas (for Howard, 73 mins)
Mark Stein (for George, 73 mins)
Adam Locke (for Helin, 76 mins)
Not used: Scott Ward, Julian Watts

Who's next?

City's remaining game
May 5 Wigan (a)

Wilson unimpressed by lucky victory

A team with more confidence about them than Luton would have buried us. We weren't sharp enough, committed enough and didn't spot the danger signs quickly enough. I was disappointed with a lot of aspects of our game.

Danny Wilson



Heads I win: Tony Thorpe rises to nod home City's third goal against his former club. Luton keeper Mark Ovendale (above) ponders Aaron Brown's opening strike

There's little to



Close encounter: City's Joe Burnell in action

NO-ONE needed to tell Danny Wilson before this encounter that he will have his work cut out this summer turning Bristol City into genuine promotion challengers next season.

All Saturday's poor performance against Luton did was to confirm his obvious concerns – and possibly add to them – despite the fact his men managed to bring the curtain down on another disappointing home campaign with a victory.

The rhetoric was, of course, spot-on before the game, about how City were determined to finish with a flourish and give their fans some heart to take into a new adventure in August.

Instead, they produced a display that, at times, compared with some of their worst at Ashton Gate over recent seasons.

Just as well the supporters were in party mood, as is traditional on the final day of the home season, because had there been serious issues at stake City would certainly have been given a roasting from the stands, as well as by their manager.

Make no mistake, the performance contained all the inadequacies and frailties

that have been fundamental in City's failure to seriously challenge their play-off rivals, and victory just couldn't disguise the fact.

Wilson knew that better than anyone. Ever the diplomat, he wasn't going to release all his frustrations publicly, but there was no doubting the irritation bubbling beneath that highly-charged exterior.

He confessed: "A team with more confidence about them than Luton would have buried us. We weren't sharp enough, committed enough and didn't spot the danger signs quickly enough."

"I'm not going to say too much but they (the players) know how I feel. I was disappointed with a lot of aspects of our game."

"We really wanted to win this match, not least to get the fans interested in snapping up season tickets, because going out with a win does create a better feeling going into the summer."

He added: "It's always hard to motivate players for this type of game, with Luton already down and nothing resting on it as far as we were concerned."

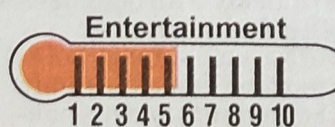
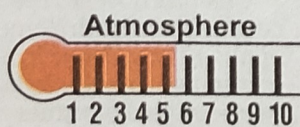
"Luton started pretty well and it sparked us off. In fact Luton had quite a few chances throughout the game and maybe it's the story

Match facts



8	SHOTS ON TARGET:	8
4	SHOTS OFF TARGET:	9
2	CORNERS:	3
8	FOULS CONCEDED:	5
4	OFFSIDES:	8

ATTENDANCE: 9,161



Bookings

City	Luton
None	None

Sendings-off

None	None
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Goals

City	Luton
A Brown (33 and 65 mins), Thorpe (78 mins)	George (59 mins)

Referee

PHIL WALTON... kept the game flowing well



Gate closed for another season: The City fans pictured don't seem too upset by the failure to at least reach the Nationwide League Second Division play-offs and there were special plaudits for young defender Matt Hill, left.



IT'S YOUR SHOUT

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A fan's view by Kevin Brake

It's time for a clear-out

“ I WOULD like to say well done to both sets of fans for observing a minute's silence for 14-year-old City schoolboy player Peter Reeve who died tragically this month.

This was a typical end-of-season game with neither side looking very interested and both sides defending terribly throughout the game.

The only interesting thing that happened in a very drab first half was Aaron Brown's first goal of the season.

At least the second could only get better but City's defending was up to its usual standard with Liam George having plenty of time to turn and shoot past Steve Phillips in the City goal.

But City were to bounce back and Brown doubled his season's tally by heading home just seven minutes later before ex-Hatters striker Tony Thorpe came off the bench to grab his 19th League goal of the campaign.

A few players need to be brought in during the summer – a strong commanding centre half (in the mould of Shaun Taylor), a tough ball-winner in midfield and a striker with pace up front.

The players I feel must go are Mortimer, Lavin, Malessa, Burns and Spencer. The other two players who should depart in my opinion are Keith Millen (he's too slow) and Thorpe.

Except for scoring goals, Thorpe must be the laziest player at the club. I really think it is time for him to go now!

”

celebrate

of their season that they couldn't finish us off, as they threatened to do. As the game went on we got into it, by which time we really could have been soundly beaten.”

Wilson was right to stress that a team genuinely worth its salt in the division would have rubbed it all over the wounds of sorry City. They took an age to string anything like a meaningful move together, so when Aaron Brown thumped home the opening goal on 33 minutes, a mistake by ex-City defender Richard Dryden from Lee Peacock's cross presenting the midfielder with the chance, you felt then City surely had to move swiftly through the gears.

Not a chance. Luton hit back with aplomb, Matt Spring clattering the bar and Steve Howard seeing his header cleared off the line by Simon Clist.

And when, as the relentless pressure continued, Matthew Taylor wormed his way round the back, Steve Phillips did enough to prevent the midfielder lifting the ball over him into an unguarded net.

The Hatters' eight-goal top scorer Liam George, who has been raised through the ranks at Kenilworth Road, began finding some alarming space down the left side in the

second half and having threatened several times to hit the target, he finally did so when a sharp move on the edge of the box ended with the striker sticking his effort, albeit somewhat awkwardly, past Phillips.

City continued to stutter, the lack of passion and drive missing at the start of the game still evident.

However, spirited Luton were finally running out of steam and Brown and Tony Thorpe headers ensured at least the boisterous fans on the pitch at the end of the game had something to celebrate.

Wilson, quite understandably, was in no mood to join them.

Post Verdict

Don't be fooled by the scoreline. Luton were both unfortunate – and wasteful – in their attempt to end City's home season in defeat. A display City's players will want to forget quickly.

Simon Parkinson



Committed: Louis Carey and Luton's Matthew Taylor

The table

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
(P) Millwall	45	27	9	9	84	38	90
(P) Rotherham	45	27	9	9	78	54	90
Reading	45	25	10	10	83	49	85
Walsall	44	21	12	11	74	50	75
Stoke	45	20	14	11	70	48	74
Wigan	45	19	17	9	53	42	74
Bournemouth	45	20	12	13	76	52	72
CITY	45	18	13	14	70	56	67
Notts County	44	18	11	15	58	63	65
Wrexham	45	17	12	16	65	67	63
Peterborough	45	15	13	17	60	65	58
Oldham	45	15	13	17	53	60	58
Bury	45	16	10	19	44	56	58
Port Vale	42	15	12	15	50	45	57
Northampton	45	15	12	18	46	56	57
Colchester	43	15	10	18	51	54	55
Wycombe	44	14	13	17	43	51	55
Brentford	43	13	16	14	51	61	55
Swindon	45	13	13	19	46	61	52
Cambridge	44	13	10	21	58	75	49
Bristol Rovers	43	11	15	17	48	52	48
(R) Luton	44	9	11	24	49	77	38
(R) Swansea	44	7	12	25	40	72	33
(R) Oxford	44	7	5	32	51	97	26