

New-look Luton make mark

01/02

By Steve Dove

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ON THE eve of Luton's first home game in the basement division for over 35 years, Mike Watson-Challis, the club's ambitious chairman, said: "It will be a momentous season for all of us — and that's a promise."

It certainly seems the start of a new era at Kenilworth Road. Seven players who started against Cheltenham were not on the payroll last season, but despite moving to the top of the table, manager Joe Kinnear still wants

the rebuilding progress to continue.

"There could still be a possibility that I may have three or four new faces before we play Reading in the Worthington Cup on Tuesday," Kinnear said.

Luton's new-look squad looked impressive against Cheltenham as Paul Hughes, on a three-month contract after arriving from Southampton, gave the home side a deserved lead after 29 minutes when he coolly slotted home Carl Griffiths' centre.

Griffiths added Luton's second nine minutes later when he latched on to a left-

wing cross from midfielder Kevin Nicholls, after a mistake by Cheltenham defender Steve Jones.

Cheltenham's Neil Howarth reduced the deficit with 20 minutes remaining, but Kinnear's side nervously held on despite having Nicholls sent off for a second bookable offence.

Luton Town: Emberson; Hillier, Boyce, Perrett, Taylor; Forbes (George 63), Nicholls, Hughes, Mansell; Howard (Fotiadis 61), Griffiths (Locke 85). **Subs:** Ovendale (g), Dryden. **Goals:** Hughes 30, Griffiths 37. **Sent off:** Nicholls. **Booked:** Forbes, Howard, Nicholls, Taylor. **Cheltenham Town:** Muggleton; Jones (Howarth 66), Banks, Walker, Victory; Duff, Milton, Yates; McAuley (Grayson 28), Alsop (Naylor 52), Devaney. **Subs:** Higgs (g), White. **Goal:** Howarth 71. **Booked:** Yates. **Referee:** G Hegley (Bishop's Stortford).