

Perrett rescues Hatters

01/02

Luton Town 1 Carlisle United 1

LACK of composure and little luck in front of goal against a modest Carlisle outfit cost the Hatters a couple of points that would have taken them top of Division Three.

The Town made up a point on leaders Plymouth, when Russell Perrett's third goal of the season equalised Steve Soley's opener from a rare visitors attack.

Carlisle had the woodwork to thank three times for getting a draw to follow up a midweek win at Hull.

Matthew Spring, Jean-Louis Valois, Dean Crowe and even full back Emmerson Boyce went

close for Luton in the opening 25 minutes.

Then Crowe beat three men on a mazy dribble and hammered a right foot shot against the bar and over.

On the half hour Matthew Taylor's dangerous cross was sliced over his own bar by Winstanley and from the resulting corner, the Hatters were unlucky again.

Steve Howard, Kevin Nicols and Crowe all had efforts knocked away in a tremendous scramble before Spring fired a shot that rocked against the under side of the bar.

The home side had a scare from Carlisle's first sustained attack on 35 minutes. Taylor was robbed in the act of clearing and when the centre came back out to him Soley netted, only to be pulled back for offside.

Premiership referee Paul Alcock had his usual eccentric match and gave Joe Kinnear a stern lecture when the Town boss took issue with him.

But the referee got things right when he gave a foul against Soley for bundling Mark Ovendale and the ball into the net illegally.

From the restart David Bayliss, Perrett and Ovendale got themselves into a tremendous muddle and were only rescued by Mr Alcock's whistle.

Stuart Green's free kick gave the Town keeper problems before Soley gave Carlisle the lead. Green's 52nd minute corner was only partially cleared, Mark Winstanley headed back towards goal and Soley nipped in to net from close range.

That was the last of Carlisle in attack. For 40 minutes the Town battered away at a massed defence.

Nicols scraped the post with a shot before Perrett did manage to score from Taylor's free kick. It was helped on by Howard and the tall defender leaped high to bulge the back of the net with his header.

As the Town pressed for the winner, substitute Adrian Forbes smashed a header against the woodwork with Peter Keen beaten.

The keeper had to produce a great save to deny Valois and club skipper Marvin Johnson produced a great cross that Forbes and Valois failed to turn in with only a touch required.

Luton Town: Ovendale, Boyce, Perrett, Bayliss, Taylor, Brkovic (Forbes 52), Spring, Nicols, Valois, Howard, Crowe (Johnson 66). Subs not used: Emberson (gk), Skelton, Hughes.

Att: 6647 Luton MoM: Matthew Spring.



■ Goalmaker: Steve Howard got the last touch before Russell Perrett's equaliser