



Foti finishes off hapless Robins

A N O T H E R impressive second half display gave injury-plagued Hatters all three points against bottom-placed Cheltenham Town.

Trailing at the break with two men off injured, Luton deservedly won with goals from Chris Coyne and in-form Andrew Fotiadis.

Both teams were promoted from Division Three last season but on this display the struggling Robins look like heading back there as Luton won their fourth straight league game.

Injured Ian Hillier was replaced by Alan Neilson in defence and Aaron Skelton was handed his first start of the season. Boss Joe Kinnear continued with the 'diamond' that put Skelton playing just in front of the defence and midfielder Matthew Spring given more of a licence to go forward.

Luton took the game to Cheltenham from the outset. After the run of good form, the Kenilworth Road faithful roared the team on for more of the same.

But Cheltenham had not read the script. In their first attack they opened the scoring on 11 minutes.

Strikers Tony Naylor and Julian Allsop were allowed room inside the box and their interplay left winger Russell Milton free on the edge of the box. He neatly tucked the ball into the corner of the net.

It was like a red rag to a bull as Luton applied relentless pressure for an equaliser.

On 16 minutes a long range drive from Skelton worried Robins' keeper Steve Book, who parried over the bar.

Two minutes later came the chance of the half when Paul Hughes played a delicate chip to Fotiadis. One-on-one with Book, Fotiadis' attempted lob sailed wide.

With 20 minutes gone top goalscorer Steve Howard hit the crossbar with a trademark header from five yards out.

Emmerson Boyce's overlapping runs on the right hand side had been causing Cheltenham grief all half and it was his teasing cross that so nearly brought Howard the equaliser.

On 34 minutes Kinnear was forced to replace Hughes due to injury with Peter Holmes and the beginning of the second half saw the introduction of striker Dean Crowe in place of the crocked Neilson.

Luton switched to a 4-3-3 formation in search of a goal with Skelton reverting to centre back in a makeshift defence.

Luton resumed brightly much to the delight of the crowd. With



■ Will the real Andrew Fotiadis please stand up...the Luton striker celebrates his winning goal

so much possession it was not long before Luton gave the crowd what they wanted.

On 54 minutes substitute Holmes teed up a shot from outside the box but overhit the ball. The ball fell to Coyne who finished the job, driving in a sweet volley from 25 yards.

After scoring in his previous two games, Fotiadis' confidence was high but on 57 minutes he missed an absolute sitter. Played through by Holmes, Fotiadis was again one-on-one with Brook.

He seemed to take an age where to place the ball and finally opted to shoot straight into Book's hands.

Fotiadis had the last laugh, scoring the winner on 69 minutes. A rare Cheltenham attack was broken down and Steve Robinson burst through the midfield before releasing Crowe who, despite being forced wide, managed a shot.

The powerful drive was blocked by Book and the ball fell

kindly to Fotiadis, who made up for his previous misses. It was no more than Luton deserved and as the Hatters pushed for three Cheltenham must have prayed for the final whistle. Fortunately for them, the only assault on their goal came with the last kick of the match.

Dynamic Crowe laid a pass on for Howard to chase. His return ball found Crowe at the near post and his diving header was just

wide.

Kinnear was pleased the result. "We got what we deserved. We could have been two or three up at half time with better finishing."

"Lesser sides would not have coped with our long-ball game today."

But the Hatters boss has a mounting injury crisis. "We only have 11 fit players left and we fielded nowhere near our strongest side."

Joe has last word in verbal battle with Valois

JOE Kinnear took one last swipe in a war of words with former Hatters star Jean-Louis Valois.

The temperamental Frenchman, now playing for Hearts, claimed:

■ Luton was only a stepping stone to better things

■ that he only saw Kinnear before and after a match

■ and that the Hatters didn't play the kind of football he liked.

Kinnear responded with: "I wish him all the best". He then added: "I remember he got off to a flyer at the start of last season so only time will tell."

"Once the cold weather starts in Scotland he'll be the first one reaching for

the tights."

n Kinnear could not be happier after left back Sol Davis's tribunal verdict. The deal is a £60,000 down payment followed by an extra £40,000 after 60 games.

The ex-Swindon player is a permanent fixture in the Hatters' line-up and Kinnear said "I'm very pleased with the fee set

by the tribunal. He's definitely one for the future."

Luton will be appealing top scorer Steve Howard's one-match ban received after his fifth yellow card last week at Stockport.

The ban would rule him out of the game with table-topping Oldham, managed by former Hatter Iain Dowie.



MATCH FACTS



LUTON TOWN (4-4-2): Berthlein; Boyce, Coyne, Neilson (Crowe 45m), Davis; Robinson, Spring, Skelton, Hughes (Holmes 34); Howard, Fotiadis (Brkovic 85)
Subs (not used): Emberson, Thorpe

Referee: Clive Penton (Sussex)

GOALSCORERS

Luton: Coyne (54), Fotiadis (69)
Cheltenham: Milton (11)

GOAL ATTEMPTS

Luton: 8
Cheltenham: 4

CORNERS

Luton: 12
Cheltenham: 2

BOOKINGS

Luton: Davis (29)
Cheltenham: -

ATTENDANCE: 6,447

HATTERS' STAR MAN:

CHRIS COYNE

Marshalled makeshift defence superbly

Nationwide Div Two results

Barnsley	1	Bristol City	4
Cardiff	1	Wycombe	0
Chesterfield	1	Tranmere	0
Huddersfield	3	Notts County	0
LUTON	2	Cheltenham	1
Northampton	1	Brentford	2
Peterborough	0	Mansfield	0
Plymouth	1	Wigan	3
Port Vale	1	Oldham	1
Stockport	1	Crewe	4
Swindon	2	Colchester	2

How they stand

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Cardiff	13	8	4	1	20	11	28
Wigan	13	8	3	2	24	10	27
Oldham	13	8	3	2	21	7	27
Crewe	13	7	4	2	21	9	25
Bristol City	13	8	0	5	25	14	24
QPR	12	7	2	3	23	12	23
Chesterfield	13	7	2	4	15	15	23
Blackpool	12	6	3	3	18	11	21
Brentford	13	6	3	4	15	16	21
Luton	13	5	3	5	23	21	18
Stockport	13	5	2	6	15	15	17
Port Vale	13	5	2	6	18	22	17
Plymouth	13	4	4	5	18	20	16
Northampton	13	4	4	5	12	16	16
Tranmere	13	5	1	7	13	22	16
Wycombe	13	4	3	6	16	19	15
Barnsley	13	4	3	6	14	22	15
Peterborough	13	3	4	6	15	15	13
Huddersfield	13	3	4	6	10	17	13
Notts County	13	2	6	5	17	20	12
Colchester	13	3	3	7	8	16	12
Swindon	13	3	2	8	13	20	11
Mansfield	13	3	2	8	19	35	11
Cheltenham	13	2	3	8	13	21	9