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GRIPPING STUFF: Hatters striker Andrew Fotiadis gets his shirt pulled at Chesterfield (left) while top scorer Steve Howard is beaten in the air. Pictures: GARETH OWEN

Embers flames Joe's fury



MISTAKE: Carl Emberson.

UNDERFIRE keeper Carl Emberson was left to carry the can as Luton Town made a losing start to 2003.

An angry Joe Kinnear was scathing in his criticism after Emberson's second-half mistake gifted Chesterfield a 2-1 New Year's Day victory at Chesterfield.

Croatian midfielder Ahmet Brkovic had earlier given the Hatters a seventh-minute lead direct from a corner.

But an Emmerson Boyce blunder and Emberson's gaffe saw Chesterfield hit back with two goals in three second-half minutes to take maximum points.

Kinnear said afterwards: "We need to score two goals every game because there's always a

cock-up coming. The goalkeeper's always going to throw one in.

"The second was an own goal. He punched it in.

"He's got a face like death and thunder because he knows he's lost us the game. It was similar to the mistake he made at Wycombe and was just laughable.

"There's nobody else to blame. There's always a mistake and I know where it's coming from.

"I could write a book on keeper mistakes. He's apologised but there's a million-and-one incidents I could talk about.

"We're always capable of making a cock-up and when it's the goalkeeper doing it you can't legislate for it. He's a big

strong lad who knows he should have punched it away.

"Now it's a toss of a coin whether I bring the other one back. The players lose confidence when you chuck one in.

"Tony Thorpe said afterwards that we should have won it 1-0 worse ways and I agree with him."

Emberson punched into his own net after David Reeves' looping header saw the Hatters keeper, Ian Hillier and Chesterfield's Chris Brandon all jump for the ball.

Initially appeared that Brandon had got the final touch, but Kinnear later confirmed that the goal was the result of an Emberson mistake.

The Hatters boss was also unimpressed by his defence for Chesterfield's equaliser on 53

minutes from Glynn Hurst. He said: "We've gone away demoralised because we always contribute to our own downfall when we get beaten.

"Emmerson Boyce lost possession for the first goal and Hurst ran between the two players meant to be marking him.

"Ian Hillier and Sol Davis went missing. We still had enough on the pitch to win it but if you analyse the two goals they scored we threw it away."

The Hatters should also have taken a greater advantage into the interval after dominating the first-half.

Man-of-the-match Paul Hughes hit the post after just four minutes before Brkovic curled in his left-wing corner, won after a strong run by Andrew

Fotiadis. Fotiadis, Thorpe (twice) and Chris Coyne then all went close to doubling the visitors lead before the break.

And Thorpe fired straight at home keeper Ben Williams two minutes before Chesterfield levelled the scores.

The return of David Bayliss to the Hatters defence as a second-half substitute after a three-month absence provided some encouragement on a disappointing day.

Kinnear said: "We thought David Bayliss in because it was a case of having nobody else. He's been out for two or three months but we decided he had to go on."

"We wanted to push Emmerson Boyce forward because Andrew Fotiadis went missing in the second half."

Rocky's knockout draw

EX-HATTERS striker Rocky Baptiste is getting ready to take on double-winners Arsenal in the fourth round of the FA Cup.

Baptiste scored the first goal in Farnborough's 3-2 win at Darlington on Saturday and is now dreaming of netting past England keeper David Seaman.

Conference club Farnborough have been drawn at home to the Gunners but may switch the tie to Highbury where they would enjoy a money-spinning bumper crowd.

Baptiste, released by Joe Kinnear in the summer of 2001, is Farnborough's top scorer this season and has already plundered six goals in his side's FA Cup run.

French keeper Cedric Berthelin is another ex-Hatter who could face a Premiership big gun.

Berthelin made a last-minute save for Crystal Palace in the 2-1 third round win at Blackpool after coming on as a sub for the injured Alex Kolinko. Palace have now been drawn at home to Liverpool.

match facts

CHESTERFIELD 2 LUTON 1

●CHESTERFIELD: Ben Williams, Martin Booty, Rob Edwards, Steve Blatherwick, Alan O'Hare, Stuart Howson, Marcus Ebdon, Chris Brandon, Gareth Davies, Glynn Hurst, David Reeves (Shayne Bradley, 73). Subs not used: Andy Richmond, Andy Rushbury, Stephen Wame, Mark Allott.

●HATTERS: Carl Emberson, Emmerson Boyce, Ian Hillier, Chris Coyne, Sol Davis, Steve Robinson, Paul Hughes, Ahmet Brkovic, Andrew Fotiadis (David Bayliss, 61), Steve Howard,

Tony Thorpe. Subs not used: Mark Owendale, Lee Mansell, Michael Leary, Joe Deeney.

●Shots on target: Chesterfield 6 Luton 10.

●Off target: Chesterfield 3 Luton 4.

●Corners: Chesterfield 5 Luton 9.

●Referee: M Ryan (Preston).

●TOP HATTER: Paul Hughes - continues to cope admirably in the centre of midfield despite the absence of Kevin Nicholls and Matthew Spring. Made several well-timed tackles and showed good vision.



HUGHES A CLEVER BOY THEN? Top Hatter Paul Hughes stars at Chesterfield

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