

Tykes falter

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Barnsley 2 Luton 3

TONY Thorpe struck a second half double to keep 10-man Luton's Second Division promotion dream alive after their 3-2 win at Barnsley.

The visitors had fallen behind to a Kevin Betsy goal after 60 seconds, and they looked to be in real trouble when goalkeeper Carl Emberson was sent off after 36 minutes for deliberate handball.

However, Luton levelled on the stroke of half time when Matthew Spring crashed the ball into the net, and Thorpe scored his first after 50 minutes when he latched onto Robbie Williams' poor back pass before rounding goalkeeper Andy Marriott and tapping the ball home.

The 28-year-old striker then extended Luton's lead 14 minutes later following a neat build-up with Steve Howard, and though Barnsley pulled a goal back through Bruce Dyer's penalty, it was not enough to claim a share of the spoils.

Luton manager Joe Kinnear hailed his side's battling spirit.

Kinnear said: "It's a great result, especially as we won with only 10 men.

"We were a little rusty as we haven't played for a couple of weeks so I'm delighted with the three points.

"It keeps us up with the other teams battling for sixth place.

"I think there's enough about us to beat the top teams in the division.

"I've told the players if we can make the play-offs and stay injury free, we are capable of going up."

Kinnear's men fell behind in the first minute when Betsy capitalised on a mix-up between goalkeeper Emberson and Chris Coyne.

The Luton pair were involved in an aggressive confrontation before being separated by Kevin Nicholls.

Kinnear added: "It was just a misunderstanding between the two. Coyne should have cleared his lines but thought he heard a shout from



MATTHEW SPRING

Emberson.

"But there's nothing wrong with being raucous on the pitch. It shows they both care, that team spirit is great and all the players want to be winners."

Kinnear said: "Emberson swears blind the ball remained in the area and we will appeal if the video shows that. But I need to see the video before commenting further.

"It was sad to see him sent off because we've only two fit goalkeepers."

Barnsley's caretaker-manager Glyn Hodges blamed defender Brian O'Callaghan for Luton's equalising goal.

Hodges claimed the defender had hesitated with the ball, allowing Spring to get in a shot.

Hodges said: "O'Callaghan said in his programme notes before the game that he likes fancy footwork and playing with the ball and that's what cost us the first goal.

"O'Callaghan let his team mates down because he's not in the dressing room at the moment. He went straight home after I substituted him at half time. There are a lot of selfish people at this club but there's not much we can do about that. If he wants to play for the club again he must come and see me."