

Forbes off for Hatters

Luton 0 Tranmere 0

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By Jim Kelly

A DRAW was the last result either team wanted. Both needed a win to try to keep in touch with the play-off race in the Second Division and in the end Tranmere were lucky to leave with a point against a team reduced to 10 men after 31 minutes.

Adrian Forbes was red-carded for using an elbow on Graham Allen but remarkably, despite being depleted, Luton took the game to Tranmere and with a little more precision in the box and perhaps a little more luck, would have collected three points.

Stand-in keeper Russell Howarth enjoyed his full debut, earning man-of-the-match plaudits from both managers.

"He had to be," said Luton boss Joe Kinnear. "Tranmere hardly had a shot at goal. We murdered them even with 10 men but we couldn't find the goal our play deserved."

The manager will not argue with the sending off of Adrian Forbes, who was playing only his second game of the season after suffering cruciate ligament damage in the summer.

Ironically, Forbes had been on the field for only 15 minutes, replacing Tony Thorpe who injured an ankle. Thorpe faces an uphill battle to play any part in Luton's remaining fixtures.

Luton grew stronger as the game went on but could not find a way past Howarth. Three times in the last five minutes he broke Luton's hearts with Paul Hughes, Sol Davis and Matt Spring all threatening to get a winner.

One of the brightest features for Kinnear was the debut performance of Sammy Igoe, on loan from Reading, and Kinnear will try to sign him permanently for next season.