



Hatters robbed by late Argyle flourish

Plymouth 2
Luton Town 1

HATTERS trip to the south coast must have left boss Mike Newell wanting to bury his head in the sand following Argyle's late, late show.

The visitors had been bossing the match and took a deserved lead when Gary McSheffrey headed home on 58 minutes.

But relentless Argyle equalised seven minutes from time before scoring the winner on the stroke of full time.

Former boss Joe Kinnear once claimed he was happy that Plymouth had won promotion with the Hatters two seasons ago because he guaranteed his side six points a season – not anymore.

Current boss Newell must have wished he could have pulled on a white shirt to give his toothless attack some aerial power up front.

He started the match with 21-year-old trialist Enoch Showunmi up front with McSheffrey in place of the suspended Steve Howard and the raw Londoner lasted just 40 minutes before being replaced by Dean Crowe.

From that moment on the Hatters looked much more settled and the midfield, with Matthew Spring at the heart of every move, began to run the match.

In fact, the visitors should have taken the lead three minutes before the break but McSheffrey headed tamely at the well-placed goalkeeper Luke McCormick.

Hatters started the second half as they ended the first and McSheffrey again had the chance to give Luton the lead on 48 minutes.

The pint-sized striker controlled a neat ball in from sub Ian Hillier (taking over from the injured Bayliss) and back-heeled it through confused centre back Graham Coughlan's, legs. McSheffrey found himself one-on-one with McCormick but a rush of blood saw him blaze over the bar from ten yards.

McSheffrey knew he could not make any more mistakes and made amends for his two misses on 58 minutes. He rose to meet a pinpoint cross from Kevin Foley and headed into the corner of the net sending the 200 travelling fans wild.



■ Not this time: Striker Gary McSheffrey is foiled by Plymouth Argyle's Luke McCormick. After two misses McSheffrey did give Hatters the lead and his delight is apparent as illustrated below

The Kenilworth Road outfit were now in trouble and home boss Paul Sturrock decided to throw caution to the wind in the 68th minutes with a double substitution.

He sent Jason Bent and Blair Sturrock on and switched to a 4-4-3 formation.

Hatters struggled from then on with Chris Coyne and the off-pace Hillier finding it hard to cope with Plymouth's frontline – and in particular, big Mickey Evans.

The home side now had the upper hand

and equalised on 83 minutes when the lively Dave Worrell crossed from the right. Evans rose above the despairing Coyne and sent a looping header over stranded Rob Beckwith.

Five minutes later Plymouth nearly took the lead when Paul Wotton hammered a shot at goal from 12 yards but Paul Hughes threw himself in front, sending the ball out for a throw-in.

Newell must have thought his side had weathered the storm and were going to take a deserved point.

But on 90 minutes another Wotton cross was met by Friio.

The classy midfielder glanced his header wide of the diving Beckwith from six yards out.

Reported Arsenal target Beckwith held his head in his hands knowing he was probably to blame for both Plymouth goals.

Newell must now be hoping that he can tie up a deal for 19-year-old striker Dean Morgan, who has had his contract cancelled by Colchester United.

At the same he will be desperate to hang on to Howard, who is interesting Sheffield Wednesday.

If Howard goes, Newell will be reaching for the nearest bucket to dig himself deeper into the sand.

Luton Town: Beckwith; Boyce, Coyne, Bayliss (Hillier 44m), Davis; Foley, Spring, Hughes, Brkovic; McSheffrey, Showunmi (Crowe 40m). Subs not used: Brill, Mansell, Leary

Referee: A Bates

GOALSCORERS:

Plymouth: Evans (83), Friio (90)

Luton: McSheffrey (58)

SHOTS ON TARGET

Plymouth: 3

Luton: 4

SHOTS OFF TARGET

Plymouth: 6

Luton: 2

CORNERS

Plymouth: 4

Luton: 2

OFFSIDE

Plymouth: 1

Luton: 2

BOOKINGS

Plymouth: Wotton (84)

Luton: Coyne (15), Showunmi (27), Beckwith (33)

ATTENDANCE: 9,894

HATTERS STAR MAN:
MATTHEW SPRING

Neat and tidy in a scrappy affair

Division Two results

Blackpool	1	Bournemouth	2
Chesterfield	0	Notts County	1
Colchester	1	Brighton	0
Oldham	1	Bristol City	1
Plymouth	2	Luton	1
Port Vale	3	Barnsley	1
QPR	0	Wycombe	0
Rushden	0	Brentford	1
Sheffield Wed	2	Stockport	2
Swindon	1	Wrexham	0
Tranmere	0	Peterborough	0

How they stand

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Port Vale	7	5	1	1	14	10	16
Sheffield Wed	7	4	2	1	14	10	14
Barnsley	7	4	2	1	10	6	14
Hartlepool	7	3	3	1	17	8	12
QPR	7	3	3	1	15	7	12
Swindon	7	3	3	1	14	9	12
Plymouth	7	3	3	1	15	11	12
Brighton	7	3	2	2	12	9	11
Bristol City	7	3	1	4	10	5	10
Wrexham	6	3	1	2	5	4	10
Rushden	7	3	1	3	12	12	10
Luton	7	3	1	3	11	11	10
Bournemouth	7	2	3	2	8	8	9
Peterborough	7	2	2	3	9	8	8
Colchester	7	2	2	3	9	10	8
Grimsby	7	2	2	3	10	16	8
Tranmere	7	1	4	2	7	7	7
Blackpool	6	2	1	3	9	15	7
Oldham	7	1	3	3	10	13	6
Stockport	7	1	3	3	9	12	6
Brentford	7	2	0	5	5	13	6
Wycombe	7	1	2	4	8	13	5
Notts County	7	1	2	4	3	13	5
Chesterfield	7	0	4	3	5	11	4

