



Town Player Watch

It's no fuss Russ in the rearguard

CENTRE-HALF Russ Perrett made his first home appearance of the season against Tranmere on Monday night, after recovering from a pre-season groin operation. The 30-year-old was rushed back in to action against Swindon after the long-term injury to David Bayliss.

And Perrett followed an assured showing at the County Ground with another comfortable display at Kenilworth Road, including his first goal of the season. Here's how he rated.....

- Minutes on pitch: 90
- Passes to own player: 23
- Passes to opposition: 5
- Pass completion rate: 82 per cent.
- Efforts on target: 1
- Efforts off target: 0
- Shots blocked: 0
- Tackles won/interceptions: 11
- Tackles lost: 1
- Free-kicks won: 2
- Free-kicks conceded: 1
- Drubbles ball retained: 2
- Drubbles ball lost: 0
- Dribble completion rate: 100 per cent.
- Headers won: 20
- Headers lost: 3
- Crosses: 0
- Offsides: 0
- Bookings: 1

VERDICT: Perrett produced a tidy display alongside the also impressive Chris Coyne.

As well as mopping up virtually all Tranmere threat at him, Perrett also preened his head at the other end with his well-taken headed goal.

NEWELL'S VIEW: "He's given us another goal from another area and he looked dangerous from set-pieces all night. He's playing on adrenaline at the moment and gives us a bit of experience at the back, which is what we need after losing David Bayliss."



IT'S THERE: Russ Perrett rises above the Tranmere Rovers defence to head Luton's opener on Monday night. Picture: JOANNA CROSS

Town Sky high after win

HATTERS 3 TRANMERE 1
HATTERS returned to winning ways and climbed into the top half of the Nationwide Division Two table with victory over struggling Tranmere Rovers on Monday night.

Having conceded last-minute goals in four of their previous five matches, Luton were keen to put on a stronger showing in front of the Sky cameras at Kenilworth Road.

And although the performance was certainly not the best produced by Mike Newell's men this season, it was enough to safely secure all three points.

A header from defender Russell Perrett in first-half injury-time put Hatters ahead at the interval.

And although Tranmere equalised when Chris Dagnall struck his first senior goal for the north-west club after 52 minutes, further strikes from forward partners Gary McSheffrey and Adrian Forbes gave Luton the win.

Skipper Chris Coyne also had a goal disallowed for a foul in injury time. Luton welcomed back fit-again Matthew Spring, who replaced Steve

Tranmere beaten in front of cameras

Robinson - the only change from the starting 11 who drew at Swindon.

And Spring was inspirational alongside Paul Hughes in midfield. The pair dominated proceedings, breaking up any Tranmere possession and prompted the majority of the Luton attacks.

After a scrappy opening, Spring collected Gary McSheffrey's knock-down in the 16th minute and fed Courtney Pitt, but from just inside the area the winger dragged his shot wide.

With his silver boots glimmering under the floodlights, Pitt continued to threaten, although his touch deserted him at vital moments.

However, he composed himself to strike a corner to Coyne after half-an-hour and the Aussie stopper was unlucky to see his overhead effort headed off the line by Gareth Roberts.

Luton finally made the breakthrough 90 seconds into added on time. Tranmere full-back Ryan Taylor, who had

already been booked for a foul on Pitt, returned to the field after treatment to an injury and immediately scythed down Pitt again on the edge of the area.

From Spring's resulting free-kick Perrett nodded home at the far post.

Tranmere upped their work-rate in the second period and soon levelled proceedings. A teasing cross from Gareth Roberts deceived Coyne and Perrett allowing Simon Howarth to strike a shot that was turned home by Dagnall.

Emmerson Boyce had a header cleared off the line on the hour before he set off on a driving run for Luton's second after 64 minutes. From Boyce's

one two with Hughes, McSheffrey nipped in to flick the ball in off the post with the outside of his left boot.

Robert Beckwith saved well from Danny Harrison's header three minutes later before Forbes made the game safe after 72 minutes.

A Spring corner was headed back across goal by Coyne for Forbes to smash home from six yards.

Coyne thought he had made it four but his header from Spring's free-kick was ruled out in injury time. Luton fans were just glad for a comfortable final ten minutes for a change.

STAR HATTER: Matthew Spring.

NEWELL'S VERDICT

"WE'VE played better and we didn't start particularly well, but I did ask the lads 'can we grind out a result?' and they've done that."

"It was frustrating at times, particularly in the first half where we had plenty of possession but no end product. We gave the ball away and tried to thread it through the eye of a needle."

"We had something to cling on to

with the goal in the first half. We didn't start the second half well at all but Emmerson Boyce has got us out of it with a good run."

"We were far from our best, but I'm happy with how they've managed to grind out a result."

"We invited some of the pressure ourselves, but it's just nice to get through the final 10 or 15 minutes without conceding for once!"

Luton 3-1 Tranmere

Perrett 45
McSheffrey 54
Forbes 72

Achternberg
Coyne
Dagnall 66
Foley 83
Roberts
Luton
Harrison
Howarth
Pitt
Forbes
Dagnall
McSheffrey
Roberts 83

Where Scored For/Agt

6 yd 5 4
18 yd 3 11
Outside 1 3
18 yd 1 3

How Scored For/Agt

Shots 7 5
Headers 7 5
Volleys 1 4
Penalties 2 2
Free Kicks 0 0
Own Goals 0 1

Goals in last 10 mins

Goals Scored 2 Goals conceded 5
Points won 0 Points lost 7

Luton Town's Scorers

Life	CC	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th	6th	7th	8th	9th	10th
Gary McSheffrey	5	1	6	11	0	55					
Steve Howard	4	1	5	10	0	50					
Tony Thorpe	2	1	3	3	100						
Kevin Foley	1	2	3	13	23						
Adrian Forbes	2	0	2	3	0.67						
Chris Coyne	1	0	1	2	14	0.14					
Russell Perrett	1	0	1	3	0.33						
Kevin Nicholas	1	0	1	5	0.20						
Alan Neilson	1	0	1	6	0.17						
David Bayliss	1	0	1	1	0.14						
Matthew Spring	1	0	1	1	0.09						
Courtney Pitt	0	1	1	1	0.09						

Seasonal Progress Chart

Points

24 August

December

Fouls & Offsides

Div 2 Rating	11	Headed Goals	7 players	1 Volleyed shots	McSheffrey 1
Div 2 Rating <td>2.2</td> <td>Long Range Shots</td> <td>McSheffrey 1</td> <td>Penalties scored</td> <td>McSheffrey 1</td>	2.2	Long Range Shots	McSheffrey 1	Penalties scored	McSheffrey 1
Div 2 Rating <td>4.83</td> <td>Offside/Goal</td> <td>4.83</td> <td>Inside 6 yards</td> <td>5 players</td>	4.83	Offside/Goal	4.83	Inside 6 yards	5 players
Div 2 Rating <td>22</td> <td>Scoring 1st Goal</td> <td>1</td> <td>Girls in Last 10 mins</td> <td>Spring</td>	22	Scoring 1st Goal	1	Girls in Last 10 mins	Spring
Div 2 Rating <td>22</td> <td>Shots 6-15 yards</td> <td>McSheffrey 3</td> <td>Ave Attendance</td> <td>6,107</td>	22	Shots 6-15 yards	McSheffrey 3	Ave Attendance	6,107

Last 6 Matches

Opposition	H/A	Score	Won when behind	1
Tranmere	H	3-1	Drawn when behind	1
Swindon	A	2-2	Lost when ahead	1
Oldham	A	0-3	Drawn when ahead	3
QPR	H	1-1		
Port Vale	H	2-0		
Plymouth	A	1-2		

Set Piece Goals

Scored from Corners	2
Scored from Free Kicks <td>4</td>	4
Conceded from Corners <td>0</td>	0
Conceded from Free Kicks <td>3</td>	3

Attendance Figures

Highest Attendance	8,339
Lowest Attendance <td>5,002</td>	5,002
Ave Attendance <td>6,107</td>	6,107