Talk of the Town *with Andy MacKenzie*

LUTON TOWN FOOTBALL CLUB

Town Player Watch

Solid show for Davies' senior bow

TEENAGER Curtis Davies made his first senior start for the Hatters in place of the suspended Emmerson Boyce on Saturday.

With injuries to David Bayliss, Russ Perrett, Ian Hillier, Alan Neilson and Leon Barnett, Town boss Mike Newell had no choice other than to throw the 18-year-old into his starting 11.

But Davies responded with a competent display alongside skipper Chris Coyne.

Here's how he fared...

- Minutes on pitch: 90
- Passes to Luton: 11
- Passes to County: 5
- Pass completion rate: 69 per cent
- Shots on target: 0
- Shots off target: 0
- Shots blocked: 0
- Dribbles ball retained: 0
- Dribbles ball lost: 0
- Tackles won/interceptions: 9
- Tackles lost: 0
- Free-kicks won: 0
- Free-kicks lost: 0
- Headers won: 14
- Headers lost: 2

VERDICT: Although perhaps not using possession as effectively as his senior teammates might have, Davies kept it simple and made few errors. He was strong in the air and quick in the challenge against his smaller opponent Stuart Barlow and the only time he looked slightly unsettled was in covering across for the runs of left winger Andy Welsh.

NEWELL'S VERDICT: "You always have doubts until you see someone play and to be honest he hasn't set the world alight in the games he's played so far this season, but he's got pace and power. He's got other things that he can improve upon, but he's done well and we're pleased with him. He's another lad who's come in and done well for us."

L4-069l

L4-069m

Pictures: Jane Sherlock

EARLY BATH: Referee Alan Butler shows Adrian Forbes the red card and even Stockport's Danny Jackman looks surprised by the decision.

It's the Enoch Show!

HATTERS 2 STOCKPORT 2

HATTERS stretched their Division Two league run to one defeat in their last 11 matches thanks to a battling display against Stockport County.

Town twice fought back from a goal down and overcame the sending off of top scorer Adrian Forbes to eventually draw 2-2 with struggling County.

The clash of the Bedfordshire and Cheshire Hatters saw the visitors score the game's opening three goals – a 32nd minute Danny Griffin own goal cancelled out Simon Lynch's 18 minute opener, before Fraser McLachlan made it 2-1 in the 71st minute.

It was left for striker Steve Howard to bag his first goal in nine games five minutes from time to eventually earn Town a point. But, even being a man down for more than 50 minutes, Luton still bossed the game and looked the more threatening in front of goal.

This was largely due to boss Mike Newell's bold decision to withdraw midfielder Lee Mansell six minutes after Forbes' 37th minute red card and introduce forward Enoch Showunmi.

It marked the 21-year-old's lengthiest spell on the field at Kenilworth Road after three away starts for the Town.

And the home crowd responded to Showunmi's unpredictable pace and trickery with a roar every time the player touched the ball. For Showunmi, playing in the Football League has marked a dramatic rise from turning out in midfield for Willesden Constantine in the Middlesex County League for the past three seasons.

Forbes sent off but Showunmi lifts the crowd

The North-Londoner did have a trial for the Hatters in 2000, when the Town were under the leadership of Ricky Hill, but Showunmi instead elected to complete a three-year business degree at London South Bank University.

His second trial at the Hatters this summer came completely by chance.

Showunmi told *The News-Gazette*: "I played for a five-a-side team last summer who had a link with a guy who is now my agent and he picked me to play against Luton in a pre-season friendly.

"I didn't think I did that well, but Brian Stein remembered me and they saw something and it went from there."

He continued: "Last season I was just training on a Thursday and playing on a Saturday. So it was a bit tiring when I first got here, but my confidence increased and then I started getting used to the players."

Showunmi, who is still playing for the cost of expenses until contract talks can begin, has also been amazed by the response from Hatters fans.

He said: "The fans keep egging me on and it's a real boost. Now I just want to try and get a bit of a run in the team and show what I can do."

Before Showunmi's introduction, Hatters had started brightly, creating four chances in the opening four minutes. County keeper James Spencer saved from Howard and Forbes and watched two Howard headers go wide.

Coyne also missed a far-post heading opportunity from Steve Robinson's corner in the 14th minute before County opened the scoring four minutes later.

Mansell gave the ball away in the Stockport half and Andy Welsh ran unchallenged for 50 yards down the left and squared for Lynch to sidefoot home.

Luton's equaliser came from nothing when Robinson's cross was turned past Spencer by Griffin at the near post.

But that good fortune was soon forgotten when Forbes clashed with diminutive County full-back Danny Jackman and was shown the red-card for an alleged headbutt.

A Howard header clipped the top of the bar in first-half stoppage time. But it was County who went ahead after the interval when McLachlan stole between Coyne and Marlon Beresford to head home Jackman's chipped pass.

Spencer produced superb blocks from Showunmi and Ahmet Brkovic, but undid his good work by picking up Robert Clare's pass-back. Howard was only too happy to drive Robinson's touched free-kick home from 10 yards.

STAR HATTER: Sol Davis. First-half attacking threat and defensively solid.

NEWELL'S VERDICT

"We're not happy with just a point because even with 10 men we had the better chances and their keeper made some very good saves.

"We felt we could have won it in the second-half, but we're really pleased with the lads because their attitude with only 10 men shows what sort of season they're having. It's a compliment to the effort that they put in that we probably should have won the game.

"It's difficult to play with one up front, especially at home. Lee Mansell's had other things on his mind this week and we felt the situation was there to throw Enoch on."

HATTERS

Luton	2-2	Stockport
Griffin 32 (og) Howard 85	Goals	Lynch 18 McLachlan 72
8	Att On Target	5
8	Att Off Target	3
7	Corners	3
0	Offsides	2
6	Fouls	5
6	Booked	7
Davis	Sent Off	Hardiker
Forbes		Gibb
5,929	Attendance	Spencer
Butler	Referee	Sent Off

Luton		Stockport
Beresford		Spencer
Coyne		Clare
Davis		Gibb 71
Davis		Griffin
Foley		Hardiker
Robinson		McLachlan
Mansell 43		Jackman
Brkovic		Lambert
Holmes		Welsh
Forbes		Barlow
Howard		Lynch 82
Showunmi 43		Morrison 71
		Wilbraham 82

Where Scored For/Agt		
6 yd	8	14
18 yd	29	19
Outside 18 yd	4	6

How Scored For/Agt		
Shots	23	13
Headers	11	14
Volleys	3	6
Penalties	2	3
Free Kicks	0	1
Own Goals	2	2

All Goals FOR in FULL Goals AGAINST in FULL

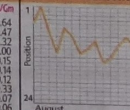
When Scored For/Agt

Goals in last 10 mins		
Goals Scored	6	Goals conceded 7
Points won	3	Points lost 8

Luton Town's Scorers

	Lge	CC	FA	LDV	Tot	Gms	Gls/Gm
Adrian Forbes	9	0	5	0	14	22	0.64
Gary McSheffrey	8	1	0	0	9	19	0.47
Steve Howard	5	1	0	0	7	22	0.32
Tony Thorpe	2	0	1	0	3	3	1.00
Lee Mansell	2	0	1	0	3	20	0.15
Steve Robinson	2	0	1	0	3	21	0.14
Kevin Foley	1	2	0	0	3	25	0.12
Russell Perrett	2	0	0	0	2	6	0.33
Emmerson Boyce	1	0	1	0	2	30	0.07
Chris Coyne	1	1	0	0	2	33	0.06
Matthew Judge	0	0	0	1	1	2	0.50
Kevin Nicholls	1	0	0	0	1	5	0.20
David Bayliss	0	1	0	0	1	7	0.14
Alan Neilson	1	0	0	0	1	8	0.13
Peter Holmes	1	0	0	0	1	9	0.11
Enoch Showunmi	0	0	0	0	1	10	0.10
Michael Leary	0	0	0	1	1	11	0.09
Courtney Pitt	0	1	0	0	1	14	0.07
Paul Hughes	0	1	0	0	1	16	0.06
Matthew Spring	1	0	0	0	1	27	0.04

Seasonal Progress Chart



Last 6 League Games			
Opponents	H/A	Score	
Stockport	H	2-2	
Rushden	A	2-2	
Notts County	H	2-0	
Colchester	A	1-1	
Barnsley	H	0-1	
Blackpool	A	1-0	

Swings	
Won when behind	3
Drawn when behind	4
Lost when ahead	2
Drawn when ahead	5

Set Piece Goals	
Scored from Corners	4
Scored from Free Kicks	5
Conceded from Corners	4
Conceded from Free Kicks	4

Fouls & Offsides			
Avg Fouls/game	13	Div 2 Rating	15
Avg Offside/game	4.73	Div 2 Rating	23

Rating of 1 = team gave away least fouls/offsides in div and 24 = most

Top Scorers in each Category			
Headed Goals	Howard, Perrett	2	Volleyed shots 3 players 1
Long Range Shots	McSheffrey	2	Penalties scored Nicholls, McSheffrey 1
Inside 6 yards	Perrett	2	Scored 1st Goal Howard, Forbes 3
Shots 6-18 yards	Forbes	6	Gls in Last 10 mins 6 players 1

Attendance Figures	
Highest Attendance	8,339
Lowest Attendance	5,002
Ave Attendance	6,045

For 90 minutes a week you're