

Colchester suffer FA Cup hangover

03/04

Luton too good for U's

COLCHESTER United welcomed back defenders Sam Stockley and Paul Tierney for this afternoon's Division Two fixture at Luton Town.

Right-back Stockley was suspended for Tuesday's nights fabulous 3-1 win over Coventry City in the FA Cup, while Manchester United loanee Tierney was not registered in time to play against the Sky Blues.

Greg Halford and Scott McGleish were both relegated to the substitutes' bench. Leading scorer McGleish was nursing a head wound, which re-opened against Coventry.

Hosts Luton threatened first in the second minute when tall striker Showunmi raced on to a long ball pumped over the top. However, defender Chilvers was able to shepherd the ball back to keeper Brown.

Only the woodwork denied Colchester an early lead in the sixth minute. Vine, fresh from scoring a hat-trick against Coventry, showed terrific pace to run on to Keith's intelligent pass.

Vine slid over a low cross into the six-yard box, which eluded the dive of keeper Hyldgaard, and the onrushing Fagan poked the ball against the far post from close in. The rebound would not fall kindly for a Colchester player and defender Boyce hoofed away.

A quickly taken throw by keeper Brown instigated a Colchester breakaway in the 19th minute. Vine pumped the ball forward for fellow striker Fagan, and he found Keith. The U's left midfielder jinked this way and that before slicing a shot wide from ten yards out.

Luton hit the woodwork on 20 minutes, although Showunmi's effort from the left wing was meant as a cross as it struck the top of the bar.

The U's earned their first corner of the game in the 24th minute. Izzet was unmarked as he met Keith's corner on the edge of the penalty area. Luton's debutant keeper Hyldgaard was really struggling and when the ball broke for Chilvers, his toe-poke was cleared off the goal-line by left-back Davis.

Brown was called into action in

CARL MARSTON REPORTS FROM KENILWORTH ROAD

TEAMS

Luton: Hyldgaard, Holmes, Foley, Davis, Coyne, Showunmi, Spring, Nicholls, Robinson, Boyce, Howard. Subs: Brkovic, Davies, Brill, Grove, Leary.

Colchester United: Brown, Stockley, Tierney, Chilvers, White, Duguid, Pinault, Izzet, Keith, Fagan, Vine. Subs: Andrews, McGleish, Cade, Halford, McKinney. Referee: Mr Eddie Ilderton (Newcastle Upon Tyne)

Attendance: 5,662.

the 26th minute when dropping to his knees to smother a low goal bound drive from Showunmi.

The U's had to defend effectively on the half-hour mark. Spring was poised to shoot on the edge of the six-yard box, but he was denied by a terrific block by centre-half Chilvers.

Then the U's other centre-half White, playing against his old club, did well to clear when striker Howard was about to meet the cross with a header.

From the ensuing corner, midfielder Spring connected cleanly with a volley but his effort whistled well wide.

Hatters keeper Hyldgaard was looking a little nervous and he was unconvincing with a punch from a cross by Keith on 32 minutes. However, he managed to get away with it.

Pinault slid a pass through for Vine, and his shot took a deflection off defender Boyce for their second corner of the game.

United had a chance to break the deadlock in the 38th minute. Stockley controlled a pass from Vine and swung over a perfect cross for an unmarked Fagan but his header was weak from just six yards out and Hyldgaard easily caught.

Four minutes later and Colchester were thwarted by the woodwork for the second time. Fagan delivered a cross from the right and Izzet's downward header bounced off the pitch and struck the bar. Again, the rebound would not fall for a Colchester player so it was a lucky escape for the Hatters.

In the last minute of normal time at the end of the first half, Keith ran at the Luton defence and slid the ball through to the onrushing Fagan whose final shot was blocked by a defender.

Luton had an opportunity in first half stoppage time. Showunmi was

through on goal, shrugging off the challenge of Tierney only to stab his shot wide of target with the goal beckoning.

There was still time for Luton striker Howard to be booked for dissent before the half-time whistle sounded. **Half time:**

Luton Town 0, Colchester United 0

Colchester began the second half brightly. Fagan scampered onto a long ball from Tierney, fending off the challenge of Boyce before screwing his shot wide.

Duguid swung over the U's third corner of the game in the 47th minute, and there was some pinball in the Luton six-yard box before Chilvers had a shot blocked.

Showunmi missed a real sitter in the 50th minute. Striker Howard and Showunmi got in each others way trying to meet a cross from Nicholls, and the ball rolled dangerously inside the six-yard box with Showunmi finally stabbing his shot wide from point blank range.

However, SHOWUNMI made no mistake when he fired Luton ahead in the 52nd minute.

Holmes swung over a cross from the right and Showunmi turned to drill home a shot in clinical fashion, with Brown unable to get his hands to the ball.

The U's tried to respond quickly and Duguid tried his luck with a shot from 25 yards out that looped wide of target.

Buoyed by his goal Showunmi embarked on a powerful run through the middle before unleashing a fierce shot that flew narrowly wide.

Luton were really getting on top and Brown had to be in the right place to catch a threatening cross from Holmes in the 58th minute.

Keith ran half the length of the pitch before being brought crashing to the ground to win a free kick just

outside the box. The visitors tried an intricate set piece with both Duguid and Keith shaping to take the free kick before the ball was slid out for Chilvers who fired high and wide from 25 yards out.

U's boss Parkinson made a double substitution in the 65th minute, and it was an attacking one.

Strikers Andrews and McGleish came on for defender Stockley and midfielder Pinault.

Andrews and McGleish were operating upfront with Fagan and Vine pushing to the flanks. Duguid had shifted to right-back.

Luton striker Howard turned on to a cross from Holmes and his low shot was well saved by Brown.

On 71 minutes, midfielder Spring spotted some space, so he charged towards goal before blasting a 20-yarder wide of goal.

Portsmouth loanee Vine was the first Colchester player to be booked when he brought down Showunmi in the 74th minute.

Duguid escaped his marker to run down the right flank and his low cross caused problems in the Luton penalty area although neither

McGleish or Andrews could register a telling shot.

Duguid powered through the middle before exchanging a one-two with Andrews. He was just about to shoot when defender Foley intervened with a fine block.

The U's made their third and final change of the afternoon on 83 minute when Cade replacing Izzet in central midfield.

Two minutes later and Luton made their first substitution with Crowe coming on for goalscorer Showunmi.

On 89 minutes, Duguid let fly with a shot from 25 yards out that did not require Hyldgaard to make a save.

In the first minute of injury time U's keeper Brown did well to block a goalbound shot from substitute Crowe down by his near post.

In the last minute of injury time, Vine cut inside a defender before seeing his low drive saved by keeper Hyldgaard. That was Colchester's last chance. **Result:**

Luton Town 1, Colchester United 0

DISAPPOINTED:
Colchester
boss Phil
Parkinson