



Tame Hatters hand Hart a point start

**Barnsley 0
Luton Town 0**

A GOALLESS stalemate with the Hatters heralded Paul Hart's managerial reign at Barnsley yesterday.

A draw was just about a fair outcome as Luton were off-colour despite their midweek enforced rest.

Two goalline clearances by either side were the sum total of an uninspiring 90 minutes.

Hart clearly has a lot of work to do on a side that now has just one win from their last 14 games.

That has seen them crash from a Christmas position of fourth to outside the play-off places and cost Icelandic boss Gudjohn Thordarson his job on Thursday.

Hart, who was sacked by Nottingham Forest, ironically to be replaced by former Hatters boss Joe Kinnear, has now linked up with ambitious ex-Leeds chairman Peter Risdale, who spent the afternoon screaming at his players from behind the Press box.

Hatters boss Mike Newell kept the same side that beat Peterborough 2-1 at London Road and the one that would have played in the postponed midweek game with Bournemouth.

Barnsley striker Michael Boulding almost got Hart's managerial career off to a dream start on ten minutes, had it not been for a timely interception from Emmerson Boyce.

The pacy striker smuggled the ball into the penalty area and despite the crowd of players in front of him squeezed a shot past Morton Hyldgaard but not the covering Boyce who cleared off the line.

Hatters' immediate reply came from a Steve Howard shot that hit the outside of the post from 15 yards.

Howard turned provider on 14 minutes when he was given time in the middle of the park to release Enoch Showunmi who headed past his marker on the run but his shot lacked direction.

Just before the half-hour mark Barnsley's on-loan Manchester United striker Daniel Nardiello for once beat Boyce in the area to get to the bye-line and cut back a shot that was well parried by Hyldgaard.

This topsy-turvy half showed no sign of letting up and Paul Hughes almost opened the scoring before the break. The midfield man



■ Peter Holmes and Kevin Betsy battle for the ball in the stalemate at Oakwell and (below) Chris Coyne tries a snap shot

wrestled the ball off Kevin Betsy, played a one-two with Howard, got into a good position but his curled effort wide from just 12 yards.

The early promise of the first half fell away into a sloppy, opening 15 minutes of the second.

Neither side showed any invention and the ball was given away far too cheaply on numerous occasions.

On the hour Hatters' showed some signs of life when impressive right back Keith Keane

floated in a menacing cross from the right, which Howard met but could not beat his old team-mate Marlon Beresford.

Eight minutes later Hatters had Keane to thank for not going a goal down. Nardiello somehow jinked his way into the box but looked to have overplayed his run. Hyldgaard came out to claim the ball but the Danish 'keeper spilled it and Nardiello got a second chance. His goalbound strike was hooked away by Keane – in the right place at the right time.

Hyldgaard made amends from the resulting corner with a brilliant one-handed save from Boulding's point-blank header.

It looked like being a bad day in the office for Howard. He hit a post in the first half and really should have done better 20 minutes from time when, from a Peter Holmes cross, his free header was again saved too easily by Beresford.

As if to highlight the fact, Howard came within a whisker of pinching all three points in stoppage time. Holmes fed the ball to Showunmi on the counter-attack and the Umbro Isotonic Division Two Player of the Month showed good control before putting Howard through. His shot was blocked, the ball spun into the air, Beresford came to collect but was left in no-man's land when Howard looped a header towards goal. The Tykes' captain Peter Handyside was on hand to ensure that Hart started with a point.

Newell said the players were disappointed with just a point. "We felt the game was there for the taking. It was a poor second half. We did not get playing until the last 15 minutes."



Luton Town: Hyldgaard; Keane, Coyne, Boyce, Davis; Nicholls, Robinson, Hughes, Brkovic (Holmes 64m); Showunmi, Howard. Subs: Brill (gkpr), Neilson, Leary, Mansell

Referee: Mr Andre Marriner (Warwickshire)

GOALSCORERS:
Barnsley: -
Luton: -

SHOTS ON TARGET
Barnsley: 7
Luton: 4

SHOTS OFF TARGET
Barnsley: 6
Luton: 5

CORNERS
Barnsley: 8
Luton: 6

OFFSIDE
Barnsley: 3
Luton: 7

BOOKINGS
Barnsley: -
Luton: Davis (38m)

ATTENDANCE: 8,656

HATTERS STAR MAN:
keith keane

Energetic display from young defender in both defence and attack

How they stand

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Plymouth	35	20	10	5	70	30	70
Bristol City	35	18	11	6	48	27	65
QPR	34	17	12	5	60	33	63
Swindon	34	17	9	8	56	40	60
Hartlepool	34	14	11	9	54	42	53
Brighton	34	15	8	11	48	36	53
Luton	33	14	11	8	52	44	53
Bournemouth	34	14	10	10	42	36	52
Port Vale	34	15	6	13	56	50	51
Wrexham	34	15	6	13	40	38	51
Barnsley	35	12	13	10	41	42	49
Sheffield Wed	34	11	12	11	38	42	45
Rushden & D	35	12	8	15	53	54	44
Blackpool	34	12	8	14	40	46	44
Colchester	33	12	8	13	35	44	44
Tranmere	33	9	14	10	38	45	41
Grimsby	35	10	9	16	44	63	39
Oldham	34	8	14	12	48	49	38
Peterborough	35	8	12	15	39	47	36
Notts County	35	9	8	18	40	57	35
Chesterfield	33	8	10	15	31	50	34
Brentford	35	9	7	19	37	57	34
Stockport	35	6	14	15	45	60	32
Wycombe	35	4	13	18	36	54	25

Division Two results

Barnsley	0	Luton	0
Blackpool	2	Port Vale	1
Bournemouth	1	Wycombe	0
Colchester	1	Hartlepool	2
Notts County	0	Plymouth	0
QPR	1	Oldham	1
Rushden	0	Peterborough	1
Stockport	2	Bristol City	0
Swindon	2	Brentford	1
Wrexham	3	Grimsby	0