

YOU MAY BEAT THE RUSH BUT YOU'RE MISSING THE GOALS

The late, late show!

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by **Simon Lambert**

FOOTBALL fans who leave games early are scoring an own goal and missing vital action – demonstrated by Luton's last gasp 3-2 win last Saturday.

A survey has shown that one in four supporters admit to leaving matches early but also miss 18 per cent of their team's goals.

And Hatters fans spotted leaving Kenilworth Road before the end of the weekend's clash with Bristol City can bear testament to the mantra 'play to the whistle'.

In an injury time thriller Kenilworth Road erupted twice – first in frustration as Luton blew their 2-1 lead, then in celebration when the Hatters clawed back a late winner.

But while most Town supporters danced and sang as if they'd won a cup final, some were already on their way home blissfully ignorant as to what they'd missed.

Luton Town historian Roger Wash said: "We've dropped a lot of points by conceding goals in the final minutes this season, and it was sweet to have it go in our favour for once."

"When Bristol won a corner in the final minutes most Luton supporters knew what was going to come – what we didn't expect was for Luton to go down the other end and score again."

"I never leave before the final



LAST GASP: Flashback to last Saturday's thriller when the Hatters beat Bristol City 3-2 in the fourth minute of injury time, thanks to a goal from Keith Keane.

whistle, but with what's happened this season in the back of their minds I'm not surprised people were ready to leave when Bristol City equalised."

Commissioned by mobile phone company 3, the study revealed early leavers' reasons:

Beating the traffic was the aim of 49 per cent, 35 per cent departed because they were losing, and six per cent skipped out because they didn't think their team would score.

Luton have proved this season that beating the rush means you miss the action, however fans could be forgiven for dashing out as more often it's been last

minute agony rather than rapture.

The Hatters have blown 13 points in the final ten minutes, conceding 12 out of their 59 goals – 20 per cent.

Meanwhile, the team have won just six points in the same period of matches, scoring seven of their 62 goals – just 11 per cent.

Speaking after the Bristol City clash, Hatters Boss Mike Newell said: "The lads have taken so many knocks in the last months with not just late goals, but goals at the death that I felt we deserved that little bit of luck."

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