

Coyne goal quells fury at penalty



TRANMERE ROVERS1

Taylor (32)

LUTON TOWN1

Coyne (76)

04/05

BY STRATTON HOYLAK

LEAGUE-LEADERS Luton Town extended their unbeaten run to 11 matches with a hard-earned point at promotion-chasing Tranmere, but were far from happy over a twice-taken penalty incident which eventually led to the home goal.

Tranmere certainly created the better chances throughout the 90 minutes, but frittered them away, especially in the closing minutes.

It needed a superb stop by deputy Luton keeper Dino Seremet in the 15th minute to deny a powerful shot by Iain Hume.

But Tranmere did eventually go ahead in the 32nd minute after being awarded a penalty four minutes earlier when Ryan Taylor was brought down by Curtis Davies.

Taylor needed treatment, and was then sent to the side-line by Staffordshire referee Tony Bates and prevented from taking the spot kick.

Hume stepped up and saw his effort saved by the Town keeper.

Mr Bates then ordered a re-take and booked the Luton duo of Chris Coyne and Kevin Nicholls during the protests which followed.

Normal penalty taker Taylor was then back on the field to try his luck. Seremet again saved, but the rebound came back to Taylor who found the target in the 32nd minute.

Luton stuck to their task without creating too much



Jubilant: Tranmere's Ryan Taylor celebrates his goal, left. Right, Eugene Dadi contests a high ball with Luton Town's Kevin Foley



trouble for the home defence, for which Ian Sharps was outstanding.

They then grabbed a lifeline in the 76th minute, with Coyne netting with a flying, angled header from a cross by Nicholls.

But Luton lived dangerously late on, with home substitute Calvin Zola blasting over when set up by Hume, and Danny Harrison seeing a shot punched away by Seremet.

It was a bad-tempered game in some respects, with four cautions for each side.

Luton manager Mike Newell said: "Our players did not think there was any contact for the

penalty, but the referee has to give it on what he sees. The re-taken stuff was just petty - frustrating and annoying.

"But we are delighted with our point secured through a grand goal by Coyne. We thought we deserved it on our performance, although we did ride our luck a bit late on."

He added: "That's 11 games unbeaten in the league now, and the confidence gets bigger and better each week. The players are really pleased.

"It was the nearest we have come to being beaten. It was our biggest test to date. Unfortunately the game was

made difficult by the officials, who I thought were very poor from start to finish."

Tranmere manager Brian Little said: "I can understand Luton's frustration over the penalty.

"It looked like a penalty to me, but it was just bizarre what followed. We were given a penalty, yet we were punished because our normal penalty taker was not allowed to have the kick. But it worked out well in the end."

Little added: "We needed a second goal, and we had three or four real chances to score it."

TRANMERE		LUTON
53	Possession %	47
5	Corners	2
3	Offsides	3
16	Fouls	16
4	Yellows	4
0	Reds	0
4	Shots On	5
6	Shots Off	3
0	Hit Woodwork	0

TRANMERE: Achterberg 7, Taylor 7, Sharps 6, Goodison 6, Roberts 6, Hall 5, Rankine 6, Harrison 6, Beresford 6 (Whitmore 81), Hume 7, Dadi 5 (Zola 58).

Next game: Bradford (h) 16/10

LUTON: Seremet 7, Foley 7, Coyne 8, Davies 7, Davis 7, Brkovic 6, Nicholls 7, Robinson 6, Underwood 6, McSheffrey 5, Vine 5.

Next game: Hartlepool (h) 08/10