

Hatters nick it at death

Luton 1
Walsall 0

04/05

A LAST-GASP penalty from skipper Kevin Nicholls gave Luton all three points with a 1-0 win against a dogged Walsall side and stretched their lead at the top of the table.

Nicholls, having missed from the spot the weekend, made no mistake in the 88th minute after Chris Coyne was fouled in the box.

Luton had the better chances in the first half and should have taken the lead in the 10th minute when Steve Howard flicked on a cross and Steve Robinson's volley beat Joe Murphy but finished inches wide.

And there were only inches in it after 25 minutes when Rowan Vine's vicious low cross flashed wide of the far post with Howard just failing to make contact as he slid in.

Minutes later Ahmet Brkovic wriggled free in the penalty area and his snap shot was well saved by Murphy.

But the best chance of the half fell to Howard who was allowed to run unchallenged to meet Brkovic's corner but the leading scorer headed over with the goal at his mercy.

Luton continued to batter away in the second half but missed the creativity of Robinson who went off injured at half time.

The Hatters started to get frustrated by Walsall's well-drilled defence and at times looked vulnerable themselves at the back against the pace and trickery of Daryl Taylor.

Just when it seemed that Luton were destined to drop points, Coyne went down under Ian Roper's challenge.

Walsall protested furiously and Neil Emblen was booked for dissent and a relived Nicholls sent Murphy the wrong way from the spot to seal the win.



KEVIN NICHOLLS