



Luton Town 3 Swindon 1
TOM LEECH reports from Kenilworth Park



**MATCH
FACTS**



Luton Town: LUTON (4-4-2): Beresford; Keane (Leary 79), Perrett, Davies, Davis; Underwood, Holmes, Nicholls, Brkovic (Foley 72); Vine (Showunmi 72), Howard.
Subs (not used): Seremet, Barnett

Referee: Fred Graham (Essex)

GOALSCORERS:

Luton: Nicholls (12pen), Brkovic (26), Holmes (84)
Swindon: Proctor (34)

SHOTS ON TARGET

Luton: 4
Swindon: 4

SHOTS OFF TARGET

Luton: 3
Swindon: 3

CORNERS

Luton: 2
Swindon: 6

OFFSIDE

Luton: 4
Swindon: 5

BOOKINGS

Luton: Nicholls (90)
Swindon: Heywood (12), Proctor (60)

ATTENDANCE: 8,173

**HATTERS STAR MAN:
RUSS PERRETT**

Solid performance that bred confidence through the side

Misery for old boys as Hatters nick it

GOALS from Kevin Nicholls, Ahmet Brkovic and Peter Holmes made sure it was a good day for Hatters on the pitch as well as off it.

They also gave former Luton Town Director of Football Mick Harford a homecoming he'd rather forget.

Harford walked out of Kenilworth Road in November to link up with Joe Kinnear at Nottingham Forest, but things didn't work out at the City Ground.

The Luton legend is now with another Hatters old boy Andy King at Swindon Town as assistant manager.

Both men saw a less-than-vintage performance from their former side but one that enhanced Luton's championship pedigree as the Hatters dogged determination bagged them all three points.

It was a fine way to celebrate manager Mike Newell's contract extension and news that Luton chairman Bill Tomlins has revealed that the club now has help in their bid to move to the promised land just off Junction 10.

In his programme notes he wrote: "I am pleased to say that behind the scenes the directors have been working on the relocation of the club and following considerable meetings, we have appointed PMG as our advisor and partner to assist the club with its relocation plans.

"PMG have a proven record in the industry and is representing the club in its formal and ongoing discussions with Luton Borough Council and respective landowners, with a view to determining the most viable and commercial site. It is our sole aim that the future of this club is never jeopardised again and that we build from the foundations that have firmly been put in place.

"We firmly believe that we can achieve similar success to that currently being delivered by our players and management."

As for the football, an unchanged side from last week's 5-0 demolition of Bristol City went ahead, slightly against the run of play, on 12 minutes through a Kevin Nicholls penalty.

A long throw was aimed at Brkovic in the box but as the Croatian leapt he was cynically pole-axed by centre half Matthew Heywood. The challenge earned Hatters a spot kick and Heywood a deserved booking.

Goalkeeper Rhys Evans guessed where Nicholls would put his penalty but the Luton skipper's net-buster was too powerful to block.

Hatters went further ahead on 26 minutes when Brkovic was in the right place at the right time to poach his 15th goal of the season.

Luton were ping-pong the ball around the Swindon area before ex-Robin Sol Davis was teed up at the edge of the box. Davis, who made over 100 appearances for Swindon and was heckled by the away support throughout, took great delight in drilling his shot goalwards but a deflection prevented it reaching its desired destination. Not that Luton could complain as the ricochet fell straight into the path of Brkovic who slid the ball home from six yards.



■ Action from yesterday's game: Steve Howard (above), Peter Holmes (right) and (below) Ahmet Brkovic scoring his 15th goal of the season

A two-goal lead was a flattering margin to Hatters as Swindon had played well - having most of the possession without really creating anything.

That all changed on 34 minutes when the Robins pulled a goal back and almost levelled a minute later following two corners.

The first was whipped in by Grant Smith and Michael Proctor got the faintest of touches to deceive Marlon Beresford at his near post.

Clearly buoyed that their efforts were starting to pay off, Swindon packed the area for the second corner moments later. This time their highly-rated striker Sam Parkin was the target but his header was kept out when Beresford at full stretch tipped his effort over the bar.

Swindon kept pushing for an equaliser but it was Luton who had the better chances. Nicholls sent a free kick just wide, Steve Howard had a low shot saved and Paul Underwood almost broke the crossbar on the hour-mark with a thunderous volley.

The away side were making it a nervous final few minutes for Hatters until Evans' goalkeeping howler put Luton in the clear.

Substitute Kevin Foley swung a cross in and Evans, under no pressure, seemed to have an easy catch. But the former Chelsea trainee fumbled right at the feet of Holmes who had the easy task of passing the ball into an empty net.

Newell left the post-match interview to his right hand man, Brian Stein who praised Hatters fans for giving Harford warm applause on his return.

"In contrast to the Swindon fans jeering of

Sol, our fans gave Mick the reception he deserved. It showed how big the fans are at our club.

"I think the lads are a bit disappointed they couldn't put on more of a performance, but we've told them that you can't play 'champagne' football every week. Swindon came here to stifle us and we had to battle. But we still won which shows the character of this side."

