



BLOCKED: Marlon Beresford saves his second penalty in four days by pushing Adebayo Akinfenwa's spot-kick on to the post in the 4-1 win at Torquay.

Town are happy bunnies!

TORQUAY 1 HATTERS 4

HATTERS emerged from the bank holiday weekend as happy bunnies following an Easter Monday thriller at Torquay.

Luton suffered a miserable start when the Gulls took the lead through Adebayo Akinfenwa in just the sixth minute. But a powerful attacking show saw skipper Kevin Nicholls and mid-field partner Peter Holmes net before half-time, while strike pair Steve Howard and Rowan Vine completed the job after the interval.

Despite the Town's slick movement going forwards, Hatters were thankful for Marlon Beresford's second penalty save in four days as he kept out Akinfenwa's spot-kick on the hour when a Torquay goal would have made it 3-2.

Boss Mike Newell said: "Marlon has done really well for us all season and his penalty save was definitely the turning point of the second-half.

"If that had gone in it could have changed the game. I'm not unhappy with the lads - you can't be unhappy

Easter Monday joy in Torquay

when you win 4-1 away from home. But we got a bit carried away with chasing more goals in the second-half and we could have been more professional."

Hatters welcomed back Kevin Foley and Ahmet Brkovic on the right in place of injured pair Keith Keane (calf) and Enoch Showunmi (hip), while Russ Perrett deputised for Chris Coyne after his red card against Barnsley.

With Luton aiming to return to the top of the league after seeing Hull leapfrog them on goal difference on Saturday and with Torquay desperately battling to jump out of the relegation places, defending took a backseat in an entertaining encounter.

The Gulls opened the scoring in similar circumstances to Barnsley's first on Friday when Beresford saved from Tony Bedeau after Aaron Browne's

cross and Akinfenwa converted the rebound from close in.

Perrett cleared off the line from Jo Kuffour's mis-hit shot in the 20th minute before Gulls keeper Andy Marriott parried Howard's towering header from Paul Underwood's corner two minutes later, only for Nicholls to prod home his 12th of the season from a yard out. The end-to-end nature continued until Howard found Foley with a raking 40-yard pass in the 31st minute

and the full-back crossed for Holmes to nod home from eight yards.

Howard saw a shot tipped on to the bar by Marriott, but he found the net - quite literally - in the 50th minute. Marriott could only parry Underwood's fierce cross-shot and Howard headed home the rebound before careering through the goal netting.

Howard's dummy from Brkovic's long pass allowed Vine to slot home number four in the 71st minute.

MIKE NEWELL'S VERDICT



"WE'RE delighted with the result and part of the performance, but not with other parts of it.

"They posed a bit of a threat to us at the start of the first-half, but we posed the biggest threat to ourselves in the second-half.

"We were looking for more goals and if we had been more ruthless and professional we could

have had it all wrapped up. It could have been six or seven, but we gave them chances and if the penalty had gone in it could have changed the whole game.

"I thought we were in control in the first-half and it was only a matter of time until we scored. But in the second-half, for all the ball we had, we didn't create enough chances."