



Luton Town FC

Doncaster Rovers 3 Luton Town 3
TOM LEECH reports Belle Vue

04/05



MATCH FACTS



Luton Town: Seremet; Foley, Coyne, Perrett, Davis; Brkovic (Showunmi 70), Nicholls, Robinson, Underwood; Vine (Feeney 70), Howard.
Subs (not used): Beckwith, Leary, Holmes.

Referee: S Mathieson (Cheshire)

GOALSCORERS:

Doncaster: L Guy 1, 65; S Robinson 51 og.
Luton: R Perrett 32; S Howard 36; Nicholls 63.

SHOTS ON TARGET

Doncaster: 5
Luton: 5

SHOTS OFF TARGET

Doncaster: 10
Luton: 3

CORNERS

Doncaster: 6
Luton: 5

OFFSIDE

Doncaster: 8
Luton: 4

BOOKINGS

Doncaster: L Fortune-West 5, T Ryan 32
Luton: A Brkovic 41

ATTENDANCE: 8,928

HATTERS

MAN-OF-THE-MATCH: Kevin Nicholls

The midfielder rounded off a fantastic season with another all-action display.



LUTON Town rounded off their superb season by breaking a club record points total.

The champions were denied 100 points by an entertaining Doncaster Rovers side who played their part in a storming clash at Belle Vue.

Hatters came back from conceding a goal after just 29 seconds through goals from Russ Perrett, Steve Howard and Kevin Nicholls. But Lewis Guy's second of the game gave Doncaster a deserved share of the spoils.

Luton boss and former Rovers player Mike Newell said: "They play some decent stuff. Doncaster had two successive promotions and are a good side. They would've wanted to beat the champions today but we competed with them all over the pitch.

"We didn't start that well but credit to the lads we kept going even though we didn't really have anything to play for.

"We didn't get 100 points but that's not the be-all and end-all. To finish the season with six wins and a draw in the last seven games is fantastic. I'm so proud of all my players."

The game couldn't have got off to a worse start for Hatters when Guy put Doncaster in the lead almost from the off. James Coppinger got behind Sol Davis and cut the ball back for Guy whose first shot was blocked by Dino Seremet but the striker got a second chance with the rebound and made no mistake from six yards out.

Hatters, who parade the League One trophy in Luton this afternoon, were struggling to get to grips with the game but scored a leveller against the run of play on 32 minutes.

Nicholls' deep free kick found Chris Coyne at the far post who did well to keep the ball in play.

The Aussie's header across teed up his defensive partner Perrett who beat Rovers' on-loan goalkeeper Iain Turner in the air to head home from close range.

If Rovers were understandably disappointed that Hatters had somehow equalised they would have been furious at the manner of



■ Kevin Foley tries to evade the close attentonms of the Doncatser defence

Luton's second.

With seemingly plenty of time to clear, Howard duly did his job as a striker and went to close Turner down expecting him to punt it up the field.

But a disastrous kick from the Everton youth team keeper hit Howard and the

ricochet fell kindly to Luton's top scorer who rolled the ball into an empty net for his 22nd of the season.

The two goals in five minutes completely took the wind out of Doncaster's sails – no mean feat on a blustery afternoon in South Yorkshire.

Hatters could even have grabbed a third just before half time but Turner went some way towards redeeming himself with a great stop.

Nicholls pinched the ball off Doolan's feet and broke on the counter attack playing in Howard with only the keeper to beat. But Turner was quick off his line to block the striker's shot with his legs.

Rovers came out rejuvenated by the break and grabbed the equaliser on 51 minutes thanks to the elements and an own goal. Seremet's goalkick couldn't compete with the whipping wind and it came back into his box like a boomerang for the imposing presence of Leo Fortune West to chase. Fortune West made it to the byline despite Perrett's best efforts and his cross was diverted past Luton's reserve keeper off the head of a stunned Steve Robinson.

Luton had the woodwork to thank on the hour mark when Paul Green's curling effort bounced off Seremet's far post, but Hatters reclaimed the lead three minutes later through Nicholls.

A cross was cleared by Rovers' backline to relative safety but they hadn't banked on the Luton captain cracking a 30-yard net-buster. It gave Turner no chance and gave the inspirational skipper his 14th of the season.

This topsy-turvy game took another twist two minutes later when Doncaster drew level again.

Green played a long ball over the top for Guy to chase and he powerfully drove the ball across goal and into the bottom corner of the net with a fine finish.

Newell threw on Warren Feeney with 20 minutes to go which drew huge boos from the home support.

The £150,000 striker spurned Doncaster for the Hatters on transfer deadline day but his introduction couldn't find the winner. After leading his players round the pitch for a deserved lap of honour Newell admitted: "All I was interested in was promotion when we started but we've surprised people winning the league in the way that we have.

"This season couldn't have gone any better."