

Newell on the way up

By MIKE ELLIS: Stoke 2 Luton 1

MIKE NEWELL is a young manager on the way up.

And just as his Luton side are surprising everyone in the Championship, so is Newell with the way he handles victory and defeat.

He was entitled to have a rant after the Hatters were robbed of a point in added time, having dominated Stoke despite playing with 10 men for three quarters of the game.

Not a bit of it.

Sure, he questioned ref Andy D'Urso's decision to dismiss Steve Howard for allegedly spitting at Carl Hoefkens in the first half.

But he did not allow his anger to cloud his belief that Luton can compete successfully at this level.

And he is right. Luton were streets ahead of Stoke, even with 10 men.

First to every challenge, inventive when they had the ball and always looking to attack.

They are a breath of fresh air and, on the evidence of their opening games in this division, they can thrive here.

Newell said: "Events went against us in this game. It's a long time since we have lost a match but I've no worries about how my players will react.

Honest

"Our aim this season was to surprise people and we've already done that.

"It is negative to talk about just staying in this league and I've never believed in that attitude.

"We have played Crystal Palace, Southampton, Leeds and Stoke so far and been the better side every time.

"As for Steven Howard's red card, the referee made a mistake.

"He said Steve was penalised for spitting but the Stoke player knew nothing about that.

"Steve is an honest lad. There was no confrontation and, if anyone spat at me, I would chin him."

Predictably there was a different version from Stoke boss Johan Boskamp.

He said: "I did not see it but my player says he was spat at."

At least Boskamp admitted his side were fortunate to win, adding: "Luton were better than us for 60 minutes and made a big impression. They controlled the game."

They certainly did. When Dean Morgan drilled in a ninth-minute opener, it seemed there was going to be only one winner.

Even Stoke's equaliser was lucky when Marlon Broomes' hopeful shot somehow slipped under Marlon Beresford's body.

But nobody could have predicted Dave Brammer's sensational winner a minute into added time — a 25-yard blockbuster which would have beaten any keeper.

SUN STAR MAN

DAVE BRAMMER (Stoke). Wonder winner.