

Oster knocks Hatters out

Reading.....1
Luton0

JOHN Oster scored the only goal of the game as Reading advanced at the expense of rivals Luton.

The 26-year-old midfielder fired home a free kick from the edge of the box 10 minutes from time to snatch the victory for Steve Coppell's side.

It was 25 minutes before Hatters striker Dean Morgan produced the game's first meaningful effort on goal, but his drive from the edge of the penalty area flashed narrowly wide of Marcus Hahnemann's post. Morgan went close again moments before the break from a similar position but once more his shot was just off target.

Reading boss Coppell opted to utilise the size of his squad as the Royals embarked upon three games in eight days.

Dave Kitson (ankle), Steve Sidwell (knee) and Nicky Shorey (knee) all missed out through injury, as Coppell made four changes to the team that beat Crewe in their previous outing.

Oster, Eric Obinna and Stephen Hunt, who all featured as substitutes against Dario Gradi's side, came into the team along with Sekou Baradji — on loan from West Ham — making his Royals debut.

Russell Perrett and Steve Robinson missed out for Luton after picking up knocks in the 1-0 win over Hull, while Kevin Foley and Markus Heikkinen missed out with respective knee and groin problems.

Morgan continued his one man crusade to open the scoring immediately after the interval, latching on to Ahmet Brkovic's flicked pass but firing over the crossbar from a central position on the edge of the box.

Warren Feeney almost grabbed his third goal of the season on 55 minutes after his cross come shot nearly embarrassed Hahnemann, but the United States international reacted quickly to divert the danger.

But it was Reading who stole the spoils against the run of play when Oster's 80th minute free kick settled the tie.

Keith Keane fouled Obinna on the edge of the area and the former Everton man placed the ball in the bottom corner of Dean Brill's goal.