

# Hornets survive late rally

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By TOM COLLOMOSSE

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WATFORD survived a second half fightback from their local rivals to earn their first away win since November 5.

It was Adrian Boothroyd's Hornets who seized the early lead.

Darius Henderson headed goalkeeper Ben Foster's long clearance to Marlon King, who laid the ball back to the edge of the area for Henderson to thump a shot beyond Marlon Beresford.

Luton's fans were dismayed, and their disappointment was increased when their team wasted two glorious chances to equalise four minutes later.

Following Carlos Edwards' cross, Rowan Vine fired a 12-yard shot against Malky Mackay, and Al Bangura did equally well to block Ahmet Brkovic's follow-up effort.

Although the home side were enjoying plenty of possession, it was the Hornets who looked more dangerous going forward.

King shot straight at Beresford in the 25th minute after Henderson had won yet another header, and five minutes later the Hornets made it 2-0.

Centre back Mackay got the faintest of touches inside the six-yard box to Anthony McNamee's inswinging free kick from the right and, although Beresford pushed his effort away, the ball was ruled to have crossed the line.

Luton looked beaten, but they scored the early second half goal they craved.

James Chambers failed to clear on the edge of his own box, allowing Edwards to shoot crisply from 18-yards into Foster's bottom corner after 48 minutes.

The goal filled Luton with verve and Foster denied them an equaliser twice in the space of five minutes. First he pushed Howard's header around his post, and in the 58th minute the on loan Manchester United stopper saved from Vine.

Just when Watford appeared to have regained their composure, they went down to 10 men in the 67th minute when Ashley Young was shown a straight red card by referee Iain Williamson for kicking out at Kevin Foley, who had fouled him.

Williamson rejected vociferous Luton claims for a late penalty when substitute Warren Feeney tangled with Clarke Carlisle, and Watford hung on.

## Newell accuses opponents of gamesmanship

LUTON boss Mike Newell criticised Watford for spoiling tactics after watching his team lose at home to their local rivals.

"I cannot use the word 'cheating' because it will land me in hot water, but we have an honest bunch of players here," Newell said.

"I would not have my players rolling around on the pitch if they were not injured.

"We are a footballing team, and when there is time-wasting it is hard to get momentum going. If that's the way teams want to play, it is not going to bring back the crowds."

Watford manager Adrian Boothroyd defended his team's approach to the match, seeking to run down the clock wherever possible after they had established an advantage.

He said: "We are learning to manage games, and the best teams are the ones who know how to manage games.

"The teams who are the most proficient at that in this league are Reading and Sheffield United — and they are first and second in the table.

"It was a good win, but it wasn't a particularly good performance. We needed this result, because it gives us momentum — but we have a lot of work to get through on the training ground."