

Cotterill rewarded for faith

Burnley1
Luton1

KYLE Lafferty repaid the faith shown in him by manager Steve Cotterill as he earned Burnley a share of the spoils with Luton at Turf Moor.

Lafferty netted after 78 minutes to score for Burnley for the first time and show why Cotterill had given the goal-shy striker a new contract.

Clarets midfielder Chris McCann, who missed the 1-0 defeat at Millwall with a hamstring injury, started in central midfield and John Spicer, who was forced to play the second half in goal last time these clubs met, came in at right back for the injured Phil Bardsley.

Luton skipper Kevin Nicholls started his first game since March but a defensive crisis forced manager Mike Newell to play prolific striker Steve Howard at centre back.

The first chance of a quiet first half fell to Burnley after three minutes when Alan

Mahon hit a stinging 25-yard effort which was comfortably held by former Claret goalkeeper Marlon Beresford.

Five minutes later Lafferty fed James O'Connor, whose shot beat Beresford, but was cleared off the line by Keith Keane.

But this work was undone when Luton delivered a sucker-punch on 42 minutes.

Good play by Nicholls found former Portsmouth striker Rowan Vine in the centre of the box, where poor defending from Burnley allowed him space to pick out his spot and beat Brian Jensen with a drilled shot.

Burnley continued to press in the second period and two minutes in almost found themselves level.

The impressive Mahon dribbled his way past three Luton defenders before feeding Lafferty, who hit the ball well but was matched by another fine Beresford save.

Luton were offering nothing in the way of attacking play and it seemed a case of when, rather than if, the Clarets

would get an equaliser as Mahon, Jon Harley, Andy Gray and James O'Connor all forced more heroics from Beresford, before Lafferty finally defeated him.

It was an inspired substitution from Cotterill as he brought on Garreth O'Connor in the 76th minute and just 59 seconds later, he played a ball through to Lafferty who hit a powerful shot from 12-yards which gave Beresford no chance.

After finally getting the equaliser they deserved, Burnley pressed for a winner and Garreth O'Connor almost made it a perfect end to the season with a long-range effort with three minutes to go, but saw his shot drift wide of the right post.

Lafferty turns on blistering form

BURNLEY'S Northern Ireland youth international Kyle Lafferty lit up the final day of

the season at Turf Moor. ^{05/06}

But Lafferty was, however, still fortunate to be on the pitch after complaining to boss Steve Cotterill that he was suffering from a blister.

But Cotterill said: "A blister? Run on the other foot then."

The Clarets boss added: "That wasn't an end-of-season game, both teams tried desperately hard to win it.

"I am really disappointed we haven't won it as we created enough chances.

"It says it all that Marlon Beresford was man-of-the-match and that always tells a tale."

Luton boss Mike Newell praised goalkeeper Beresford, saying: "He kept us in it in the second half.

"We played some decent stuff in the first half and scored a very good goal, but second half we couldn't keep the goal and they put us under plenty of pressure.

"We got a point away from home which we haven't done too often recently — so we have to be happy."