

Not gr-eight

06/07

PLYMOUTH 1 LUTONTOWN 0

Andy MacKenzie reports from Home Park

HATTERS slumped to their worst run of results in more than 100 years after suffering an eighth consecutive league and cup defeat at Plymouth last night.

Bojan Djordjic's 60th minute goal piled on the misery for Mike Newell's men and left them languishing just outside the Championship relegation zone.

The reverse also meant Town matched their previous worst sequence of defeats when they lost eight league games in a row way back in the 1899-1900 season.

Hatters made one change to the side that lost 2-1 at Southampton at the weekend as leading scorer Rowan Vine returned in place of Adam Boyd, who dropped to the bench.

Plymouth meanwhile made four changes after their 2-1 home weekend loss to lowly Leeds, but home midfielder David Norris had the first attempt on target in the seventh minute when his weak 10-yard effort from Djordjic's cross fell into the arms of Town's on-loan Pompey stopper Dean Kiely.

Kiely then had to be alert to dive and hold Luke Summerfield's speculative 30-yarder a minute later before Akos Buzsaky went closer still for the home side in the 10th minute when his thundering 22-yard free-kick cannoned back off the crossbar after Markus Heikkinen had fouled Norris.

Town were on the rack, but almost struck on the counter attack in the 16th minute when Warren Feeney blocked an Argyle shot after a corner had been half-cleared and found Vine on the half-way line.

Vine in turn fed Feeney again, who threaded an inch-perfect pass between two defenders for Vine to run on to and strike an 18-yard shot that Luke McCormick pushed around the post.

Plymouth immediately went to the other end of the field as Summerfield prodded a 15-yard effort wide from the right hand corner of the penalty area before the end-to-end action continued as Kevin Foley's drilled 18th minute cross from the right saw Ahmet Brkovic head across goal and wide.

The game eventually settled down as Luton began to impose themselves and Town again worked a great opening on the half-hour mark after more good interplay between Vine and Feeney.

This time it was Vine who played in Feeney on the edge of the penalty area and the striker – searching desperately for his first league goal of 2006 – saw his low 20-yard strike tipped wide by McCormick.

LUTONTOWN



PLYMOUTH ARGYLE



Referee: Trevor Kettle (Berkshire)

Attendance: 9,965

Three minutes later Luton pushed again as Vine, looking back to his early-season form, created space with a marauding 30-yard run, then took a pull-back from Carlos Edwards and flashed a 20-yard cross-shot just wide.

Hatters' good work was almost undone seven minutes before the break when Barry Hayles wrestled his way past Russell Perrett on to a quickly taken throw-in and scuffed a shot across the face of goal and wide from tight on the touchline.

Luton looked slick going forward and Vine and Edwards combined to tee up Feeney for another decent opening in the 41st minute, but the former Stockport man slipped at the vital moment as he shaped to shoot from six yards out.

It was Plymouth who ended the half on the offensive as Marcel Seip stepped up from the back to thump a six-yard header off the underside of the bar from Summerfield's corner as Town breathed a sigh of relief.

The second-half started in sedate fashion, but burst into life on the hour when full-back Paul Connolly did superbly well to keep in a lost cause down the right and cut-back for Djordjic to prod home from eight yards for his third goal in three games.

Luton reacted with a double substitution as Dean Morgan came on for Feeney and David Bell replaced Kevin Foley.

But the best Town's 186 travelling fans were treated to was a 25-yard snapshot from Vine in the 72nd minute that flew way off target.



Picture: GARETH OWEN

Luton ace Carlos Edwards and Plymouth's Luke Summerfield battle for possession