



06/07

By BRIAN HOWARD

THE STAY-AWAY FANS were the lucky ones as Luton Town and Southend produced a dire evening of football watched by the Hatters' lowest crowd of the season.

Town were in such desperate straits that they bizarrely finished the game with defender Leon Barnett and substitute Warren Feeney — without a league goal for a year — up front for the last ten minutes.

The move was made at the expense of leading scorer Rowan Vine, who angrily threw his water bottle to the ground after being substituted before taking his place on the bench next to unused £500,000 striker Adam Boyd.

The unusual tactical decision almost paid off as Barnett saw a ten-yard header tipped over the top, but the end result was an uninspiring bore draw that did little to ease Luton's aim to move away from the relegation zone.

Both sides came into the game on the back of wretched long-term runs, Luton having lost eight of their last nine league and cup games, and Southend having won just once in the league since August, in their previous outing against Southampton.

It was Luton who had the first opportunity just two minutes in when, following a breakaway from a Shrimpers corner, Vine found David Bell who set off on a 40-yard run.

But he slammed his left-foot shot into the midriff of Darryl Flahavan.

MATCH STATS

LUTON v SOUTHEND

5	Shots on target	6
5	Shots off target	7
4	Corners	5
4	Offside	3
8	Fouls conceded	8
0	Yellow Cards	0
0	Red Cards	0
48	Possession %	52

Aft: 7,468 Rating: ★★★★★
Ref: N Miller - 8/10

Both sides then took their time to settle before Luton attacked again in the 14th minute when Lewis Emanuel intercepted a Jamal Campbell-Ryce pass and found Vine, who cut in from the left past Efe Sodje, but slipped as he attempted to shoot from 16 yards allowing the ball to bobble to Flahavan.

Kiely almost presented Southend with an opportunity to open the scoring in the 24th minute.

After picking up Lee Bradbury's tame header from Kevin Maher's free-kick, he completely fluffed his clearance against a Southend opponent, but quickly recovered to head the ball clear on the edge of the area.

Town tried to step up the pace after the interval and had a strong penalty appeal turned down just two minutes into the second period.

Bell did well to cross from the left and, after Ahmet Brkovic nudged the ball on, Vine shot only to see the ball deflect off the prone Sodje's hand.

The Hatters' penalty appeals were ignored, however, as referee Nigel Miller gave the defender the benefit of the doubt. Vine then missed perhaps Luton's best chance of the night in the 51st minute.

The busy Bell found Brkovic, who mis-controlled only for the ball to squirt out to Vine, who fired wide, left-footed, from 14 yards with just Flahavan to beat.

Barnett then saw his header tipped over in the 88th minute from Kevin Foley's right-wing cross.

But it was Southend who should have won the game as Freddie Eastwood, looking suspiciously offside, ran clean

HIGH BALL: Southend's Spencer Prior gets his foot in head of Dean Morgan, of Luton Town

PICTURES: Action Images

FANS HAVE LAST LAUGH



THEY SHALL NOT PASS: Luton's Leon Barnett heads clear

DEAN KIELY	4/10
Had little to do, but spilled two 20-yard efforts that came his way	
STEVE ROBINSON	5/10
Looked busy in midfield, but didn't have much influence on proceedings	
LEON BARNETT	6/10
Kept his concentration throughout the 90 minutes and was strong in the air	
KEVIN FOLEY	5/10
Didn't get forward as much as he may have liked and gave the ball away at times	
MARKUS HEIKKINEN	5/10
Not stretched, but was turned by Freddie Eastwood once in the first half	
LEWIS EMANUEL	4/10
Some wayward passing and was given a tough time by Jamal Campbell-Ryce	
DEAN MORGAN	4/10
Failed to keep hold of the ball and couldn't produce any of his usual trickery	

LUTON

DAVID BELL	7/10
Luton's best player and tried to make things happen from midfield	
AHMET BRKOVIC	5/10
Always seemed a yard off the pace and much he tried didn't come off	
CARLOS EDWARDS	6/10
A couple of long-range efforts early on, but not at his best	
ROWAN VINE	5/10
Another energetic showing, but wasted a good chance in each half	
SUBSTITUTES	
FEENEY - 5/10; FOR MORGAN (65)	
COYNE; FOR VINE (81)	
NOT USED: BERESFORD; LANGLEY; BOYD;	

STAR PLAYERS



DAVID BELL
STAR RATING
7



JAMAL CAMPBELL-RYCE
STAR RATING
7

DARRYL FLAHAVAN	6/10
Solid enough between the sticks as he comfortably stopped three first-half efforts	
SPENCER PRIOR	6/10
Decent enough display and used his height advantage to good effect	
LEWIS HUNT	6/10
Found himself rarely threatened and was quick in the challenge	
EFETOBORE SODJE	6/10
Strong in the air, but lucky to escape a handball in the area just after the break	
STEVEN HAMMELL	5/10
Caught out a couple of times as he attempted to clear, but never in real danger	
JAMAL CAMPBELL-RYCE	7/10
Southend's best player Clever footwork and always looked to go forwards	
ALAN MCCORMACK	6/10
Industrious in the middle of the park and work hard for 90 minutes	

SOUTHEND

MARK GOWER	5/10
Failed to produce any real crosses from his position on the left-hand side	
KEVIN MAHER	6/10
One long-range shot wide in the first half, but produced little else of note	
LEE BRADBURY	5/10
Got little change out of the well-drilled Luton defence throughout the match	
FREDDY EASTWOOD	6/10
Showed some neat touches and smashed a super 30-yard effort on to the top of the bar	
SUBSTITUTES	
HOOPER; FOR CAMPBELL-RYCE (80)	
HARROLD; FOR BRADBURY (80)	
NOT USED: WELCH; FRANCIS; CLARKE;	

through and rounded Kiely only to hit the post.

Luton boss Mike Newell said: "We gave the ball away all night and that's probably as poor as we've played here.

"Players will have off-days but, when they're all giving it away, you're never going to get near their goal.

"When it's not your day it's not your day, but things could have gone against us at the end."

Southend boss Steve Tilson reflected:

"In the first half we played some good stuff. In the second period Luton pegged us back a bit, but at the death we thought we'd won it when Freddie hit the post.

"Any manager will say the same that when you're at the bottom don't go for you.

"There was nothing between the two sides and a draw was probably a fair result.

"It will give us a lift for the next few weeks because that's probably the longest run we've had - two unbeaten!"