

HATTERS ADD TO SKY BLUES WOES

Luton.....3
Coventry.....1

AHMET Brkovic got on the scoresheet for both sides, before further goals from Rowan Vine and Dean Morgan settled a frantic clash in Luton's favour.

Brkovic cancelled out his own first half stoppage-time strike when he became the only player to beat inspired Hatters keeper Dean Kiely, and Vine and Morgan piled on the misery for Coventry with two goals in two minutes after the break.

Coventry's players are banned from boozing over the Christmas period, but manager Micky Adams may feel like drowning his sorrows with his side having leaked eight goals in their last two games.

Adams, still smarting from the previous week's 5-0 drubbing by West Brom, made four changes, with Baggies goalkeeper Luke Steele in the starting line-up after rejoining the club on emergency loan.

Luton, who were unchanged with stroke victim Sol Davis' anticipated return put on hold, created the first opportunity when top scorer Vine broke down the left and shot at Steele, who made a nervous initial save but gathered the ball

at the second attempt.

Kiely's heroics then kept the scores level with the Luton goal leading a charmed life for the majority of the first half.

First, the hosts failed to deal with a Michael Doyle corner and, with the ball bouncing around the penalty area, Leon McKenzie hooked it towards goal only to see the on loan Portsmouth keeper fling out a hand to

make a superb point-blank save.

And moments later, Kiely conjured up a double save to keep out headers from Stern John and Dele Adebola, before McKenzie, with the goal gaping, shanked the ball over the top from just six-yards.

McKenzie then planted a weak header straight into Kiely's arms from a Stephen Hughes corner before Vine, in a rare Luton attack, was

adjudged offside as he tucked away Carlos Edwards' deflected shot.

Kiely came up with yet another superb save, clawing away Hughes' free kick which looked destined for the top corner, before Luton took the lead seconds before half time.

Brkovic twisted and turned just inside the area before sending a low shot past Steele.

Luton could have gone two up after the break, but Vine's shot deflected off Mikkel Bischoff and over, before Brkovic forced a sprawling save from Steele with a low drive.

Brkovic went from hero to zero on the hour when, under pressure from the considerable presence of Adebola, he inadvertently headed Hughes' free kick past Kiely, who got a touch but could not keep the ball out.

But the Croatian midfielder was breathing a sigh of relief five minutes later when Edwards wriggled clear down the right and crossed for Vine to slide the ball past Steele.

And just two minutes after Vine's 11th goal of the season, Morgan grabbed his fourth with a curling free kick which he bent round the wall and past Steele's outstretched left hand.

City substitute Kevin Kyle headed straight at Kiely late on, but even with four minutes of stoppage-time added on, the demoralised visitors never looked like getting back into the game.



AHMET BRKOVIC

**Newell
thrilled
with
response**

LUTON manager Mike Newell admitted his side were outplayed by Coventry during the first half, but was delighted with the response of his players after the break.

"It's a good result," Newell said.

"They were the better side in the first half so the goal came at a good time for us.

"The goal gave us a lift and then it

was a case of us believing in ourselves. We played better in the second half.

"We had a reasonable season at home last year and people moan and groan sometimes when we aren't wiping the floor with teams, which can be frustrating. People forget we've got a young team here."

Coventry manager Micky Adams was left frustrated by Dean Kiely's heroics in

goal, although he was satisfied with his side's first half display after the debacle of a 5-0 defeat by West Brom the previous weekend.

"Their keeper got man-of-the-match and rightly so," said Adams.

"But that's about as well as we've played away from home this season in the first half and a good response from last week's drubbing."