

STICKY END TO CUP RUN

HATTERS 0 EVERTON 1

Mark Wood reports
from Kenilworth Road

GALLANT Hatters gave Everton a real fright on Hallowe'en night, but the visitors left Kenilworth Road with an all-important extra-time victory in their goodie bag.

Premiership Toffees were made to look extremely ordinary for long periods, but substitute Tim Cahill brought Luton Town's Carling Cup exploits to a sticky end at the fourth-round stage when he stabbed home at the far post in the 101st minute.

Town boss Kevin Blackwell opted to stay with the starting line-up that did so well to defeat Nottingham Forest 2-1 in the league on Saturday.

And David Bell was unlucky not to give Luton the lead when his blistering free-kick from fully 30 yards was deflected just wide on five minutes.

Brave Hatters bow out in extra-time to Toffees

Hatters, playing Paul Furlong as a lone forward with David Edwards supporting, were struggling to play their football far enough upfield and their cause wasn't helped when the veteran striker was substituted after picking up an injury just 20 minutes in.

After an initial flurry of activity the game lulled into a cagey affair with neither side able to impose themselves.

Hatters' best chance of scoring seemed to be from set-pieces and when Darren Currie's 49th-minute free-kick fell to Bell in the area the midfielder could only stab wide.

A slip from substitute Calvin Andrew on 57 minutes seemed to confuse Everton's defence and Edwards seemed through on goal but Everton's backline

recovered just in time and did enough to put the Welshman off.

Seconds later Jaroslaw Fojut was unfortunate to give away a foul on the edge of the area and Alan Stubbs' low free-kick went just wide.

The Toffees then started to take the game by the scruff of the neck. Dean Brill did well to save Phil Neville's deflected shot, while Joleon Lescott pulled his shot wide when he should have done better.

And when Phil Jagielka's messy header squirmed through Brill's legs on 63 minutes Spring arrived in the nick of time to clear off the line.

Former Luton target James Vaughan should then have given the visitors the lead but he glanced his header wide.

Brill once again came to the

rescue for Luton with six minutes left of normal time, getting down well to save a Leon Osman effort from the edge of the area.

But Everton finally broke the deadlock 11 minutes into extra-time when Thomas Gravesen's corner squeezed through and Cahill turned the ball in at the far post.

Spring then saw a shot cleared off the line and Andrew also went close at the death but Everton clung on.

Luton: Brill, Goodall, Perry, Coyne, Bell, Currie (Morgan 104), Robinson, Edwards (McVeigh 104), Spring, Furlong (Andrew 20), Fojut. Subs not used: Hutchison, Jackson.

Everton: Wessels, Lescott, McFadden (Vaughan 71), Stubbs, Jagielka, Neville, Valente, Pienaar (Gravesen 95), Osman, Carsley, Anichebe (Cahill 77). Subs not used: Yakubu, Howard.

STAR HATTER:
Jaroslaw Fojut

Attendance: 8,944