

A single strike is all it takes to earn Hatters a lucrative clash with Liverpool

HATTERS 1 FOREST 0

Carl Field reports from Kenilworth Road

A STIRRING cup show from a determined Hatters side has earned the cash-strapped club a lucrative FA Cup third round tie in the new year.

Liverpool, who will parade their talents at Kenilworth Road before live TV cameras on January 6, spent the evening qualifying for the next round of the Champions League with a 4-0 away win at Marseille.

That shows the scale of the mountain Luton have to climb – but last night they battled all the way to earn their chance against the mighty Reds.

Chants of “bring on the Scousers” reverberated around Kenilworth Road after Calvin Andrew’s priceless second half header found off Nottingham Forest.

Luton were denied time and again in the first half by Forest goalkeeper Paul Smith before Andrew’s 53rd minute strike.

As expected Matt Spring returned to the team after a bout of flu, in place of the ineligible Marc Wilson.

With Paul Furlong suspended, Luton reverted to a 4-4-1-1 formation with Dave Edwards playing in behind lone front man Calvin Andrew. Darren Currie earned a recall in midfield.

Luton fans had their hearts in their mouths. In just the second minute when Dean Brill’s kick was charged down by the onrushing Forest hitman Nathan Tyson, but luckily the ball fell kindly for the Town stopper.

On seven minutes, David Bell’s weak shot from the edge of the box

LUTON TOWN



Unused subs: Goodall, Talbot, Keane, McVeigh

FOREST



Unused subs: Morgan, Roberts

Referee: Scott Mathieson (Cheshire) Att: 5,758 (1,013 Forest)

STAR HATTER: Calvin Andrew – his winner could prove to be priceless

was easily dealt with by Paul Smith in the Forest goal.

And then Dave Edwards flashed an effort wide from Andrew’s headed knockdown just before the quarter hour mark.

Four minutes later Luton were agonisingly close to going in front when Steve Robinson’s diving header from just inside the box looked to be going in, only for the ball to be hacked off the line.

And when Robinson side-footed the resultant rebound across the face of goal, it just needed the faintest of touches to see it home.

But a despairing Edwards could not quite connect with his outstretched boot and the ball bobbed wide.

On 25 minutes Currie tried his luck with a spectacular side-footed effort from some 30 yards out.

The left-foot strike was swerving towards Smith’s top left hand corner but just lacked enough accuracy just to net.

The chances were all coming Luton’s way and on 33 minutes, Bell’s effort forced a terrific save from Smith, who had to turn the ball

Picture by Gareth Owen



SO SOLID: Forest keeper Paul Smith, challenged here by David Bell, stopped everything the home side could throw at him before Calvin Andrew came up with the header which won the game.

behind.

From the corner that followed, the inspirational Town midfielder almost prodded the ball home at the back post but once again Smith was equal to the danger.

Three minutes later the Hatters were pressing forward again, with Currie receiving a delightful crossfield pass on the left hand edge on the box and playing the ball out to Andrew, who forced yet another diving stop from Smith.

The second period started slowly but the breakthrough did finally arrive eight minutes after the break.

Spring sent a cross from the left into a packed penalty area that fell straight onto the head of Andrew, who powered home a header to finally beat the impressive Smith in the Forest goal to the delight of the Kenilworth Town faithful.

Luton were then denied what looked like a stonewall penalty just moments later when Bell’s attempted cross from the right appeared to be handled by for-

mer Northern Ireland international Neil Lennon.

The referee decided that the contact had been made outside the box and awarded Luton a free kick instead, blotting an otherwise impressive display.

The visitors launched a rare attack on the hour mark and Brill had to be at his best to keep out Matt Lockwood’s stinging right-footed effort from the left hand edge of the penalty area.

Forest boss Colin Calderwood threw on Junior Agogo and Chris Commons with 20 minutes remaining in attempt to save their cup dream.

The two combined just a minute after coming on as Commons set through his forward partner, who prodded the ball past Brill.

But his effort didn’t have the legs to creep over the line and it was hacked away to safety by Chris Perry.

At the other end, Andrew got up dangerously again to meet Bell’s inswinging free kick but this time his fierce header was well over the target.