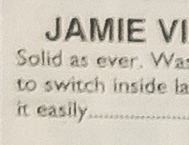


HOW THEY RATED



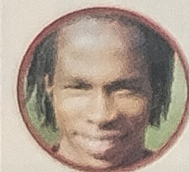
PETER BREZOVAN
Not a busy evening but almost gifted Luton an early opener with a poor parry. Not his best kicking either.....6



JAMIE VINCENT
Solid as ever. Was again asked to switch inside late on and did it easily.....7



MIGUEL COMMINGES
Not as effective going forward but defended well. You can see why Malpas wants to keep him longer.....7



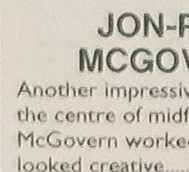
PATRICK KANYUKA
An impressive display. The new signing from QPR won everything in the air and even played through a bad head wound.....8



HASNEY ALJOFREE
Inspirational as ever. Captain marvel helped Kanyuka through but was forced off late on.....8



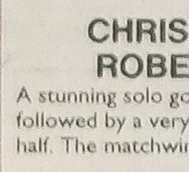
STAR MAN



JON-PAUL MCGOVERN
Another impressive display in the centre of midfield. McGovern worked tirelessly and looked creative.....8



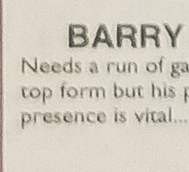
LEE PEACOCK
Peacock's work does not always go noticed in the middle but his teammates certainly appreciate it. Another good shift.....7



CHRISTIAN ROBERTS
A stunning solo goal was followed by a very good second half. The matchwinner.....8



ANTHONY MCNAMEE
Still finding his feet at Ton but again showed signs of promise...6



BARRY CORR
Needs a run of games to regain top form but his physical presence is vital.....6



MOSES ASHIKODI
Will prove a good signing. Is obviously powerful and pacy but just lacked composure with the ball.....6

SUBSTITUTES

Blair Sturrock (Ashikodi 75)
Sofiene Zaaboub (McNamee 63)
Andy Nicholas (Aljofree 76)
Not used: Phil Smith (GK), Michael Pook

LUTON: Dean Brill, Alan Goodall, Chris Perry, David Bell, Darren Currie (Sam Parkin 45), Richard Jackson, Drew Talbot (Stephen O'Leary 63), Calvin Andrew (Dean Morgan 45), Keith Keane, Matthew Spring, Paul Furlong

SUBS NOT USED: Don Hutchison, Marlon Beresford

REFEREE: Mr Carl Boyeson.....9
The best performance from an official I have seen all season

BAD BOYS

BOOKED: Town: Sturrock 82

BUT CAN YOU DO

Malpas lays down the challenge to hero Roberts after wonder winner



by Andy Cryer
at Kenilworth Road

acryer@newswwits.co.uk

"IF YOU see Robbo in training that is what you see, he is either a Premiership player or a pub player but we need to get more performances from him."

Town manager Maurice Malpas' description of the mercurial Christian Roberts may have been a slight exaggeration but the Welsh winger accepts consistency has been his biggest downfall throughout his career.

Last night's stunning individual winning goal lit up an otherwise grim evening at Kenilworth Road but many Town fans will be wondering which Roberts will turn up in the weekend's clash against Northampton.

His second half performance last night showed everyone his importance to the team, adding that bit of creativity which was

lacking at Crewe on Saturday, but his manager knows all too well he can be as frustrating as he is scintillating.

Still there can be no denying his drilled 52nd minute winner came at a crucial time for the Robins as they move to just five points off the play-off places with

games in hand over most of their rivals.

And after a lengthy spell on the sidelines after a knee operation, Roberts is relishing meeting his manager's challenge head on.

He said: "Who would not want a challenge like that?"

"I never go into a game want-

ing to play bad. That is a challenge but I have had managers saying that to me through the

years so another one is fine.

"I was delighted to get the nod for the game.

"I have had a difficult couple of months to be

honest, with my knee injury, and the manager pulled me and said he was thinking about giving me a chance and did I want it.

"I stress to you I want to play football, I want to be at this club. Swindon Town is going in the right direction and I want to be a part of it.

"I have had to be patient as I have just had an operation. I have been out for five to six weeks and it is difficult because we know the history with my knee but I have had to bite my lip.

"How could I complain when the lads have been putting in performances like Nottingham Forest? I wouldn't have had a leg to stand on."

While Roberts' mazy dribble and powerful finish will take all the headlines, Town's defensive rearguard, especially debutant Pat Kanyuka, can also take huge credit from the deserved victory.

Skipper Hasney Aljofree led by example in the heart of the defence, until getting taken off to have six stitches in an eye wound, while Kanyuka showed maturity beyond his years to slot in alongside him, despite also taking a hefty whack on the head that left him needing stitches as well.

Jon-Paul McGovern carried on

KEY MOMENT

Christian Roberts' 52nd minute winner. The Welshman brilliantly ghosted past two men before driving the ball past a helpless Dean Brill. After this he and his teammates grew in confidence and there was only ever one winner.

YOU'RE A BLOODY HERO Lee Peacock congratulates bandaged debutant Patrick Kanyuka at the final whistle



THE DISCIPLINE

It was a disciplined performance from Town in more than one sense. They kept their shape throughout and Aljofree and Kanyuka showed they were prepared to take a boot in the head for the cause.

Team ethic working a treat as Maurice savours start

MAURICE Malpas has hailed his Town's side's collective spirit - insisting any successful play-off push will not be based on just a few "superstars", writes ANDY CRYER.

Christian Roberts' brilliant 52nd winner earned Malpas his first away win as Town manager at Luton but he was keen to hail the uglier side of his team's display.

Defenders Hasney Aljofree and Pat Kanyuka received six stitches in the head each for their efforts but, just four games into his reign, Malpas is excited by his team's togetherness.

He said: "Our back four was tremendous. Our team does not have any so-called superstars. Our biggest thing is our teamwork, our camaraderie and being together.

"The best way for us to win is to work our socks off and if we produce performances like that we will win far more games than we lose.

"It is credit to Patrick for coming in and doing so well and big credit to Hasney Aljofree as well. He talked Patrick through the game so I can't speak highly enough about them.

"That is what we need. Corr came in and needs the games but he worked his tail off. If they work their tail off collectively there is nothing more to ask from them."

The win leaves Town within touching distance of the pack chasing a play-off place in League One and, with Northampton at home next up on Saturday, Malpas is keen to continue his impressive league

start as manager.

He said: "That was a fantastic three points. It was a difficult match with the first half quite scrappy because both sides were determined to do well.

"In the second half we were far better, got the goal and had a couple of other chances to finish the game off. I thought the defence was fantastic and the midfield made it easy for them by defending well in front of them.

"People have criticised us for getting too many draws so it was important we got something.

"We knew it would be difficult but I want to get near the play-offs it is games like these we have to start winning.

The inclusion of recent signing Kanyuka was a surprise but, with Jerel Ifil suspended, Malpas insists it was not a difficult decision.

He said: "We took a chance by throwing Pat Kanyuka in. The lad has hardly trained, he has only been at the club for a few days. We felt he was the right one to play and for an hour he was great.

"For the last half hour I don't think he knew where he was or what he was doing after getting a knock on the head but he was up and wanted to play on. A big credit to the boy.

"I don't think it was difficult but my only concern was how long he was going to last. He kept going though and we will wrap him in cotton wool."

Attendance: 5,738

Weather: Rain



YOUNG GUNS GO FOR IT!

Town's under 18 team claim famous FA Youth Cup triumph over Premier League Middlesbrough: REPORT & REACTION ON PAGE 49

IT AGAIN, CHRISTIAN?



	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Swansea	27	17	6	4	52	22	57
Doncaster	28	13	8	7	41	28	47
Nottm Forest	27	12	10	5	42	20	46
Walsall	29	11	13	5	35	24	46
Carlisle	27	13	6	8	39	28	45
Leeds	29	18	5	6	49	24	44
Leyton Orient	29	12	8	9	35	39	44
Tranmere	29	12	7	10	33	29	43
Southend	28	12	4	12	42	40	40
SWINDON	27	10	9	8	36	32	39
Northampton	29	10	8	11	35	39	38
Yeovil	29	10	8	11	28	32	38
Oldham	27	9	10	8	28	24	37
Brighton	26	9	8	9	32	30	35
Huddersfield	27	10	4	13	27	42	34
Hartlepool	28	9	6	13	39	42	33
Bristol Rovers	25	7	10	8	27	28	31
Gillingham	28	8	7	13	29	43	31
Millwall	27	8	6	13	29	39	30
Cheltenham	27	8	6	13	22	36	30
Crewe	29	7	9	13	27	43	30
Bournemouth	29	7	5	17	35	54	26
Luton	28	9	7	12	31	35	24
Port Vale	29	5	6	18	26	46	21

● Leeds deducted 15 points for breaching competition rules; Luton deducted 10 points for going into administration

in his central midfield role to great effect while Malpas' decision to play Roberts instead of Michael Pook out wide turned out to be a match-winning decision.

Roberts said: "It was a massive win for us. We have had some decent games in recent weeks and tonight gives us a good boost of confidence.

"Overall it was a massive performance, especially by the defenders.

"Hasney and Patrick were fantastic, they proved they can put their head in where it hurts and it was a great result for the club.

"I said from day one, if we do our jobs silent and quietly we will be okay.

"We don't need to shout about things and scream from roof tops we need to do our job quietly and if we keep doing that we won't have a problem.

"We are not in a bad position so things are looking good and who would not want to be in this position?"

Malpas now ponders how to get his winger to produce on a similar level every week because he

knows a fully firing Roberts is an exciting prospect.

He said: "Robbo got a bit of a roasting after Saturday, not because he played poorly but because he never does it for long enough.

"Tonight I thought he was average in the first half and excellent in the second half.

"I don't know if it is confidence or motivation, but we will try everything to try and get him to

play more consistently even during games.

"He has to strive for that. There is no point in him being a hero today and a

dumpling on

Saturday.

"He has to do the same Saturday if not better. Everyone knows he has ability but he has to put a mentality to that.

"One game in a month does not mean you are a good player. Five or six good games in a month do."

MATCH WINNER Christian Roberts is joined by his teammates to celebrate his crucial goal

Pictures: DAVE EVANS



NOT TOO BAD Town physio Dick Mackey sees the bright side as he helps off skipper Hasney Aljofree with a cut head

MATCH IN DETAIL

Two mins: Town started on the front foot and Moses Ashikodi raced clear onto Jon-Paul McGovern's through ball but could only drag his shot wide of the target, via a deflection.

Three minutes: Skipper Hasney Aljofree hit a speculative 35-yard shot tamely wide while Lee Peacock flicked Roberts' left wing free kick agonisingly wide of goal.

13 mins: Luton's David Bell almost stole the lead against the run of play, shooting wide of the post after a powerful run.

16 mins: Another long-range Bell strike looked to have handed the hosts the lead, after Drew Talbot tapped home the rebound from Peter Brezovan's parry, but was belatedly flagged for offside.

23 mins: The lively Ashikodi should have handed Town the lead with just goalkeeper Dean Brill to beat from eight yards, but he leaned back and blazed wildly over the bar.

32 mins: Talbot looked certain to score from close range after an inviting Bell cross, but Miguel Commings threw himself in to clear.

37 mins: Roberts made ground down the right and cut the ball across but Corr's attempted chip sailed harmlessly over the bar.

52 minutes - GOAL (Roberts): Jon-Paul McGovern cleverly switched play from right to left, with Christian Roberts easing past Alan Goodall as he ghosted into the area. The Welshman then cut inside Chris Perry before hammering the ball into the bottom corner past Brill.

56 minutes: Roberts again beat Goodall on the right before standing a cross up, which Peacock headed goalwards but it was easily blocked.

75 minutes: Struggling to get into the game, ex-Town man and Luton sub Sam Parkin's clever one-two with Paul Furlong ended in the latter skewing his shot well wide.

81 minutes: Skipper Hasney Aljofree was taken off with a head injury, replaced by Andy Nicholas at left back with Jamie Vincent shuffled into the middle and despite having to play through an astonishing seven minutes of injury time, Town held out.

MATCH STATS

SHOTS ON TARGET

First half: Luton 2 Town 0
Second half: Luton 0 Town 2

SHOTS OFF TARGET

First half: Luton 3 Town 5
Second half: Luton 3 Town 6

CORNERS

Luton 4 Town 3

OFFSIDES

Luton 3 Town 6

NEXT UP

SATURDAY: Northampton (H) Coca-Cola League One, 3pm



HE'S BEHIND YOU Barry Corr feels the force of a Luton challenge