

MAN OF THE MATCH



DON HUTCHISON

Veteran's goal-line clearances kept Luton in it

THE SQUAD

Brill; Asafu-Adjaye, Hutchison, Keane, Davis; McVeigh, Spring, O'Leary, Emanuel; Parkin, Andrew. Subs: Beresford, Beavan, Goodall, Robinson, Currie

MATCH FACTS

SHOTS ON TARGET

NORTHAMPTON 6 LUTON 9

SHOTS OFF TARGET

NORTHAMPTON 4 LUTON 8

CORNERS

NORTHAMPTON 4 LUTON 5

OFFSIDE

NORTHAMPTON 2 LUTON 3

BOOKINGS

NORTHAMPTON

Coke 42, Hubertz 90

LUTON

O'Leary 69

REFEREE

KEVIN FRIEND (LEICESTERSHIRE)

ATTENDANCE

5,132

FOOTBALL LEAGUE ONE

Brighton	2	Port Vale	3
Bristol Rovers	0	Hartlepool	0
Carlisle	2	Yeovil	1
Crewe	1	Southend	3
Huddersfield	2	Doncaster	2
Leyton Orient	0	Leeds	2
Millwall	1	Gillingham	1
Northampton	2	Luton	1
Nottm Forest	3	Cheltenham	1
Swansea	1	Bournemouth	2
Swindon	3	Oldham	0
Walsall	2	Tranmere	1

FOOTBALL LEAGUE ONE

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Swansea	41	24	10	7	74	38	82
Carlisle	41	23	9	9	60	37	78
D'caster	42	21	10	11	59	38	73
Nott'm Forest	41	18	15	8	56	29	69
Southend	41	20	8	13	64	51	68
Leeds	41	23	10	8	64	34	64
Tranmere	42	17	11	14	50	42	62
Walsall	41	15	15	11	47	37	60
Brighton	41	16	12	13	52	45	60
Oldham	42	15	13	14	50	42	58
North'ton	42	15	13	14	53	51	58
Leyton O	42	15	11	16	44	55	56
Hartlepool	42	15	8	19	60	60	53
Huddersf'd	41	16	5	20	45	62	53
Swindon	41	13	12	16	53	52	51
Yeovil	42	13	10	19	34	51	49
Bristol Rvrs	39	11	15	13	40	43	48
Cheltenham	42	12	12	18	37	56	48
Millwall	42	12	10	20	40	56	44
Crewe	42	10	14	18	40	59	44
Gillingham	42	11	11	20	40	67	44
B'nouth	42	14	6	22	55	69	38
Port Vale	42	9	8	25	44	72	35
Luton	42	11	10	21	42	57	33

Two-faced Hatters blow their chances

LUTON TOWN FC

LEAGUE ONE

NORTHAMPTON 2

Hubertz pen (34), Dyer 41

LUTON TOWN 1

Parkin 90

07/08

TOM LEECH

at Sixfields Stadium

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IF FIFA ever decide to shorten the length of football matches to 45 minutes Luton Town would be world beaters.

The schizophrenic nature of Mick Harford's Hatters was evident yesterday as the team was battered in the first half and conceded goals from Poul Hubertz and Alex Dyer.

After the break they completely out-classed their neighbours but only had Sam Parkin's late goal to show for it.

It was a role reversal of Tuesday night's game at Gillingham where Luton undid all their good work in the first half by surrendering the lead and the match in the second.

If Harford could combine the first half of Gillingham and the second of Northampton Hatters would not be facing relegation.

Instead they began the afternoon knowing that defeat at Sixfields, coupled with Crewe winning at home to Southend would confirm a drop to the bottom tier of English football.

Hatters seemed intent on keeping their end of the bargain gifting Northampton the advantage 34 minutes in. Gangly forward Hubertz had his back to goal when he got on the end of a long ball but was hauled down just inside the box by Sol Davis.

It was a needless foul by the full back who still had half of Hubertz's shirt in his hand when he went to appeal the decision. Dubbed 'the lower league Peter Crouch' by the home fans Hubertz took the penalty himself and provided a finish the Premiership striker would have been pleased with, sending Dean Brill to the wrong way.

The goal came at a time when you felt the game could still go either way but after Hubertz's spot kick heads dropped and Northampton took control.

A combination of Brill's glove and Don Hutchison on the line kept out Adebayo Akinfenwa's powerful header before the Cobblers made it



NO PRISONERS: Stepen O'Leary does well to avoid this tackle at Northampton yesterday

two on 41 minutes. Daniel Jones was allowed time to deliver a cross from the left wing and Dyer's deflected header flew past Brill into the top corner.

Only Hutchison's diligence made sure it stayed respectable at the break when another block spared Luton's blushes. A slick one-two between Akinfenwa and Andy Holt cut the Hatters open and teed the winger to shoot. Holt's low drive beat Brill but not the covering Hutchison, whose slide stopped the ball rolling in.

Harford made just one change to the side from midweek recalling Calvin Andrew up front and the young striker came inches from getting Luton back in the game. Moments after the restart Andrew muscled through the middle and

Mark Bunn rushed off his line. It looked the wrong choice from the keeper when Andrew's shot whistled past him but the ball went the wrong side of the post.

If that missed opportunity was forgivable his howler on the hour mark was indefensible. Ed Asafu-Adjaye's cross was perfect, Andrew was unmarked six yards out.

It looked a nailed on goal – instead Andrew's glancing header went more in the direction of the corner flag than the net.

Substitute Darren Currie, making his first appearance for two months, fluffed an even bigger sitter seconds later. The winger showed signs of rust when blasting straight at Bunn.

On 74 minutes Bunn pulled off a world class save. Parkin's header

looped over Bunn initially and went to Currie at the far post. Currie squared it for McVeigh to volley into an unguarded goal but Bunn flung himself across to block the Ulsterman's effort.

When Stephen O'Leary was booked for supposedly diving after being scythed down in the box it looked like Hatters were destined not to score. But Northampton old-boy Parkin had other ideas, grabbing a consolation with nearly the last kick of the match.

Currie kept the ball well on the edge of the area and fooled his marker to squeeze in a low shot that Bunn could only parry. The lurking Parkin slammed in the rebound to give Luton a goal their second half dominance deserved.

Post match reaction... post match reaction...post match...

HATTERS boss Mick Harford was left trying to figure out how Hatters have not taken a single point out of their last two games.

The defeat to local rivals Northampton was particularly hard to swallow after Luton's second half performance and missed chances.

"We had a lot of the play and didn't deserve to lose," said Harford.

"I've got 11 players in the dressing room and none of them should have been on the losing side today.

"Over the last six of seven games we should have had more points but the table doesn't lie.

"In parts of games we make the wrong decisions and it costs us. Their man of the match was the goalkeeper which says a lot.

"We gifted them their opener although for a big lad he (Hubertz) hit the floor pretty easily.

"There was some good defending from Northampton in the second half – there needed to be.

"I felt we were the better team from start to finish."

Next up for Luton is Brighton at home but with games running out

Harford admitted next Saturday will seal their relegation fate.

"We live to fight another day due to other results but there's a massive possibility we'll go down next weekend," he said.

"I'm not going to criticize my players for missing chances. They got in great positions in the first place but it didn't go our way."