

Hatters hit rock bottom

08/09

SILKMEN BOUNCE BACK FROM SIX-GOAL HUMILIATION TO END TOWN'S EARLY SPELL OF GOOD FORM

LUTON TOWN FC

LEAGUE TWO
MACCLESFIELD TOWN 2
Yeo 12, Jennings 61

LUTON TOWN 1
Charles 90

TOM LEECH
at MOSS ROSE

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BEFORE yesterday's game Macclesfield Town hadn't scored a league goal; had no points; had lost their previous game 6-0 at home and were longer odds for the League Two championship than Luton.

Ninety minutes later they looked like world-beaters as Hatters undid their strong start away from home with a pitiful display against the Silkmen.

Simon Yeo gave Macclesfield the lead in a one-sided first half before James Jennings made it two on the hour.

Substitute Ryan Charles pulled one back in added time with a curling free kick, but by then the damage was well and truly done.

Luton made just one change from last weekend's win at Exeter but it was a change they could have done without.

Talisman Kevin Nicholls was ruled out through injury and replaced as captain and in the heart of midfield by Kevin Watson.

With their pride dented by last Saturday's result Macclesfield came out with a point to prove and made Luton virtual bystanders by dominating the first half.

They went ahead in style on 12 minutes through Yeo's cheeky piece of opportunism.

From a long ball the veteran forward was allowed to control the pass on the edge of the box and spied Dean Brill off his line. With a deft touch Yeo lofted the ball over the stranded keeper and celebrated in front of former Macclesfield manager Paul Ince who had taken his seat in the directors' box just minutes before.

Yeo's eye for goal was evident again five minutes later when he tested Brill's instincts with a fierce near post drive.

Luton looked rudderless without their inspirational skipper and only a defensive slip-up gave them a chance at Macclesfield's goal on the half-hour mark.

Defender Matthew Flynn's clearance smacked into Rossi Jarvis and the ball fell straight into the path of Lewis Emanuel who spurned the opportunity by blazing over the bar.

Mick Harford chose to shuffle his pack at half-time and Sol Davis made way for teenage striker Charles on the left wing.

Charles' enthusiasm looked wasted out wide however and Luton looked no more likely to score with three forwards on the



IMPACT MAN: Ryan Charles came on as substitute to score Hatters' consolation goal late on

pitch – unlike Macclesfield who doubled their advantage an hour in.

A short corner caught Hatters out and Jennings made his way into the box with alarming ease. The midfielder drove his shot through a crowded area and past Brill at full stretch.

Ten minutes later it could have been three. Danny Thomas provided a curling cross for Yeo who had it all to do with his back to goal.

But with a twist of his head he used the pace of the pass to loop the ball over a despairing Brill from ten yards. However Yeo's second of the game was ruled out for offside.

Asa Hall and Tristan Plummer were introduced as Luton looked for a way through the Silkmen's stubborn defence and the on-loan Bristol City winger raised spirits with ten minutes to go.

Plummer weaved past two men down the right before firing a shot that finally made Jonathan Brain work in the Macclesfield goal.

There were barely seconds left when Luton were awarded a

free kick on the edge of the box which Charles stepped up to take.

He had the final say with a fine shot that curled around the wall and flew into the top corner.

The stats

FOOTBALL LEAGUE TWO

Saturday				
Aldershot	2	Darlington	1	
Brentford	2	Dag & Red	1	
Chesterfield	1	Rotherham	0	
Chester	1	Bury	1	
Exeter	2	Ac'ton St'nley	1	
Gillingham	3	Grimsby	0	
Lincoln City	2	Barnet	0	
Macclesfield	2	Luton	1	
Morecambe	1	Shrewsbury	0	
Notts County	1	B'mouth	1	
Port Vale	0	Bradford	2	
Rochdale	0	Wycombe	1	

THE SQUAD

Luton: Brill; Keane, Pilkington, Spillane, Davis (Charles '46'); Gnaka (Hall '61'), Watson, Jarvis (Plummer '72'), Emanuel; Parkin, Martin. Subs: Logan, Roper.

LEAGUE TWO TABLE

TEAM	P	W	D	L	F	A	W	D	L	F	A	GD	PTS
1 WYCOMBE	5	1	1	0	2	1	3	0	0	4	0	5	13
2 BRADFORD	5	2	0	0	4	1	2	0	1	6	3	6	12
3 BURY	5	2	0	0	3	1	1	2	0	5	3	4	11
4 DAG & RED	5	1	1	0	7	1	2	0	1	6	4	8	10
5 SHREWSBURY	5	2	0	0	5	0	1	1	1	3	3	5	10
6 BRENTFORD	5	2	1	0	6	1	1	0	1	1	1	5	10
7 GILLINGHAM	5	2	0	1	4	1	1	1	0	3	2	4	10
8 ALDERSHOT	5	2	1	0	6	4	1	0	1	1	1	2	10
9 CHESTERFIELD	5	1	0	2	2	4	2	0	0	4	1	1	9
10 PORT VALE	5	1	0	2	3	5	1	1	0	4	2	0	7
11 EXETER	5	1	0	2	2	3	1	1	0	2	1	0	7
12 ACC STANLEY	5	1	0	1	2	1	1	0	2	3	3	1	6
13 DARLINGTON	5	0	1	1	2	3	1	1	1	7	2	4	5
14 ROCHDALE	5	1	1	1	4	3	0	1	1	0	2	-1	5
15 NOTTS COUNTY	5	0	3	0	3	3	0	1	1	2	3	-1	4
16 LINCOLN CITY	5	1	1	1	4	4	0	0	2	0	2	-2	4
17 MORECAMBE	5	1	0	2	3	5	0	1	1	2	3	-3	4
18 CHESTER	5	1	1	1	6	4	0	0	2	1	9	-6	4
19 MACCLESFIELD	5	1	0	2	2	9	0	0	2	0	6	-13	3
20 GRIMSBY	5	0	1	1	0	1	0	1	2	1	8	-8	2
21 BARNET	5	0	0	2	1	4	0	0	3	2	10	-11	0
22 ROTHERHAM	5	2	0	0	4	1	1	1	1	3	2	4	-7
23 B'MOUTH	5	0	1	1	1	2	0	2	1	3	5	-3	-14
24 LUTON	5	0	1	1	2	4	2	0	1	3	2	-1	-23

Post match...

LUTON TOWN boss Mick Harford refused to blame the display at Macclesfield on missing Kevin Nicholls insisting his side are not a one-man team.

"I'm disappointed with the result and the performance," he said. "We weren't at the races today."

"Kevin wasn't the reason for our defeat. He pulled up with a hamstring injury yesterday morning but I'd like to think he'll be back next weekend."

"You know Kevin – he'll be keen to get back as soon as possible."

"The players were forewarned that Macclesfield had been on the receiving end of some hidings recently and would be up for it."

"We didn't create a lot in terms of open play and we were poor in the final third. We went long with direct balls on a few occasions and that isn't my preference."

"At times Macclesfield played with energy and verve and we couldn't match it."

"We'll begin again on Monday, look at the video, learn from our mistakes and move forward."

The one positive from the trip to Moss Rose was Ryan Charles, whose free kick at the end marked his return from the Kenilworth Road treatment room.

"It's good to be back with the lads," he said. "I'm getting fitter and stronger."

"I tried to come on and make an impact. I used to play on the wing in the youth team so it wasn't that out of position for me. I just needed to get used to the speed of the game. The gaffer told me to come on and make an impact. "Hopefully it'll be different next week."

"The last two Fridays I've been practising free kicks and it looked in my range so I took it. I knew it was going in when I hit it."

MAN OF THE MATCH



RYAN CHARLES

Sweet free kick at the death gave fans something to cheer

MATCH FACTS

SHOTS ON TARGET
MACCLESFIELD 7 LUTON 5

SHOTS OFF TARGET
MACCLESFIELD 7 LUTON 4

BOOKINGS
MACCLESFIELD - 0

LUTON JARVIS, 56
REFEREE: ANDY PENN (W Midlands)

ATTENDANCE: 2,349