

Newton theory helps Hatters defy the odds

Cambridge United 3 (2)
Luton Town 4 (0)

SPIRITED Hatters showed just what they are made of according to winger Adam Newton as they produced an incredible comeback to win 4-3 at Cambridge United on Saturday, writes Mark Wood.

Ten-man Town found themselves 2-0 down at the break after Liam Hatch had been dismissed for two dubious bookings, but they launched an unbelievable second-half fightback to win three potentially invaluable points.

A Kevin Gallen double, a magical Rossi Jarvis strike and a first-ever senior goal from Jake Howells earned Luton a memorable victory at the Abbey Stadium, and Newton hailed the way they responded to their abject 3-0 defeat at Wrexham the Tuesday before.

He joked: "I can't remember what the score was. I've not played a game like that since school."

"The most important thing was that we showed ourselves, each other, the fans and the manager the right reaction from the other day, even though we had the setback with having Hatchy sent off."

"We were unhappy with what Wrexham did to us on Tuesday and we set out to do the same."

The 28-year-old winger admitted the Hatters felt aggrieved by the fact they were trailing 2-0 at the break, but came out after the interval with nothing to lose.

Newton continued: "You get those times in football when you play well and don't get the rub of the green. I myself felt hard done by and so did a lot of others, what with the penalty, which I thought was a shocking decision."

"We had nothing to lose. That's what the manager was saying. Only the people in the dressing room could go out and show what



INTHETHICK OF IT: Adam Newton and his team-mates put in a committed and wholehearted show to see off the U's

we're about second half."

And he was full of praise for the attacking mindset 10-man Hatters showed after the break to pull off the most remarkable of victories.

Newton added: "From our point of view it shows a good positive mindset. We had the little setback when they had the equaliser and we still took the game to them."

"In hindsight you would take the draw but that's not what we are about. No matter what they threw at us we dealt with it."

Town produced a magnificent performance on a dramatic afternoon as they responded in fabulous fashion to their lacklustre defeat at Wrexham.

Manager Mick Harford reverted back to a 4-4-2 formation and made just one change in personnel as Tom Craddock was dropped to the bench, with Howells playing on the left of midfield and Gallen partnering Hatch up front.

Luton looked the better side from the off with Howells warming Danny Potter's gloves with a shot on the turn after only four minutes.

The hosts looked lively enough going forward, but Town created the better chances with Gallen fir-

ing over and Newton side-footing wide from the edge of the area when he should have done far better.

Former Town winger Courtney Pitt gave full-back Claude Gnaka a torrid time throughout the game and he broke the deadlock with the U's first effort of the game on 20 minutes. Mark Beesley teed the unmarked winger up on the edge of the box and he squeezed his effort past Mark Tyler.

Town continued to look the more likely team, but Jarvis could only fizz just over when well placed while Gallen's flick header lacked the venom to truly trouble Potter.

And referee Robert Madley then made a terrible decision when he gifted the hosts a penalty for a non-existent foul by Alan White on Anthony Tonkin.

The defender clearly got the ball and incensed Town striker Hatch then foolishly got himself booked for arguing with the official.

Tyler got a strong hand to Chris Holroyd's powerful penalty, but couldn't keep it out as Cambridge scored twice from just two efforts.

And Hatch paid the ultimate price for his earlier indiscretion when he was, perhaps, handed a

harsh second yellow card for a sliding challenge on Cambridge skipper Paul Carden just before the break.

With the odds stacked against them, 10-man Town put together one of the greatest ever halves of football by a Luton team.

They were given hope just three minutes in when White's header from Jarvis' corner was pushed off the line by Potter, but Gallen was on hand to scramble the ball into the roof of the net.

Gnaka was then lucky not to be handed a second yellow card for a foul and he was swiftly replaced by Callum Reynolds.

Gallen dragged a good chance wide on 58 minutes, before playing a part in the best goal of the game two minutes later.

Jarvis was the architect and executioner as he drove forward from midfield, before exchanging passes with Gallen on the edge of the box and magically curling the ball past the spellbound Potter.

Seconds later and Luton were ahead. A poor defensive header let Gallen in and, although his drilled effort was well saved by Potter, Howells was on hand to fire home his first goal at this level.

Luton's lead lasted just six minutes though. Dan Gleeson's cross picked out Wayne Hatswell at the far post and although Tyler pulled off a brilliant stop to deny the centre-half, Holroyd was on hand to slam the ball home.

With 16 minutes left a mass of bodies tumbled in the area at a corner and, somewhat surprisingly, Madley pointed to the spot and Gallen kept his cool to send Potter the wrong way.

A treble substitution by the U's failed to undo Luton's resolute defending and Tyler ensured a memorable triumph when he somehow turned Brian Saah's close-range effort round the post with three minutes left.

STAR HATTER: Kevin Gallen: Battered veteran was simply fantastic on the day.