



NO CHANCE, SURELY: Chris Holroyd powers home the penalty to put United 2-0 up just past the half-hour mark. SPO 597690

Cambridge Utd 3 Luton Town 4

Pitt 20 Gallen 48, 75 (pen)
Holroyd 33 (pen), 65 Jarvis 60
Howells 62

Attendance: 4,870 (away 1,728)

CAMBRIDGE UNITED
Danny POTTER 6
Dan GLEESON 6
Brian SAAH 5
Wayne HATSWELL 5
Anthony TONKIN 5
Robbie WILLMOTT 6
Paul CARDEN 5
Jai REASON 5
Courtney PITT 6
Chris HOLROYD ★ 7
Mark BEESLEY 7

Substitutes: Crow (Beesley, 76min), Phillips (Willmott, 76), Ives (Pitt, 76) **Not used:** Coulson, Parkinson.

LUTON TOWN
Tyler, Gnapka (Reynolds, 53), Murray, Hall, White, Pilkington, Newton, Howells (Blackett, 63), Hatch, Jarvis, Gallen (Craddock, 81). **Not used:** Gore, Charles.
Referee: Robert Madley.
Sent off: Luton - Hatch (second yellow, foul) 43.
Booked: Luton - Gnapka (foul) 8, Hatch (dissent) 33, Murray (foul) 68, United - Tonkin (foul) 45, Saah (foul) 74.

Match statistics

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Oxford Utd	13	10	2	1	25	8	32
Kettering	13	7	3	3	19	10	24
Stevenage	12	6	5	1	18	9	23
Mansfield	13	7	2	4	23	15	23
York	12	6	4	2	18	10	22
Luton	12	6	4	2	17	12	22
Tamworth	13	5	7	1	17	12	22
Crawley Town	13	6	3	4	14	18	21
Cambridge Utd	13	5	5	3	25	13	20
AFC Wimbledon	12	5	5	2	21	11	20
Rushden & Diamonds	13	5	5	3	22	16	20

Self-destruction complete as U's gift Hatters lifeline

EXTRAORDINARY is just about the only word that could be used to attempt to sum up a game with so much incident both on and off the field.

But it was one Cambridge United had in the palm of their hand and conspired to give away.

At 2-0 up and Luton down to 10 men at half time, it should have been a matter of just taking the sting out of the game and frustrating the visitors before possibly boosting the goal difference when United had gone before.

However, it will go down as a day when Martin Ling's side shot themselves spectacularly in the foot, with a mad 20 minutes at the start of the second half, effectively killing off the good work that had gone before.

To be fair, had Luton not bought their shooting boots from the suppliers of the infamously hit-and-miss Scud missiles they could easily have been in front in the first half.

But, United took advantage of their

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■ AARON MASON



wastefulness when Courtney Pitt marked his first start of the season by coolly stroking home from 15 yards after fellow recall Mark Beesley laid a square pass into his path midway through the first half.

The visitors continued to create chances, but when United were awarded a penalty just after the half-hour when Alan White appeared to get a touch of the ball as well as bringing down Anthony Tonkin, extra police suddenly arrived in the gap separating home and away fans in the Habbins Stand.

Chris Holroyd planted the spot kick to Mark Tyler's right to double United's lead and equal his goal tally from last season.

The already simmering atmosphere threatened to boil over when Liam Hatch was sent off just before the break after

collecting his second yellow card for a foul on Paul Carden, having earlier been booked for dissent after disagreeing with the United penalty award.

Suspended Kevin Nicholls was involved in an altercation with a home supporter in the Main Stand moments later with fans' director Colin Proctor attempting to cool things down before the Hatters' captain and his spectating team-mates were led away by a steward.

Legend has it Luton boss Mick Harford was the only player to join Wimbledon during the Crazy Gang years who did not have to go through a humiliating initiation ritual because his new team-mates were so scared of his hard man reputation.

If that is the case, one can only imagine what went on in the visitors' changing room at half time on the back of their 3-0 defeat at Wrexham on Tuesday.

Whatever it was, did the trick, as they came out all guns blazing, despite being a man short, with Kevin Gallen stabbing

home from close range after Danny Potter did well to claw away White's header from Rossi Jarvis' corner.

Fate lent a hand when Luton should have gone down to nine men soon after when the already-booked Claude Gnapka's chopped down Holroyd.

Perhaps sensing the response from the 1,784 away fans if he took such action, referee Robert Madley bottled out of dishing out another caution.

Harford was quick to see he had a walking red card on his hands and immediately substituted the Frenchman.

But United did not learn from their previous mistake when Jarvis was allowed to fire a curling shot past a rooted Potter on the hour after playing a one-two with Gallen to get the Hatters back on terms.

More non-existent defending followed two minutes later with Jake Howells on hand to slot in from 12 yards after Potter could only parry an effort from Gallen.

Howells had to come off after injuring himself in scoring the goal that gave Luton

an unbelievable advantage. United looked to have sorted themselves out when Holroyd levelled soon after by prodding home after Tyler did well to push away Wayne Hatswell's header from a Dan Gleeson cross.

However, Luton had the ball in the back of the net again through White, following a corner only for Madley to have blown a split second before to award them a penalty believing the Hatters defender's shirt had been pulled by the below-par Brian Saah, who was booked for his efforts.

Gallen sent Potter the wrong way with his spot kick to put the visitors back in front.

Ling made a triple substitution with Danny Crow, Lee Phillips and Sam Ives coming on for Beesley, Pitt and Robbie Willmott as United switched to 4-3-3.

But, they could not unlock Luton for a fourth time, as former United man Fred Murray threw his shirt to the travelling fans in celebration of a famous comeback at the final whistle.

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BACK IN COURT: After being given his first start of the campaign, Courtney Pitt struck first for United (above), to the delight (left) of the player himself and team-mates Mark Beesley, Dan Gleeson and Wayne Hatswell (obscured), SPO 597673 & SPO 597676



ROT SETTLES IN: United's Dan Gleeson cannot stop Jake Howells poking home Luton's third goal.

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