

Charles' sweet shot is last-gasp winner

09/10

KIDDERMINSTER 1
Barnes-Homer 13,

LUTON TOWN 2
Newton 76, Charles 90

Blue Square Premier
Aggborough Stadium

BY JAMES CUNLIFFE

LUTON battled back from 1-0 down in a remarkable second half that saw Adam Newton hit a stunning equaliser before substitute Ryan Charles bagged the winner with 30 seconds remaining.

The win kept up caretaker boss Alan Neilson's 100 per cent record which looked severely under threat after a terrible first half marred by a red card for each team.

A goal from Matthew Barnes-Homer in the 13th minute was well deserved after the home side had started much the brighter. They had looked dangerous on the counter attack and neat interplay had the Hatters running around in circles.

However it was route one football that led to the opener, though it still owed everything to the striker to fashion the chance. His chest down outfoxed the defenders allowing him to thump a half-volley on the turn below keeper Mark Tyler.

It added more confidence to a side who, not content with winning the midfield 50/50s, were also winning balls for which they were second favourites.

In contrast Luton were thumping aimless balls forward to Tom Craddock and Ben Wright who simply aren't built to deal with them.

Tyler, not for the first time this season, kept his team in it when Duane Courtney looked to have doubled the lead on 28 minutes. It was typical of how in control of



GET IT AWAY: George Pilkington clears up at the back

the game Kidderminster were that their smallest player rose highest in the penalty box to plant a header that – if not for a stunning low save to push it away – would have nestled in the bottom corner.

Then in one minute Rossi Jarvis went from hero to villain.

First he cleared Chris McPhee's effort off the line. Almost immediately afterwards he made a rash challenge in front of the dugouts on the man he'd

just thwarted. It earned him a straight red – the Hatters' fifth of the season. It probably deserved no more than a caution and Jarvis was furious at the decision.

Town were thrown a lifeline when Harriers were also reduced to ten men in the second minute of added time.

Robbie Matthews turned into the box and tried to pull out of a challenge on Tyler who dived at his feet to retrieve the ball. It was

n't quick enough though and the striker's studs caught the keeper. There was little malice though the referee saw it different and sent him off.

In stark contrast to the first half there was only one team in the second period as Luton burst out of the blocks. A Craddock toe poke four minutes into the half was never going to beat keeper Dean Coleman, but it was a shot across the bows.

When Claude Gnaka

came on for Ed Asafo-Adjaye in the 52nd minute Luton suddenly had an outlet from the right-hand side. The Frenchman supplied cross after cross which kept the Kidderminster defence petrified.

The first of them almost saw Asa Hall bag the equaliser with a header at the back post that had Coleman scrambling for his life across the goal, although it bounced inches wide. The Harriers' goal

lived a charmed life as twice more Hall rose highest in the box but couldn't find the finish.



SCORERS: Ryan Charles and Adam Newton after the 90th-minute winner

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Brian Smirke could have settled it with their only decent attack of the half, though he blazed over the bar on the hour. Newton should have scored the leveller soon after, but he headed Freddie Murray's cross straight at a relieved Coleman.

However, the winger made no mistake with 15

minutes left as he scored a goal-of-the-season contender.

His volley from 25 yards left the Harriers' keeper with no chance as it crashed in off the bar.

Town pushed and pushed with the impressive Gnaka causing panic in the home side's half, and it was he and fellow substitute Charles who were involved in the grandstand finish.

Gnaka's umpteenth run down the wing saw him

feed the ball to Hall. He crossed to the near post to Charles whose deft flick looped over Coleman to provoke rapturous scenes in front of the travelling support.

LUTON: Tyler, Asafo-Adjaye (Gnaka 52), White, Pilkington, Murray (Howells, 87), Nicholls (c), Jarvis, Hall, Newton, Craddock, Wright (Charles, 61)

Subs: Gore, Blackett, Referee: R Wigglesworth Attendance: 2,927 (925)

BLUE SQUARE PREMIER TABLE

		HOME					AWAY							
	P	W	D	L	F	A	W	D	L	F	A	GD	Pts	
1	Oxford Utd	16	7	1	0	22	3	5	2	1	12	7	24	39
2	Stevenage	15	4	3	0	14	4	4	3	1	10	6	14	30
3	Kettering	15	4	2	1	13	4	5	1	2	9	7	11	30
4	Mansfield	16	6	1	1	19	6	3	1	4	8	13	8	29
5	Luton	15	5	1	1	12	4	3	3	2	9	11	8	28
6	AFC Walsdon	15	2	3	2	10	4	5	2	1	17	10	13	26

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