



HAVE THAT: Luton's Kevin Gallen challenges Rochdale's Craig Dawson

PICTURES: Gareth Owen

HILL RELIEVED AT LATE SHOW

By Stuart Hammonds

ROCHDALE BOSS Keith Hill saw his side stage a stunning second half fightback that had his smoker's heart racing.

Hill joked afterwards that the fans who had travelled to Blue Square Premier Luton wanted him sacked at half-time as his League Two high-flyers looked to be collecting their FA Cup P45.

But three second-half goals – the last two from Joe Thompson in the 87th and 89th minutes – ensured a rematch at Spotland next week.

Hill said: "My heart rate normally only goes up when I'm smoking Embassy Number Ones, but it was a bit of a rollercoaster.

"The scoreline in the first-half wasn't a reflection of the game. We made ridiculously bad mistakes defensively which gave Luton a 3-0 advantage, but we created some real good opportunities and didn't make the most of them.

"We weren't probably at our best but in the second half we changed it around a bit, as we can



do, and the belief came back once we got the first goal.

"We needed to get the ball moving forward a little bit quicker, but because of the injury to our keeper Kenny Arthur, who couldn't really kick it, that causes problems in itself.

"He was having to go short to the full-backs and we didn't play enough forward passes.

"But at the end of the day, when you are 3-0 down at half-time and looking at the prospect of going out of the FA Cup, you are more than happy."

Rochdale bossed the opening stages in terms of possession, but found themselves three down inside half-an-hour as the Hatters finished clinically.

It started in the fourth minute when Andy Burgess nutmegged Jason Kennedy in midfield before releasing Kevin Gallen.

The veteran striker teed up Adam Newton to deliver a delicious cross for Steve Basham.

Rochdale still popped the ball around but after Shane Gore – in the Hatters' goal after Mark Tyler injured himself in the warm-up – saved from Gary Jones and Chris O'Grady, Luton struck again.

Once again Burgess' elegant left-foot created it, a superb pass inside Rory McArdle allowing Adam Newton to chip Arthur as he advanced towards the edge of his box.

The visitors' keeper was clearly

09/10
(PAC)
HEADS UP:
Andy Burgess scores for non-league Luton

struggling with the injury that had put his inclusion in doubt, unable to take any goal-kicks.

His back injury wasn't helped by having to pick the ball out of the net for a third time when Basham doubled his haul after Marcus Holness failed to clear.

Hill switched Holness to right-back and moved McArdle inside, and Rochdale started to look a lot more steady.

They were handed a lifeline when teenage centre-half Craig Dawson deflected McArdle's header in, then Thompson's switch to centre-forward saved the day.

Luton boss Richard Money said: "What a fantastic game of football. Anyone who leaves this stadium and says otherwise needs to have a serious look at themselves.

LUTON (4-4-2): Gore 7, Pilkington 6, White 6, Blackett 6, Murray 7, Gnani 7, Keane 6 (Howells 46, 6), Burgess 8, Newton 7, Basham 7 (Graddock 75, 5), Gallen 6 (Subs not used: Ascu, Adjaye, Reynolds, Hall, Jarvis, Charles).
ROCHDALE (4-4-2): Arthur 6, McArdle 7, Dawson 7, Holness 5, Kennedy 7, Thompson 8, Kennedy 7, Jones 7, Rundle 6 (Higginbotham 58, 6), Dognell 7, O'Grady 6 (Buckley 57, 6) Subs not used: Spencer, Taberner, Magna, Brizoli, Flynn.

Aft: 3,167 Rating: ★★★★★
Ref: Danny McDermid 6/10

STAR MAN
ANDY BURGESS
Luton