



LUTON TOWN 1 WREXHAM 0

Craddock 36



TOM THUMP:
Luton's Tom Craddock fires in the only goal of the game as Luton beat Wrexham

PICTURE: Gareth Owen

HATTERS ON THE MONEY!

ONLY a fantastic fingertip save from Mark Tyler enabled Town to claim three invaluable points at Kenilworth Road today with a 1-0 win over struggling Wrexham.

The Hatters completely bossed the first half as Wrexham barely had a kick, and Luton fully deserved their lead thanks to Tom Craddock's 36th-minute opener.

His powerful left-foot strike was too hot for Sam Russell to handle and the Wrexham keeper could only push his effort on to the woodwork on its way into the net.

The Red Dragons were perhaps fortunate to only be one down at the break, but they took the game to promotion hopefuls Luton in the second half.

Wave after wave of Wrexham attacks foundered on Luton's defence and they were desperately unlucky to see Andrew Fleming's thumping 25-yarder touched on to the bar by Tyler on 68 minutes.

However, the Hatters defended wholeheartedly in the second half to keep their first clean sheet at home since September 12.

By Gareth Jones

Luton manager Richard Money was delighted to claim victory, but admitted their Welsh visitors had pushed them hard in the second half.

He said: "The first half performance was arguably the best performance since I've been manager.

"I thought we pressed the ball really well in the first half and second half we have had to defend professionally and we did.

"You obviously hope you can get a second goal but they are a good team.

"You are not going to expect a team of Wrexham's quality to lie down and allow us to dominate for 90 minutes.

"They are always going to have a spell in the game.

"We had to defend really professionally in the last 20 minutes to make sure we won the game."

Wrexham boss Dean Saunders admitted his side had struggled in the first half but felt they acquitted themselves far better after the break.

He said: "First half I thought we

were under a bit of pressure.

"They pinned us back, got some crosses in and looked a bit sharper than us to the ball.

"Second half I thought we pumelled them for long periods but we just couldn't get the goal.

"I thought the referee could have given a penalty as well when Sakho has crossed the ball in and their boy has handballed it.

"Since I've been at the club that's the most pressure anyone has had on us really.

"The chances we had were not as many as we normally would.

"Fleming hit a lovely one but unfortunately it hasn't gone in."

And Saunders admitted the defeat probably spelled the end of

MATCH STATS

LUTON v WREXHAM

5	SHOTS ON TARGET	2
4	SHOTS OFF TARGET	1
8	CORNERS	3
2	OFFSIDE	2
14	FOULS CONCEDED	12
2	YELLOW CARDS	2
0	RED CARDS	0

STAR MAN: Keith Keane (Luton)

ATT: 6,528

ENTERTAINMENT: ★★★★★

REF RATING: S Creighton 5/10

HATTERS 4-4-2: Tyler 6; Asafu-Adjaye 6, Keane 8, Kovacs 6, Pilkington 6; Craddock 7, Howells 7, Gnani 6 (Jarvis 64, 5), Gallen 6 (Nwoko 87); Murray 6, Heslop 7. Subs not used: Blackett, Gore, Neilthorpe.

WREXHAM 4-5-1: Russell 7; Westwood 5, Assoumani 5, Williams 5, Jones 5 (Obeng 64 5); Spann 5, Baynes 6, Fleming 6 (Wolfenden 82), Smith 6, Holden 5 (Sakho 7-54). Mangan 6. Subs not used: Taylor, Maxwell.

any play-off dreams the Red Dragons might have had and threatened changes in the future.

He added: "We are struggling to scrape in there. The damage was done probably in the middle of the season.

"The odds are stacked against us now. You wouldn't have a bet, even if you were allowed!"

"But we've got to keep winning games because they are playing for their futures and playing for their contracts.

"I will probably have to change three or four players to get it right for next season.

"I've got to build a team to get us out of here and it's going to take a bit longer than I thought."