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CITY KEEP THEIR COOL TO END LUTON DREAM



Carruthers' rebound puts them in the final

By Stuart Hammonds

THE NLP STAR MATCH
YORK moved a step closer to ending a six-year stay in Non-League, carrying out a cool, calculated job on Luton, only for their achievement to be overshadowed by post-match trouble.

Chris Carruthers' follow-up finish two minutes after half-time doubled the advantage they held from the first leg, and booked them a promotion final date with the left-sider's old club, Oxford.

It was no less than the Minstermen deserved, with resolute defending allied to the constant threat of 37-goal Richard Brodie and Michael Rankine ensuring that for the sixth time in eight years, the Conference's runners-up - Richard Money's Hatters - would not be promoted to the Football League.

York manager Martin Foyle, who will also be up against a former employer at Wembley next week, considered it a job well done.

"We were outstanding," he said. "Credit to the players. The most pleasing thing was that when we did get the goal, we changed around straight away and went 4-5-1 and they did exactly what I wanted them to do, as explained on the training pitch."

On facing Oxford, he said: "I don't think it was a case of whom we played in the final, it was just a case of getting there."

"We were organised, we worked very hard and the players put their bodies on the line. There were so many good things."

"It was hard because I respect Luton, and I feel sorry for Richard because he's a friend of mine. I think they are, probably, the best side in the league football-wise and they are



WEMBLEY BOUND: York players celebrate at the end of the match

hard to play against. "It was important that we came here with a lead, and you could see that it gave us that bit of belief. Pressure was on Luton to come at us and we soaked everything up. Then we've got my front two, who are a right handful. They are prepared to run the channels, and you don't see many strikers doing that these days."

The game plan included frustrating the Hatters and one fine save from Michael Ingham, denying Kevin Callen in the 22nd minute, apart, the hosts never looked like scoring against City for the first time in four attempts this season. When Luton got into good posi-

tions, they found Dave McGurk in the form of his life, making block after block and, in the 77th minute, he showed a turn of pace and an impeccable timing to slide in on clean-through Tom Craddock. Alex Lawless, Brodie - twice - and Rankine all threatened at the other end before Carruthers was in the right place at the right time, 47 minutes in. Mark Tyler couldn't hold Rankine's low free-kick and when George Pilkington attempted to scoop it clear, the ball cannoned off Carruthers and into the net. "They are doing what we tell them on the training pitch - the tricks of the trade," said ex-striker Foyle of

Carruthers' following up. Luton boss Money reckoned Brodie's last-minute strike at Bootham Crescent won it. "I couldn't say too much after the game, but I genuinely felt that we needed to win at York to change the complexion of the tie. "Coming off the pitch having conceded a goal at such a bad time, it gave them something to hang onto and it meant that they could come here and be as strong and as organised as they are capable of being. "I thought we played well first half and moved the ball really well, but just couldn't get our shots off quickly enough and in fairness to them, they defended with their lives."

EDUCATION SEES YORK TOP THE CLASS

IN GENERAL election week, 'Education, Education, Education' was once again the order of the day. York boss Martin Foyle praised his players for listening, Luton's Richard Money told his to look at their opponents and learn, and Luton's fans needed teaching how to behave.

THE VERDICT

Foyle has taught his side to play his way, often without wingers. Here, they took their time - keeper Michael Ingham and left-back James Meredith especially - but what team in their position

wouldn't? All their star turns - Ingham, Dave McGurk, Alex Lawless, Michael Rankine and Richard Brodie - rose to the occasion. The supporting cast took centre stage, too, right-back Ben Purkiss fully justifying Foyle's recent preference to

leave regular captain Daniel Parslow on the bench and Meredith shackling Claude Gnakpa. Midfield pair Levi Mackin and Neil Barrett out-Heslopped Simon Heslop, pressing high up the field before knitting play together when they won the ball. And what about Luke Graham?

Unwanted at Kettering, loaned to King's Lynn and then surplus to requirements at Mansfield, but Graham has found a home in York. This was the 11th time City had faced a top-ten club in the top-ten club playing. It was their tenth clean sheet. Unsung, but definitely on song!

MATCH STATS	
LUTON v YORK	
3 SHOTS ON TARGET	5
4 SHOTS OFF TARGET	3
5 CORNERS	2
14 OFFSIDE	11
1 FOULS GOING	2
2 YELLOW CARDS	0
1 RED CARDS	0
STAR MAN: Dave McGurk (York)	
ATT: 9,071	
ENTERTAINMENT: ****	
REF: Rob Lewis 7/10	
LUTON TOWN: 4-4-2: Tyler 7, Newton 6, Pilkington 7, Blackett 6, Murray 7, Craddock 7, Heslop 7, Hall 72, St. Keane 6, Howells 6, Brown 64, St. Craddock 6, Brown 6, Barnes-Homer 59, 51. Subs not used: Cline, Kivney.	
YORK CITY: 4-4-2: Ingham 6, Purkiss 6, McGurk 6, Graham 6, Meredith 6, Lawless 7 (Sergienko 90+), St. Madden 6, Barrett, Parslow 90+4, St. Carruthers 7, Brodie 7, Rankine 6, Clait 80, 81. Subs not used: Mimmie, Pitt.	

AIMING HIGH: Richard Brodie pulls down a centre

PICTURES: Action Images