

Town go goal crazy to cut down Forest

Blue Square Bet Premier
Luton Town 6 (3)

Forest Green Rovers 1 (1)

STYLISH Luton romped to a 6-1 victory at Kenilworth Road last night but it could have been many more against a shell-shocked Forest Green Rovers side.

A controversial opener from Andy Drury, an Amari Morgan-Smith poke, a brace from the in-form Danny Crow and a late Matthew Barnes-Homer strike and a maiden goal for young substitute Dan Walker did the damage as the Hatters simply overwhelmed the visitors.

Rovers hit back via a rare error from keeper Mark Tyler but in truth there was only ever going to be one winner.

Town named an unchanged team for match from the one that triumphed 4-2 at Eastbourne on Saturday.

The only change came on the bench where Adam Watkins was replaced by Claude Gnaka.

The Hatters made a bright start with Drury slipping Barnes-Homer in after just two minutes but James Bittner beat away his effort.

Controversy reigned as the Hatters took the lead after just six minutes in questionable circumstances though.

Barnes-Homer was flagged offside as he chased Crow's pass but the referee saw it differently as he waved play on.

Freddie Murray surged clear on the left and crossed for the unmarked Drury at the far post who expertly rounded the keeper and slotted home.

Official Simon Long consulted his assistant as he was assailed by visiting players, but after a brief

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conversation pointed to the half-way line and the goal stood.

Luton were inches away from doubling their lead on 13 minutes when Drury swung in a corner and George Pilkington thumped his header against the bar.

But it was two seconds later when Drury's testing cross found the onrushing Morgan-Smith who top-poked home at the near post to make it two in three starts.

Completely in control the Hatters missed a gilt-edged opportunity on 24 minutes. The influential Drury found Crow and his incisive cross picked out Barnes-Homer just a few yards out, who fluffed in front of an open goal.

But the big man kept possession and Curtis McDonald chested his curler off the line with Crow mis-kicking the rebound with the goal gaping.

A jinking run from Keith Keane then carried the combative midfielder into the box, but he flashed his effort over.

The Kenilworth Road faithful didn't have long to wait to wait for a third as Bittner's terrible kick went straight at Crow who out-paced the Rovers defence before curling home a luscious finish.

Sensing more goals Town continued to press with Barnes-Homer powering on to Drury's pass and forcing Bittner to save with his legs.

A delicious Jake Howells through ball left Drury one-on-one with Bittner on 39 minutes but the mercurial winger delayed too long as the keeper saved.

Having hardly threatened the



JOY: Amari Morgan-Smith and Danny Crow (inset) celebrate scoring against Rovers

visitors pulled a goal back seconds later.

Tyler dallied on the ball too long and was robbed on the edge of the area by Reece Styche who curled into the unguarded net.

Town refused to let that take the wind out of their sails and should have made it four before the break as Keane's superb cross was wastefully headed just wide by the unmarked Pilkington.

The impressive Drury was withdrawn for Gnaka at the break as the Hatters made a rip-roaring start to the second half.

Barnes-Homer's brilliant cross was fluffed by Crow from just a couple of yards out in the opening moments, but he made no mistake as he netted his second four minutes.

Pictures by Jane Russell

Hatters: Mark Tyler, Dan Gleeson, Freddie Murray, Keith Keane, George Pilkington, Amari Morgan-Smith, Matthew Barnes-Homer, Andy Drury (Claude Gnaka 46), Zdenek Kroca, Jake Howells (Godfrey Poku 60), Danny Crow (Dan Walker 67). **Substitutes not used:** Ed Asafu-Adjaye, Kevin Pilkington.

Rovers: James Bittner, Jared Hodgkiss, Luke Jones (C), Reece Styche (Michael Fowler 69), James Norwood (Malvin Kamara 46), Yan Klukowski, Gavin Caines, Curtis McDonald, Chris Flood, Gary Mills, Liam Enver-Marum (Liam Head 86). **Substitutes not used:** Craig Armstrong, Zak Jones.

Booked: Murray 20, McDonald 27. **Referee:** Simon Long.

Assistant referees: S Brown and A Coggins.

Fourth official: S Plane. **Attendance:** 5,704 (Forest Green Rovers 18).

Star Hatter: Matthew Barnes-Homer. At the centre of everything.

Gnaka robbed McDonald on the right and drove to the byline before laying it on a plate for the former Cambridge striker.

Flying Frenchman Gnaka then flashed wide and after a brief lull some shoddy Luton defending almost allowed Rovers a second.

Substitute Malvin Kamara was allowed too much room and crossed to the unmarked Chris Flood at the far post whose header swerved just wide.

With the game seemingly won Money was able to bring on youngsters Godfrey Poku and Walker for elongated spells and the latter should have scored his first goal for the club with 19 minutes to go.

Barnes-Homer's flick fell perfectly for the youngster and, as his marker slipped, Walker strode

clear only to fire straight at the sprawling Bittner.

Barnes-Homer got his reward for a tireless night's work with Town's fifth nine minutes from time.

The top scorer produced some neat footwork on the left which was replicated by Gnaka before pulling the ball back for Barnes-Homer to stroke home.

Walker went for goal when he should have set up Barnes-Homer before Morgan-Smith released Gnaka who slid the ball past Bittner only to see it clip the heels of McDonald.

Keane pulled a late chance wide before Walker unleashed a 25-yard scorcher past the despairing dive of Bittner in stoppage time to cap a wonderful night for Luton.