

New boss still without a win as Mills strikes at the death



OFF THE MARK: Jake Howells celebrates scoring Luton's opener

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BLUE SQUARE BET PREMIER

LUTON TOWN 2
KETTERING TOWN 2

LUTON Town are still searching for their first win under manager Gary Brabin after Danny Mills snatched a dramatic late equaliser for Kettering Town to salvage a point for the visitors.

It was an emotional night at Kenilworth Road, with fans and the club paying tribute to recently deceased broadcaster Ian Pearce with a minute's applause before kick off. When the action did get underway it was hardly a classic, but Jake Howells' well-taken goal had given Luton a deserved lead shortly before half time.

Kettering skipper Brett Solkhon pulled one back in the 49th minute when he took advantage of some slack defending from the hosts, but Amari Morgan-Smith's first goal since last October looked to have secured Brabin his first three points in charge of the Hatters.

But as in Saturday's 3-3 draw with Kidderminster Harriers, the Hatters were undone by a late goal with Mills pouncing on virtually the last kick of the game to earn Marcus Law's side a share of the spoils.

Luton dominated possession in the opening ten minutes but found clear cut chances hard to come by despite several testing crosses being put into the opposition box. That was until Keith Keane unleashed a thunderbolt of a shot from 30 yards which Poppies' keeper Willy Gueret did well to tip away one-handed.

Kettering did threaten on the quarter hour when recent signing Kieron St Aimie picked out Callum Wilson, only for Keane to get in a block on the shot. The resulting corner amounted to nothing and the Hatters quickly countered, with Robbie Willmott's attempted chip from an angle going just over the bar.

Then on 20 minutes, Sol Davis cynically tripped Claude Gnaka on the edge of the Kettering box and earned a booking for his troubles. Willmott floated in the free kick to Jason Walker, but the visitors were able to clear. They moved the ball swiftly up

field and Wilson found himself through again, although this time was denied by goalkeeper Mark Tyler.

Striker Wilson was proving to be a threat for the away side and forced Tyler into a good save on the half hour with a low shot from 25 yards. Seven minutes later, Luton won a free kick from a similar distance when Morgan-Smith was sandwiched by Ian Roper and Nick McKoy, but Willmott curled his shot just over the bar.

The deadlock was eventually broken by Howells with five minutes to go until the interval. Walker's deft flick-on with his back to goal caught the Kettering defence off guard, and the left back raced in to drill the ball past Gueret with a first-time strike.

Then in first half added time, Gnaka headed a cross from the left by Morgan-Smith straight at the 'keeper, while at the other end Wilson drilled a shot high over the bar with the last action of the first 45 minutes.

However, the Poppies drew level within four minutes of the restart and it was their captain who got the equaliser. A clearance was charged down by Solkhon, who weaved his

way through the defence and around Tyler before slotting home from an angle.

It took just six minutes for Luton to go back in front though and it was the unmarked Morgan-Smith who was there to lash home a Willmott cross from the left for his third league goal of the season.

The striker could have had another in the 62nd minute when another cross from Willmott was knocked into his path by Keane. However, he fluffed the first attempt before his follow-up shot was saved by Gueret.

Morgan-Smith's final act before being substituted, saw him denied again by Kettering custodian Gueret after he tried to loft the ball over him seven minutes later. That was followed by Alex Lawless firing wide from distance.

The Hatters looked to be on course for victory despite some nervy moments, but with less than a minute of added time left Mills got the leveller. His initial shot from close range was well parried by Tyler, but the Luton goalie could do nothing about the follow up as the Poppies got out of jail.

For reaction to Luton's draw with Kettering last night