

Amari brace sees the Hatters home

by Mike Simmonds

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**Blue Square Bet Premier
AFC Telford 0 (0)
Luton Town 2 (1)**

BATTLING Town recorded their first away win of the season with a dogged 2-0 victory at AFC Telford last night.

Two goals for leading scorer Amari Morgan-Smith were enough for the Hatters, but they were forced to withstand a late onslaught after Ed Asafu-Adjaye was sent off midway through the second half.

Withstand it they did though, with the visitors' defence outstanding, especially centre-halves Will Antwi and Dean Beckwith, as Luton made it back-to-back victories to move up to third in the table.

Town boss Gary Brabin made one enforced change with new signing Jamie Hand suspended meaning a recall for Asafu-Adjaye at right-back with Keith Keane moving into midfield for his 250th Hatters appearance.

Town looked full of beans at the start, especially with Morgan-Smith on the right hand side and it was the reborn attacker who broke the deadlock just eight minutes in.

Asafu-Adjaye's cross was headed across goal where the unmarked Robbie Willmott fizzed the ball into the area and Morgan-Smith's sidefoot had just enough power to beat the outstretched efforts of Ryan Young.

SO SIX-Y: Amari Morgan-Smith was on target twice as he took his season total to six goals



The goal brought about Telford's best spell of the game though as Phil Trainer nodded over the bar but Hatters were still threatening as Alex Lawless almost capitalised on an underhit backpass by Richard Davies and Stuart Fleetwood sent a right-footer into the gloves of Young.

Town should have had their second on 30 minutes when Willmott's glorious corner was nodded over the bar from a matter of yards by Beckwith.

A wonderful back-heel by Fleetwood sent Willmott free on the left with minutes of the half remaining, but his cross flashed across the face of goal.

Town knew a second goal would be vital and it arrived just 19 seconds after the restart, which saw Telford

pass the kick off straight to Danny Crow.

He advanced towards goal and, although his cross was cleared, the ball was worked back to Morgan-Smith, who gleefully slammed his shot into the corner.

Telford came close to pulling a goal back on 61 minutes when Sean Newton's wickedly inswinging corner saw Mark Tyler go up with a Bucks forward, but neither could get a touch as it bounced just wide.

Hatters were reduced to 10 men on 66 minutes when Asafu-Adjaye, who had just been booked moments earlier, slipped as he tried to challenge Greg Mills and took the winger out, leaving referee Kevin Johnson with little option.

That lit the blue touch paper as challenges started

flying in with Mills cautioned for chopping down Lawless, while Bucks skipper Shane Killock was incredibly lucky to stay on the pitch after a hideously late challenge on Keane.

Chris Sharp, who had scored twice against the Hatters in pre-season for the New Saints then glanced a header which Tyler did well to grab on his goal line, while Fleetwood escaped a booking after kicking out when chasing a long ball forward.

Morgan-Smith blotted his copybook by kicking the ball away to pick up Town's fourth booking of the evening and it was only in injury time that Telford looked like gaining a consolation.

First substitute Andy Brown broke through, but Tyler was out to save at his feet, before the striker beat the Hatters keeper to a cross, but his header was hooked of the line by Beckwith as Town held on.

AFC: Ryan Young, Will Salmon (Craig Farrell 85), Sean Newton, Carl Rodgers (Jon Adams 69), Stuart Whitehead, Shane Killock (C), Phil Trainer, Dwayne Samuels, Richard Davies (Andy Brown 46), Greg Mills, Chris Sharp. **Substitutes not used:** Ryan Valentine, Ryan Robinson.

Hatters: Mark Tyler, Keith Keane (C), Dean Beckwith, Alex Lawless, Amari Morgan-Smith, Danny Crow (James Dance 71), Robbie Willmott (Adam Watkins 90), Stuart Fleetwood (Aaron O'Connor 82), Jake Howells, Ed Asafu-Adjaye. **Substitutes not used:** John Paul Kissock, Kevin Pilkington.

Referee: Kevin Johnson.
Assistant Referees: Sarah Garratt and Edward Smart.

Fourth official: Steven Plane.
Bookings: Samuels 21, Lawless 54, Asafu-Adjaye 65, Asafu-Adjaye 67, Mills 68, Killock 73, Morgan-Smith 81.

Sent off: Asafu-Adjaye 67.
Star Hatter: Amari Morgan-Smith. His clinical finishes proved the difference on the night.

Attendance: 2,640.