

Town silence Lambs with a complete performance

by Mike Simmonds

01582 798511 mike.simmonds@jpress.co.uk
Blue Square Bet Premier

Tamworth 1 Luton Town 3

HATTERS finally turned in a 90-minute performance to pick up a welcome three points at Tamworth on Saturday.

Prior to the match, Luton had squandered leads in three of their last four Blue Square Bet Premier games, frittering away precious points in the title race.

It was becoming a common theme as having led 1-0 at the break against AFC Telford, Cambridge United and Lincoln City, Town were pegged back in the second half.

There was a sense of foreboding as Danny Crow put Hatters 1-0 up on Saturday, before the Lambs came out after the interval on the front foot.

But this time, Crow struck again, followed swiftly by James Dance, to ensure there was no way back.

A delighted Crow said: "That's been kind of hanging over our heads. Everyone's been moaning at each other because we know how we've been letting people down in the second half."

"But the lads kept plugging away and got the goal first half."

"The gaffer then said we've always done well first half but second half we've let a lot of people down. I think the closing down and work ethic was what got us all the goals."

Defender Dan Gleeson added: "I think it's been a bit of a monkey on our backs, the second half performances."

"Although we looked a bit jittery for five or 10 minutes, they had nothing to lose, but we dug in and got a well-deserved three points."

Town boss Gary Brabin made seven changes from the side that beat Swindon Supermarine in the FA Trophy and Hatters made a competent start, seeing huge shouts for a penalty turned down on 13 minutes when Crow's blast was blocked at full stretch by defender Patrick Kanyuka.

Official Ross Joyce's next de-

Pictures by Dave Brown



UP IN THE AIR: Hatters defenders George Pilkington and Greg Taylor look to challenge from a corner

cision had the home fans up in arms though when Lambs skipper Paul Green was dismissed for an over-the-top challenge on Gleeson after both players slid in to win possession.

Kanyuka almost put the hosts in front, heading a corner over the bar from close range, while the lively Crow shanked wide.

Town fluffed another chance when Greg Taylor scuffed past the post before James Dance's deflected cross was dropping in only for the covering Kanyuka to head away from his own goal-line.

Hatters continued to press as some clever passing released Dance whose fierce drive was tipped over by Jonathan Hedge.

Hedge came to the Lambs rescue once more, parrying Howells' instinctive effort behind but from the corner Town were ahead when Janos Kovacs headed the ball goalwards and Crow hooked in his sixth goal of the season with a clever overhead volley.

Luton could have gone into the break 2-0 up when Gleeson and

Lawless combined, but Dance's slide-rule cross was skied over by Adam Watkins.

During the interval, Brabin would have been praying his side started where they left off and this time they did as after just six minutes it was 2-0.

Dance charged down a clearance and the ball fell to Crow, who with his confidence now clearly boosted, struck his first-time shot past Hedge.

Kyle Patterson's header was pushed over the bar by Pilkington only for the third to arrive on 56 minutes as Jake Howells played a delightful through ball for Dance and he took a touch before burying his left-footed shot.

The goalscorer was booked for his celebrations as was Gleeson moments later. Hatters were now full of verve though with the game turning into a training exercise of attack versus defence.

Crow had the perfect chance for his hat-trick on 75 minutes when Keith Keane burst into the box and was brought down by Fran-

cino Francis, with the referee pointing to the spot and sending off the defender in the process.

Crow stepped up, but his weak attempt was turned behind by Hedge, while the striker blasted well over when the resulting corner fell kindly to him.

Tamworth pulled a scarcely deserved goal back on 76 minutes as substitute Danny Mills volleyed goalwards and the ball took a huge deflection off George Pilkington, to wrongfoot Kevin Pilkington.

Hatters tried to reassert their authority as Taylor's blast was parried by Hedge, while the visitors worked a three-on-one situation as substitute John Paul Kissock fed Howells, but he could only fire into Hedge's midriff.

Stuart Fleetwood replaced Crow and tested Hedge, as Dance's rebound was well blocked too.

Willed on by 622 away fans, Town were more than happy to play keepball in the closing stages, as they eased to a more than comfortable victory

TOWN start s the se to rep efforts Satur Rec Luton the se winni a few rema It t twice victo Br ever star " littl the rea " an of an an to w as

la a w I t c w

U... after Marino move