

Town carve Lambs apart

by Mark Wood

01582 798517 mark.wood@press.co.uk

Blue Square Bet Premier

Luton Town 3 (1) Tamworth 0 (0)

A 'PERFECT' afternoon for the Hatters saw them overpower Tamworth at Kenilworth Road on Saturday.

The one-dimensional Lambs were carved apart by Luton who were simply too good, winning out thanks to Stuart Fleetwood's predatory strike, a header from Janos Kovacs and an own goal from Francino Francis as Town stretched their unbeaten league run to 13 games.

Kovacs said: "I think through the whole team, everyone did their job. I'm very happy with the result, the performance, especially on a heavy pitch because it wasn't easy to play nice football.

"But I think we sometimes showed some great stuff and as a team I thought we were rock solid through the whole game. I'm very happy and can say a perfect afternoon for the team.

"We showed that kind of confidence, creativity, control – what we need to show as a big club in this division every week.

"That's why I'm happy we came out and did the perfect job.

"It's not easy to do it, but we can

build on this and we can build our confidence up as we have done in the last 13 games.

"We are unbeaten so hopefully at the right time, the right place, we will show our best and we will win promotion."

Kovacs admitted that Fleetwood's early opener helped to ease the pressure on the Hatters.

He continued: "At home it's always when you score the first one. If you cannot score in the first 20, 25 minutes, half an hour then the pressure is growing on you. But we were able to do that and were able to enjoy it much more.

"These kinds of games are very dangerous for the back four and for all the team that it doesn't concede. When you are controlling the game and you've got the ball you need to always be switched on. It's all about concentration and we did that and hopefully we can do that a few more times this season."

Midfielder Andre Boucaud was handed his debut and fit-again striker Aaron O'Connor started along with centre-halves George Pilkington and Kovacs, who had all missed the 2-1 FA Trophy victory at Kidderminster.

Town played some neat passing football in the opening stages without threatening and it was the visitors who had the first real effort on nine minutes but Liam

McDonald's poke was deflected wide.

Boucaud showed some good early touches as Luton's full-backs pushed forward at every opportunity.

The hosts took the lead after a quarter-of-an-hour when Curtis Osano's ambitious 30-yard drive deflected into the path of Fleetwood who rounded the slow moving Jonathan Hedge and thumped home from a couple of yards out – although injury then immediately forced Osano off.

Only a great saving header from Greg Taylor diverted Jean-Paul Marna's goal-bound blast on 23 minutes as heavy rain made for a scrappy encounter and, when Luton did produce some good football, they couldn't find an end product.

Boucaud whistled an effort wide and they almost got a route one second when Fleetwood latched on to Pilkington's clearance, but could only roll a tame effort at Hedge, who gathered at the second attempt.

Richard Tait pulled off a great last-ditch block to thwart Adam Watkins from releasing Fleetwood, while at the other end Pilkington put in a superb sliding tackle to snuff out Kyle Patterson's cross.

A power cut hit Kenilworth Road in the second half, but Lu-

ton still played with the most energy. Watkins' tempting cross was just headed away before Jake Howells could get on the end of it, while Kovacs almost turned a dangerous low cross into his own net six minutes in.

Town went close again on 54 minutes when John Paul Kissock's hanging corner was headed goalwards by Kovacs, but neither Fleetwood nor O'Connor were able to force home.

Watkins threaded O'Connor through, only to be thwarted by a dubious offside call, before Hedge palmed away a Boucaud curler just after the hour.

Town finally put clear water between the teams as Kissock curled in a free-kick and the unmarked Kovacs was able plant his header home from close range.

A third should have arrived on 73 minutes when Hedge saved well from Kovacs' header, but it was 3-0 with 11 minutes to go when Fleetwood's cross was superbly turned back across goal by Howells and Francis put through his own net.

Substitute Craig McAllister found old friend Fleetwood, but he could only curl tamely at Hedge, while Watkins and Taylor fired just wide, and Watkins headed against the foot of the post from an Alex Lawless cross as Town eased to victory.