

Hughton: An awful day for us

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Chris Hughton admitted the buck stopped with him after presiding over Norwich City's shock FA Cup 2-0 fourth round exit to Conference outfit Luton Town.

Scott Rendell's 80th minute winner at Carrow Road consigned the Canaries to a first cup defeat against non-league opposition since 1956.

City also became the first top-flight club since Coventry City in 1989 to lose to a club in the fifth tier of English football in the competition.

Hughton defended his decision to make multiple changes in a repeat of the previous round's win over Peterborough, but the Norwich boss admitted his players had let themselves down.

"Yes I think they have," he said. "As manager of this football club I will always take responsibility. It is an awful day for us.

"We were not good enough as a team. I pick it and I have no regrets about the team I picked. I am very capable of taking responsibility but as a team we were poor. It is probably right up there as the lowest point of my career. The game is full of highs and lows. If

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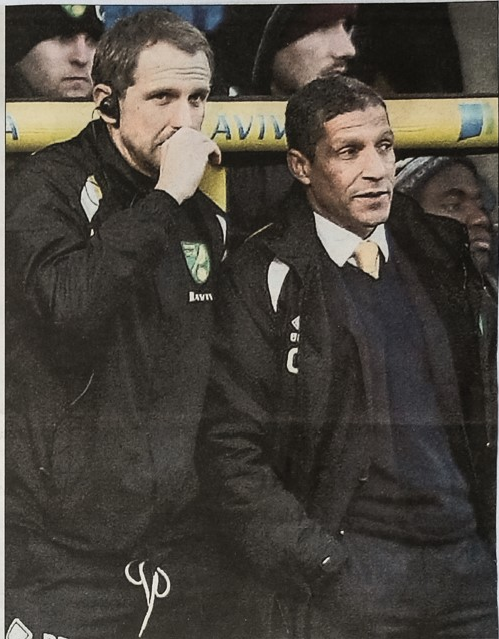
you look at our form it has taken a dip and we are in a difficult place and this scoreline is a reflection of that. The most important thing is we come out of that, but at this moment it is not a nice feeling."

City's FA Cup embarrassment prolonged a dire start to the New Year which has brought just one point from the last 18 in the Premier League.

"It is a concern, yes, but if we want to be a Premier League team and those players want to be Premier League players character is one part of the game," said Hughton.

"Players have to show that and I strongly believe that is in the team because we have shown it before and we are at a stage where they have to show it even more. It is impossible to keep such good form going throughout the whole of the season for teams like us.

"There is going to be dips. This is a low period, but we are professional people and I have a team in there who have fared well for periods of the



GRIM VIEWING: Norwich City manager Chris Hughton with coach Paul Trollope as things start to go wrong against minnows Luton on Saturday.

season. One thing you have to do is keep encouraging them."

Hughton insisted his dejected squad will be ready for Tottenham's pending league visit to Carrow Road on Wednesday evening.

"We need to pick them up. It is a big game for us and probably where we are now this game can not come quickly enough," he said. "We have to pick them up and I am quite sure that won't be a problem. I don't think

we can feel as bad as we do right at this moment.

"It is a big home game for us and we need everybody pulling in the right direction.

"We are in a position in the league where we are three points behind Stoke and most feel they have had a good season and a point behind West Ham and most would say the same. It is my responsibility to put some confidence back into the team."