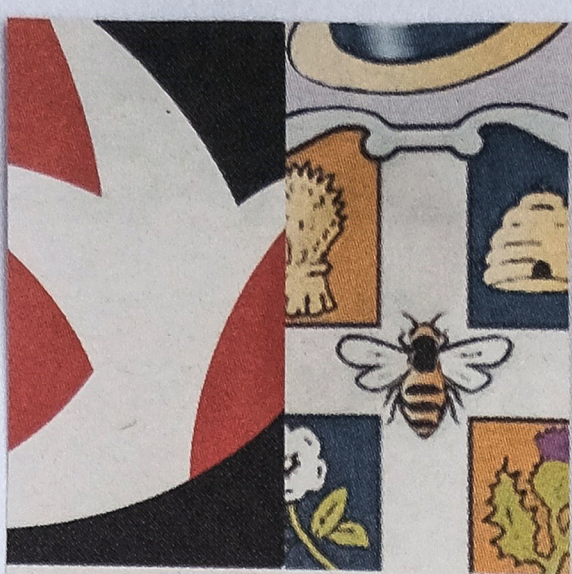




CHELTENHAM 1 LUTON TOWN 1

Kotwica 20

Whalley 20

14/15

Att: 3,611 Rating: ★★★ Ref: Darren Handley 6/10

By Jon Palmer

CHELTENHAM boss Paul Buckle declared himself delighted with a point against his old club.

His wait for a first home win as Robins manager continues, but he is confident they are moving in the right direction as they matched John Still's high-flying Luton.

"I am happy with a point – and would we have taken a point before the game? Most probably yes," said Buckle.

"It was a frantic start to the game and we managed to take the lead with a good goal.

"It was a shame we couldn't hold on, but they levelled and had their tails up.

"We then had to stay strong because they were attacking a packed away end, so I was very proud of the players.

"It's good to be disappointed not to have won against a team like Luton.

"We looked very solid and maybe, on another day, we could have held on.

"Tactically, I thought we got it spot on. Luton were always going to ask questions of us, but we made it a tough game for them, creating a number of chances."

"They have a lot of experience and we put in a professional performance against a very good team."

Still believes the condition of the playing surface prevented either side from putting on a more entertaining show at Whaddon Road.

"The pitch was atrocious and you can't get a true run of the ball on it at all," said Still.

"The ball was bouncing all over the place and we decided to play in the other team's half and play off mistakes. That's the same for both teams, I have to add.

"To give the moments of quality you want to provide was very difficult.

"They took the lead against the run of play and it was a poor goal, but we responded well straight away.

"Both goals had a element of fortune in them, and trying to find the right line of pass was difficult for both teams.

"You have to play in all weathers and all conditions and we battled. It would have been nice to find a touch more quality."

Luton made a bright start, but they found themselves a goal down in the 20th minute.

Mark Tyler had already been forced into a smart save by the lively Jack Dunn.

But he could do nothing to prevent Zack Kotwica bundling the ball over the line after a cross from debutant Jake Gray was helped on by Dunn.

It was Kotwica's second strike of the season, but Cheltenham's lead lasted less than a minute.

A low shot from Andy Drury was parried by Trevor Carson straight to Shaun Whalley, who tapped into an empty net from close range.

Gray cleared an effort from Whalley off the line in the 28th minute as Luton nearly went ahead before the break, but the second half failed to live up to the opening 45 minutes.

Dunn was denied by Tyler after a mistake from Steve McNulty, before substitute Mark Cullen fired over from a good position in the 84th minute as honours finished even.

CHELTENHAM: (4-5-1): Carson 6; Jones 6, Brown 7, Taylor 6, Braham-Barrett 6; Gray 7, Stewart 7, Richards 7, Ferdinand 6, Kotwica 7; Dunn 7 (Harrison 90). **Subs not used:** Vaughan, Gornell, Deaman, Hanks, Sterling-James, Reynolds

LUTON: (4-5-1): Tyler 7; Harriman 7, McNulty 6, Wilkinson 7, Griffiths 6; Whalley 7 (Miller 69 6); Smith 7, Drury 7 (Lawless 63 6); Doyle 7, Howells 6 (Cullen 63 6); Stockley 7. **Subs not used:** Lacey, Wall, Justham, Robinson

BUCKLE BRAVES IN PITCH BATTLE

**STAR
MAN
ANDY
DRURY**
Luton

MY ROUND:
Shaun Whalley
celebrates
Inset: He
scores for Luton
PICTURES:
Gareth Owen

