



LUTON TOWN 1 CARLISLE UTD 0

Cullen 36

Att: 8,502 Rating: ★★★ Ref: James Linington 5/10

14/15

WINNER: Mark Cullen celebrates scoring the clincher
PICTURES: Gareth Owen



CULLEN BOOSTS PLUCKY LUTON

By Mike Simmonds

LUTON boss John Still admitted he was impressed by his side's resilience as the ten-man Hatters overcame struggling Carlisle at Kenilworth Road.

Striker Mark Cullen netted the only goal of the encounter on 36 minutes, but Hatters had to play the final 24 minutes with ten men after Luke Wilkinson was dismissed.

Still, who saw Norwich City midfielder Cameron McGeehan unveiled to supporters at half-time after joining on loan until the end of the season, said: "They are a big, big side and got it wide, knocked lots of balls in and by and large we dealt with it well.

"The first half we played really well and had some opportunities to score a few more, obviously it's a little bit more difficult when you go down to ten.

"But the resilience of the team was first class, there were a few scrambles, but Mark Tyler hasn't really had to make a save when you consider that Wilko was off



SLIDER: Mark Cullen rams home the winner for Luton

and Steve McNulty wasn't playing, so I was really pleased."

Carlisle set up defensively, and Luton were stymied early on as Mark Cullen's volley was flicked behind by a visiting defender, with Nathan Oduwa's curling effort straight at keeper Dan Hanford and then Jayden Stockley saw his shot charged down.

Hanford turned behind Cullen's volley from distance although the hosts had a sighter as Charlie Wyke created space, only to shank his effort over the bar.

Griffiths had an opportunity midway through the half, dragging wide as the goal opened up for him, shortly before Luton took the lead.

Matt Robinson's through ball

found Cullen and he took a touch before rifling past Hanford.

In the second period, Cullen almost had his second, rolling a shot across goal while another attempt was parried by Hanford, with Robinson firing over the top.

Town went down to ten when Wilkinson tripped Anthony Sweeney and had to go, adjudged to be the last man.

Andy Drury almost killed the game off with a stunning volley that hit post and bar, with Cullen flagged offside when turning the rebound in.

Carlisle threatened a late equaliser as David Amoo and Danny Grainger blazed over, and disappointed boss Keith Curle

said: "The initial impression was that we were a little bit flat. The preparation and planning was good to start the game, we knew what we wanted to do and I think we didn't get the impetus that we needed.

"We didn't get ourselves camped in their half, our balls forward, we weren't hitting the right areas with enough quality and got outmanoeuvred slightly in midfield.

"We tried to be too protective and were not getting on the front foot – that was the reason for the change at half-time. Overall, I think we've competed very well against a very good team. The front two for this division are excellent and they've got threats in other areas, good game management and we've played a capable squad."

Luton: Tyler 7, Harriman 7, Franks 7, Wilkinson 7, Griffiths 8, Drury 7, Smith 8, Robinson 6 (Ruddock Mpanzu 77 5), Oduwa 7 (Lacey 67 6), Stockley 6, Cullen 8 (Howells 83 6). **Subs not used:** Justham, Gullfridge, Whalley, Hall. **Carlisle:** Hanford 5, Young 5, O'Hanlon 7, Archibald-Henville 6, Grainger 6, Sweeney 7, Griffith 5 (Amoo 46 6), Meppen-Walter 5 (Potts 60 5), Dempsey 6, Rigg 5 (Beck 73 5), Wyke 6. **Subs not used:** Kearns, Brough, Asamoah, Eccles.

STAR MAN
MARK CULLEN
Luton