



EXETER CITY 2

Nichols 71, Nicholls 82

(4-4-2): Olejnik 7, Davies 7, Tillson 6, Moore-Taylor 7, Woodman 6, Grant 7, Oakley 6 (Watkins 59 7), Nicholls 8, Holmes 7, Nichols 6, Reid 6 (Morrison 59 6). Subs not used: Hamon, McAllister, Oyeleke, McCreedy, Egan

LUTON TOWN 3

McGeehan 30, Green 34, Benson 90

(4-2-3-1): Tyler 6, Long 7, Cuthbert 7, Okuonghae 8, Howells 6 (Griffiths 65 6), Lee 7, Lawless 7, Mackail-Smith 6 (McQuoid 72 6), McGeehan 7, Green 7 (Marriott 89 N/A), Benson 6.
Subs not used: Justham, Guttridge, Justin, Musonda

Att: 3,777 Rating: ★★★★★ Ref: Andy Davies 4/10

Last-gasp Benson takes no prisoners

PAUL BENSON gave caretaker boss Andy Awford a winning start after snatching a 99th-minute goal amid bitter controversy at St James Park.

The Hatters sacked manager John Still on Thursday – the same day Jose Mourinho was axed – following four straight defeats. But just as Chelsea won 3-1 against Sunderland in their first game without the Special One, Luton revived their fortunes with a smash-and-grab raid.

Exeter's players complained that keeper Bobby Olejnik had both hands on the ball when Benson bundled home from close range, yet Awford felt Luton deserved their slice of luck following a difficult week for the club.

The caretaker boss said: "Paul Benson wasn't sure whether the keeper had two hands on it or not.

"Sometimes you get them, sometimes you don't. We thought it was a legitimate goal.

"We have had enough hard-luck stories this season so we will take any luck that comes our way.

"We have experienced heartbreak at the end of games so maybe things have turned for us today.

"There is no better time to score the winner with five seconds left and we are all delighted.

"It has been a tough week for everybody connected with the club for obvious reasons. Hopefully we can push on now."

By Matt Bamsey

Luton keeper Mark Tyler produced a smart finger-tip save to deny Alex Nicholls before the visitors took the lead against the run of play.

Craig Woodman clipped the heels of speedster Sean Long and Cameron McGeehan converted the penalty with nonchalant ease.

The Hatters extended their lead four minutes later after Long sent a cross to the back post where Danny Green arrived to ram a deflected shot past Olejnik.

Exeter pulled one back on 71 minutes thanks to a stunning 20-yard free-kick by Tom Nichols and the Grecians were level 11 minutes later after Nicholls attacked Lee Holmes' corner with a bullet header.

Then in the ninth minute of stoppage time – which came after a linesman had to be replaced due to injury – Benson grabbed the winner from close range.

Exeter manager Paul Tisdale refused to be drawn on the moment of controversy. He said: "I have no view and you probably had a better view than I did. The ball has ended up in the back of our net, whatever way you spin it.

"I am more concerned about the 30 seconds that led up to that point and the process that led to that goal. I am sure you can imagine we are all very deflated."

