

# Fuller Flavour

Karl Fuller column...



## Bob Marley chant proved prophetic - everything's more than alright

**W**ith the visit of Birmingham (3-1 win) on Saturday, memories echoed back to less than five years ago when they were last in town.

A crowd of just over 17,000 witnessed relegation confirmed in a drab 1-1 draw with four games of the season still to be played.

Yet post-match, the Sir Bobby Robson stand sang a rendition of Bob Marley's Three Little Birds, including the poignant lines of, 'Don't worry about a thing, 'cause every little thing is gonna be alright.'

How those words have turned out to be true. Maybe not for the first two years after relegation. It took a major reset to get going again. But the past two years has been more than just alright.

I will throw in a very telling statistic shortly, but back to last Tuesday night first. Anyone that thought we would be in for an easy win against Rotherham, especially with a 3-1 half-time lead, would have been spitting feathers when the Millers equalised in the 94th minute.

I saw plenty leaving the ground, but you do not turn your back on this squad.

Yes, I was wondering if we had the time to score a fourth, but I also had the belief. Repeatedly this season, we do not know when we are beaten.

The game had a touch of Port Vale vibes from last season. A win that was anything but smooth.

Omari Hutchinson's winner was made even sweeter with the news that Southampton had lost at home to Hull. Another perfect night, in the end, at the Road.

At the weekend, Birmingham should have been out of sight by

the break. The fact they scored with a rare effort on goal just before half-time was not out of character for us really. We do not do simple and easy at Portman Road.

Once again, a degree of patience was required in the second half. But another goal from a substitute, that is 20 for the season, settled the nerves and the win was made more comfortable with a third.

That was Kieran McKenna's 60th league win in just 103 games. He is also closing in on his 200th league goal with just two more required.

Four wins in a row have got us right back into the automatic promotion battle with Leeds. Southampton are faltering a little at present. And, dare I say it, we are now back to just six points off Leicester. That gap was 18 points on February 13 (albeit, we had two games in hand then).

How about this for another staggering statistic. Going this season, there had been only seven instances in Championship history (dating back to 2004/05) where a team had accumulated 72 points or more after 34 games. Now you can add Leicester, Leeds and Town to that list. And of those 10 instances, we are the only team that had been in League One the year before.

I still despair at the lack of credit we receive from so many quarters outside of our own bubble. So often, I'd hear that it was too early to give us praise, that we would fall away, that our luck would run out and how we had not played anyone of note.

Yet here we still are. Standing tall, chest pumped out and



Conor Chaplin blows a kiss to the crowd after scoring his 11th goal of the season.

Image: PA

throwing back roars of defiance into the faces of those doubters. With 12 games left, we have refused to go away.

Yes, there are still some very tough games on the horizon. And so many of us will not get carried away. But we have the right to enjoy everything we have achieved up to now and can have hopes of it lasting a bit longer.

The only element of caution I have right now is that the injuries picked up by Wes Burns, Nathan Broadhead and Conor Chaplin on Saturday are not too serious. Especially with a game at Plymouth to come, which is not our happiest of hunting grounds.

For now though, four wins on the spin have kept us dreaming still.



Ipswich Town players Cameron Burgess, Omari Hutchinson, Massimo Luongo, Sam Morsy and Leif Davis, alongside manager Kieran McKenna, celebrate the 3-1 home win against Birmingham City. Image: ROSS HALLS