

Fuller Flavour

Karl Fuller column....



That hurt ... but this Town team always bounces back

Ipswich Town are back down to third in the Championship table following Saturday's 2-1 defeat at Cardiff City. Blues fan Karl Fuller reflects on a week of late drama.

Do not get too high with the wins, or too low with the defeats they say.

After the high-octane finish to the Bristol City game, and the devastating end to the Cardiff game, it was impossible to not feel either emotion. Football at its best and worst.

I get the feeling this is how the rest of the season will be. There is a humungous prize being dangled in front of us. A reward that nobody in their right mind thought we could get anywhere near back in August.

Each win takes us nearer to that prize. A rare defeat swung it away again.

The way last Tuesday night's game ended, I got the feeling that destiny was starting to play its part. Six wins in a row after one win in nine league games was some turnaround. It put us right back in the mix for an automatic place.

Leaving Portman Road after that brilliant 3-2 win felt like heaven. A gruelling effort saw us over the line. Fair play to Bristol City for making us work to the very end. They played their part.

The longer the game at Cardiff went on, the more it had Plymouth vibes to it. Hold on at 0-0 for as long as possible, get the game-changing substitutes on, and go for the win.

It seemed to go to plan when Kieffer Moore scored. Even as injury-time got underway it felt like three points were coming our way. And then that body blow final five minutes came. I can still scarcely believe we lost.

In isolation, that hurt. Not just

us, but the players too. And yet, there is no panic from me. These boys know how to make things right. This is just our fifth loss of the season.

There were mitigating factors. A long return trip to Plymouth, that energy-sapping win over Bristol City, and another 90 minutes of giving it all against Cardiff.

There comes a time when a car will stop when its fuel tank is empty. We were just running on empty physically, mentally and emotionally at just the wrong moment.

This was Charlton away last season all over again.

Hindsight is a wonderful thing with what could have been managed better. Foresight from Kieran McKenna and his staff usually ensures that it does not happen again. A home defeat to Leeds earlier in the season was followed by four straight league wins, as was the defeat at West Brom.

The defeat at Leeds was backed up with a five-game unbeaten run in the league. And our only other defeat at Preston saw a draw and six wins follow. We know that this squad has bouncebackability in abundance.

If we can get a win at home to Sheffield Wednesday on Saturday, we can then go into an international break with plenty of time for batteries to be recharged for the final eight games.

Whatever happens between now and May 5, we should not take our eyes off what we have achieved this season.

At the very least, we will be in the play-offs (unless the most catastrophic of results occur). That is not a position that I envisaged before the first ball was kicked. I stated that 12th place would be decent enough. Consolidate this season and push on next.

There was a time when the circumstances of that win over Bristol City might happen once a season. It is now happening most games at Portman Road.

The emotions have been far higher than they have low



Kieffer Moore has now scored six goals in nine games for Ipswich Town.

Image: PA

throughout this season. Would you have swapped not getting too high against the Robins and taken a 2-2 draw in exchange for a lesser lowly experience against Cardiff with a 1-1 draw? Yes, that would have still been galling to concede a late equaliser to Cardiff. But it would have kept us unbeaten.

A levelling out of emotions with two draws would see us sitting with one less point in the table. So, whilst I understand the mantra of not getting too high or low, we cannot be blamed for our levels of feelings after these last two games.

It is an emotive sport, and Ipswich Town are giving us the ride of our lives. There will be more to come for sure.



Callum O'Dowda diverts in Cardiff City's late injury-time winner against Ipswich.

Image: PA