

Cardiff City 1-1 Blackpool

Cardiff City were once again made to pay for their lack of clinical edge as Blackpool came from behind to earn a draw and keep the Bluebirds hovering above the relegation zone.

Kion Etete put the Bluebirds ahead in the first half with a delightful chip following Callum Robinson's excellent pass in behind the defence. However, it was Gary Madine, the man who didn't score in 28 games for Cardiff, who headed home the equaliser in the second half.

Despite 22 shots, around three times as much as Blackpool, City just could not find a second goal. And they had their chances.

Instead, they now sit uncomfortably close to the relegation zone, just two points off the bottom three, as we hit the halfway point of the season.

Cardiff did well to put aside the pre-match negative talk regarding the club's transfer embargo. One sensed that if the performance was sub-par, coupled with that news, the atmosphere might have been difficult with the relegation zone staring at them.

However, the Bluebirds started excellently and took the game by the scruff of the neck, creating all of the early chances and applying all the pressure.

Callum Robinson should have opened the scoring after eight minutes after a length-of-the-field move resulted in Mahlon Romeo hitting a lovely cross into the striker, whose shot was unfortunately straight at Daniel Grimshaw in the Seasiders' net.

Robinson proved a thorn in Blackpool's side all afternoon. He had a big penalty shout on the quarter-of-an-hour mark, after

nicking the ball beyond Grimshaw, but the referee brandished a card for simulation. On second look, the official seemed to have got it wrong,.

Robinson was crucial in Etete's goal, too. A sumptuous, outside-of-the-boot ball behind the defence saw the ball roll perfectly into his strike partner's path and Etete lifted it over Grimshaw before watching it squeeze the right side of the post. A lovely strike to notch your first goal for the club.

There was a flashpoint involving former Bluebirds striker Gary Madine after the break after he appeared to stamp on Perry Ng's foot. Ryan Wintle, Madine's former team-mate at Blackpool, sprinted over to confront him as both sets of players gathered around the injured Ng. Madine, though managed to escape with only a caution.

And it proved costly, in fact, because he was the man who drew things level for the visitors. Ian Poveda sent in an inviting cross and Madine headed the ball into Ng before it ricocheted into the net. Right against the run of play. Madine wheeled away, in front of the Cardiff fans, and pointed to his back amid a chorus of boos.

Suddenly, Cardiff went from being in complete control to trying perhaps too hard to get that winner, as things began to turn against them, including 50/50 refereeing decisions.

Mark Hudson called on the cavalry, but City struggled to create clear-cut chances, as is often the case, as the game drew to its frustrating conclusion.

It means Cardiff go into Christmas with just two wins from their last 10 games and hovering just above that relegation zone. What an opportunity missed to put some daylight between them and the bottom three. Squandered.

Cardiff City XI: Allsop; Romeo, Ng, Kipre, O'Dowda; Ralls, Wintle; Harris (Colwill 71), Whyte (Philogene 63), Robinson;

Etete.

Subs: Alnwick, Simpson, Nkounkou, Rinomhota, Ojo.

Blackpool XI: Grimshaw; Connolly, Williams, Husband, Garbutt; Carey, Dougall (Poveda 46), Patino; Lavery (Hamilton 65), Madine, Yates (Beesley 65).

Subs: S. Moore, Thompson, Wright, J.Moore.