

Brave Luton grab victory

71/72

LUTON WERE reduced to 10 fit men for most of the second half but summoned unsuspected reserves of courage and stamina to earn their first home win for two months with a remarkable revival. Two down at half-time Luton, who had already brought on their substitute, scored twice while Don Givens was off the field.

And their winning goal was fashioned by the injured Givens who had limped back on to make up the numbers.

Delighted manager Alec Stock said later: "This was how we used to play. It should be just the tonic we all need."

It looked as though Stock's desperate interval substitution of Vic Halom for Viv Busby had backfired when Givens was carried off in the 47th minute.

The picture looked even grimmer shortly after when Mike Keen crashed into advertisement hoardings.

But Keen recovered and with Givens still receiving touchline treatment to a knee, Luton pulled a goal back.

REVIVAL

And it was Keen who sparked the revival. He won a corner and after Chris Nicholl had headed the cross goalwards, Keen surged through the packed Pompey penalty area to jab the ball home in the 52nd minute.

Givens returned but had to retire once more in the 55th minute.

Incredibly, three minutes later, Luton drew level through a spectacular 40-yard drive from Gordon Hindson, his first goal since his transfer from Newcastle six weeks ago.

The brave Givens came back yet again in the 60th minute and although he was still clearly

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Luton - - - - - 3

Portsmouth - - - 2

troubled by injured knee ligaments he mustered a great run to set up the winner three minutes from time.

His fierce shot rebounded off the post and Peter Anderson, always a busy worker, hit it first time back at goal and Pompey's David Munks could only help it into the net.

The dramatic turn-about set Luton's lowest gate of the season of 9,910, rejoicing. They had spent most of the first half barracking a wretched Luton performance.

Lively Portsmouth snatched a second minute lead when a Keen header rebounded off Dick Reynolds. Then they set about the home defence with smooth skill.

Luton pivot Nicholl was watched by representatives from Leeds, Arsenal, Southampton, Spurs and Aston Villa, but he was never happy against the bustling Reynolds.

Nicholl lost Reynolds in the 39th minute when the Pompey striker made it 2-0.