

It's cup stalemate!

LUTON Town are still searching for their first win under new boss Ricky Hill after a goal-less draw with Peterborough United last night.

The Hatters go into the second leg of this Worthington Cup tie at London Road on level terms but, with more composure in front of goal, they should have taken at least a one-goal advantage.

Luton had a dozen attempts on the visitors' goal and dominated for long periods but only managed one shot on target all evening – a weak Liam George effort that was easily gathered by keeper Mark Tyler.

And the Hatters could even have lost this first leg but for Mark Ovendale's tremendous save from pacy Peterborough striker Francis Green seven minutes from the end.

Ricky Hill dropped Adam Locke to pave the return for Matthew Spring in midfield, while Emmerson Boyce continued at centre-back in place of the injured Marvin Johnson. With Stuart Fraser at right-back the Hatters lined up in a 4-4-2 formation for the second successive game.

The visitors included ex-Hatter David Oldfield on the left-wing, with other Kenilworth Road old boys Barry Fry, Wayne Turner and physio Paul Showler watching from the bench.

Luton bossed the opening exchanges, with Fraser's firm drive flying low past Mark Tyler's post after

Hatters still look for that first win



**Luton Town 0
Peterborough 0**

**Dave Flett on
last night's
Kenilworth
Road match...**

just five minutes following good work by Mark Stein and Peter Holmes.

Paul McLaren was the next to go close from long range, narrowly missing the target with a 30-yard effort.

On 14 minutes, Matthew Taylor released Stein with an excellent first-time pass. The former Chelsea striker outstripped his marker but could only shoot into the side netting from an acute angle.

Luton continued to control a one-sided first-half and should have gone in front on 22 minutes.

Stein's cross from the right found Andrew Fotiadis – fresh from signing

a new one-year contract – charging into the penalty box. But, sadly for the Hatters, Fotiadis directed his lunging header wide of goal from five yards.

The lively Stein then dragged a 39th minute header across goal and wide before Liam George wasted the best opportunity of the half, shooting tamely into Tyler's hands with the goal at his mercy.

Peterborough went into the interval having failed to make a single attempt on Ovendale's goal.

But the visitors showed more adventure early in the second-half with tricky striker Francis Green only being denied two shots on goal by tremendous blocks from Fraser and Julian Watts.

At the other end Luton continued to pass the ball crisply and, on 54 minutes, thought they had made the breakthrough when Spring diverted Peter Holmes' wayward shot into the bottom corner, only for the offside flag to be raised.

Seconds later, Fotiadis fired inches over from the edge of the area.

Peterborough's first goal attempt of the evening came on 64 minutes but Oldfield's 20-yard effort dribbled wide.

Green tested Ovendale for the first time moments later but the Hatters keeper produced a comfortable low save. On 77 minutes a loose pass from Spring led to Green getting another sight on goal but Ovendale was equal to his low drive.

The Hatters responded with an excellent one-two between Spring and Taylor that resulted in the latter's shot being deflected wide and, shortly afterwards, George screwed another good opportunity off target.

But for all Luton's domination, it was left to goalkeeper Ovendale to ensure the home team did not go into the second leg a goal behind.

The impressive Hatters' number one produced a terrific acrobatic reflex save to deny Green again after the Peterborough front man had sprinted clear.



BUSY MAN: Hill

RICKY HILL said this week that he was hopeful of bringing in an experienced defender to bolster the Hatters.

But his search for a striker is proving more difficult.

After Saturday's 2-1

defeat at Wigan, the Hatters' boss said with a wry smile: "It would be nice to have a big striker with two good feet who is quick."

"If anybody knows one out there that we can afford please call me."

big match line-up

● **LUTON TOWN:** Mark Ovendale, Emmerson Boyce, Julian Watts, Paul McLaren, Stuart Fraser, Matthew Taylor, Matthew Spring, Peter Holmes, Liam George, Mark Stein, Andrew Fotiadis (sub Dean Brennan, 82 mins). Other subs: Jude Stirling, Adam Locke, Andre Scarlett, Nathan Abbey (gk).

● **PETERBOROUGH:** Mark Tyler, Adam Drury, Dean Hooper, Simon Rea, Andy Edwards, David Oldfield (sub Jon Cullen, 81 mins), Howard Forinton, Richard Forsyth, Francis Green, Ritchie Hanlon (sub Dave Farrell, 46 mins), Tony Shields (sub Richard Scott, 78 mins). Other subs: Matthew Wicks, Dan Connor (gk).

● Referee: Richard Beeby.

● Attendance: 3,175

● Luton top player: Matthew Taylor.

Hill lines up new defender