

Stein's off the mark!

LUTON Town are in the Worthington Cup second round after an exciting 2-2 extra-time second leg draw at Peterborough last night.

Mark Stein and Andre Scarlett scored to send Ricky Hill's men through on the away goals rule, but it was keeper Mark Ovendale who was the real hero for Luton with a string of fine saves.

The result means the Hatters are now unbeaten in five matches – a sequence that has not been achieved since September, 1998!

Luton manager Ricky Hill made three changes to the side that drew 1-1 at Rotherham on Saturday.

Stuart Fraser returned from Scottish under 21 international duty to replace Adam Locke at right-back, while Dean Brennan was preferred to Peter Holmes in the wide left position and made his first start as a professional.

Hill's only enforced change saw last season's top scorer Liam George return to the starting line-up as an orthodox striker in place of the injured Andrew Fotiadis.

Peterborough gave veteran forward Guy Whittingham, on loan from Portsmouth, his first start and also included ex-Hatter David Oldfield in their side.

Both sides had chances in an even first-half with Fraser, fresh from his international experience in Latvia, warming home keeper Mark Tyler's hands after just six minutes.

The Hatters' right-back unleashed a powerful drive that Tyler finger-tipped over the crossbar.

Seconds later, Brennan struck an ambitious 30-yard effort that whistled past Tyler's top corner.

Peterborough's first goal attempt also came from Fraser, who turned a right-wing cross from Dean Hooper inches past his own post.

But the home side's main threat before the break was lively striker Francis Green.

Green impressed in the first leg at Kenilworth Road and in the first-

Super goal – then Hatters win thriller



**Peterborough 2
Luton Town 2
(after extra-time)**

**Dave Flett on
last night's
London Road
showdown...**

half of this game went close with two terrific volleys.

The first effort was beaten out well by Mark Ovendale and the second flashed wide of the Hatters' keeper's upright.

At the other end, Andre Scarlett went close on 28 minutes when his rising left-footed drive just cleared the Posh crossbar.

Three minutes later, Mark Stein scored his first goal since returning to the club to fire the Hatters in front.

And what a way to get off the mark!

The 34-year-old striker swivelled smartly to fire an opportunistic half-volley into the top corner from 15 yards after George's cross was only half cleared by Hooper.

But the visitors' lead was short-

lived and the home side levelled the scores on 34 minutes when David Farrell raced on to Andy Clarke's through ball and slotted coolly past an onrushing Ovendale.

On the stroke of half-time Brennan should have put the Hatters back in front after a slip by Adam Drury left him with a clear run on goal.

But the ex-Sheffield Wednesday midfielder's shot lacked conviction and was saved by Tyler.

Green was surprisingly withdrawn at half-time by Peterborough boss Barry Fry and replaced by midfielder Tony Shields.

Four minutes later, hobbling first-half scorer Farrell was substituted and Ritchie Hanlon entered the action.

The Hatters regained the lead on 52 minutes when Andre Scarlett scored his second first team goal.

Tyler saved at Stein's feet following Brennan's clever pass but George seized on the loose ball and pulled it back for Scarlett to side-foot firmly into the roof of the net from 15 yards.

Whittingham squandered an excellent opportunity on the hour-

big match line-up

● **PETERBOROUGH:** Mark Tyler, Dean Hooper (Richard Scott, 114 mins), Adam Drury, Simon Rea, Andy Edwards, David Farrell (Ritchie Hanlon, 49 mins), David Oldfield, Andy Clarke, Richard Forsyth, Guy Whittingham, Francis Green (Tony Shields, 46 mins).
Other subs: Jon Cullen, Daniel Connor.

● **LUTON:** Mark Ovendale, Stuart

Fraser, Julian Watts, Emmerson Boyce, Matthew Taylor, Andre Scarlett, Matthew Spring (Adam Locke, 106 mins), Paul McLaren, Dean Brennan (Peter Holmes, 75 mins), Mark Stein (Tresor Kando, 114 mins), Liam George. Other subs: Nathan Abbey, Jude Stirling.
● Referee: Uriah Rennie
● Attendance: 4,286.
● Top Hatter: Mark Ovendale.

to put the home side back on level terms, somehow contriving to divert the ball away from goal at the far post after a teasing cross from ex-Wimbledon striker Andy Clarke.

Two minutes later Ovendale – not for the first time this season – displayed his agility in the Luton goal with a brilliant reflex save at the near post to turn Andy Edwards' header behind for a corner.

Ovendale saved the Hatters again on 66 minutes as Peterborough began to bombard his goal in search of an equaliser.

This time he tipped over an Oldfield volley after Whittingham's cushioned header.

In a rare foray upfield Hatters' skipper Paul McLaren almost put the tie beyond doubt when he hit the post from 25 yards on 67 minutes, but moments later Ovendale was beaten at the other end.

Clarke rode a challenge from Matthew Taylor before cutting inside Julian Watts and curling a wonderful effort past a helpless Ovendale.

Hill responded by replacing Brennan with Holmes and on 79 minutes George stooped low to head Scarlett's cross wide.

Clarke wasted a better chance to win the tie for Peterborough a minute later, rising unchallenged to meet Hooper's cross but directing his header off target.

In a thrilling finish to normal time, Oldfield then rattled Ovendale's post shortly afterwards.

It was the last noteworthy goal attempt before referee Uriah Rennie blew the whistle, taking the game into extra-time.

Ovendale was again Luton's saviour in the first period of extra-time, pulling off a brilliant double stop to deny both Clarke and Whittingham.

Emmerson Boyce went closest for the visitors, bursting out of defence before dragging a 20-yard effort wide.



NUMBER ONE: Mark Stein got off the mark with a super goal at London Road last night.

Tickets still available

TICKETS are still on sale for the Hatters next two games at normal prices.

Ricky Hill's men take on neighbours Northampton Town on Saturday and table-topping Walsall on Tuesday night at Kenilworth Road.

Turnstiles will also be open on the night of the game.

● Stuart Fraser played for Scotland under 21s in Friday night's 3-1 victory in Latvia.