

PETERBOROUGH UTD.....1

Willcock (80)

LUTON TOWN.....2

Howard (26), Brkovic (78)

03/04

BY CHRIS PLUMMER

BATTLING defender Guy Branston was within inches of becoming an instant hero on his debut for relegation threatened Peterborough when going close to salvaging an injury time point against ambitious Luton Town.

Starting a month on loan from Rotherham, Branston was solid at the back and never missed an opportunity to get forward as the Posh attack failed to make the most of a succession of fine crosses

from second-half substitute David Farrell.

But Luton managed to dig deep and show sufficient defensive character to survive although manager Mike Newell confessed to more than a little relief at the arrival of the final whistle. Newell said: "We certainly rode our luck near the end and I endured a 15 minute heart attack on the bench.

"But we hung on for what was only our third away win of the season and after a defeat in midweek it was a good result and one that keep us in the top

six although we know we have to do better on the road."

Luton took command when Paul Hughes released Steve Howard to open the scoring with a 26th minute strike from just outside the area, the Luton marksman - who hit two at Grimsby on Tuesday - leaving home goalkeeper Mark Tyler helpless with a shot that flashed into the net.

It looked all over for Posh when Luton grabbed a second, Croatian winger Ahmet Brkovic drifting in completely unmarked to meet a swirling

free-kick by Steve Robinson and convert with a well placed 78th minute header

Posh finally got back into the hunt two minutes later, Adam Newton breaking away on the right to whip through a cross for Calum Willock to turn past Luton's Danish goalkeeper Morten Hyldgaard.

Barry Fry said after the game. "David Farrell livened things up for us, but we should have had a couple of goals from situations where there were chances just two or three yards out."

Branston in a pickle over missed effort

PETERBORO		LUTON
58	Possession %	42
13	Corners	4
2	Offsides	5
9	Fouls	13
2	Yellows	1
0	Reds	0
8	Shots On	4
8	Shots Off	4
0	Hit Woodwork	0

PETERBOROUGH: Tyler 6, Newton 6, Burton 7, Branston 7, Arber 6, Williams 6 (Farrell 45), Thomson 6 (Kanu 81), Legg 7, Woodhouse 6, Clarke 6 (Logan 45), Willock 7.
LUTON: Hyldgaard 6, Keane 6 (Neilson 84), Coyne 7, Boyce 7, Davis 6, Nicholls 7, Robinson 7, Hughes 6, Brkovic 7, Showunmi 7, Howard 7.