



LUTON TOWN 1 YORK CITY 2

Gray 5

McLaughlin 81, Meredith 86



11/12

Late York fightback spells end for Brabin

MATCH STATS

LUTON v YORK

4	SHOTS ON TARGET	6
6	SHOTS OFF TARGET	6
4	CORNERS	8
1	OFFSIDE	1
16	FOULS CONCEDED	8
4	YELLOW CARDS	1
0	RED CARDS	0

STAR MAN: James Meredith (York)

ATT: 5,925

ENTERTAINMENT: ★★★★★

REF RATING: Steve Bratt 6/10

LUTON TOWN: 4-4-2: Tyler 7, Osano 7, Kovacs 8, Pilkington 7, Howells 6, Lawless 7, Keane 7, Poku 7 (Watkins 85, 5), Willmott 6, Crow 6 (McAllister 58, 6), Gray 7 (Fleetwood 73, 5). **Subs not used:** Blackett, Kissock.

YORK CITY: 4-3-3: Ingham 8, Challinor 7 (Bopp 69, 7), Smith 8, Doig 7, Gibson 7, Meredith 8, Oyeabanjo 7, McLaughlin 7 (Parslow 90+3), Blair 7, Walker 7, Reed 6 (Chambers 64, 6). **Subs not used:** Moke, Blinkhorn.

By Stuart Hammonds

PADDY McLAUGHLIN scored one of two late goals to continue York's hold over play-off rivals Luton and cost Gary Brabin his job – then likened the Minstermen to Manchester United!

The Northern Irishman hadn't been drinking, at least not at that point although it's fair to assume a few pints of the black stuff would have been sunk on the Friday night road trip back north.

McLaughlin was simply referring to City adopting the Premier League champions' famous trait of leaving it late, his 12th goal of the season cancelling out Andre Gray's opener shortly before James Meredith's 86th-minute winner.

Home fans once again called for Hatters boss Brabin to be sacked after York made it 13 away games without defeat with the 23rd and 24th goals they have scored in the last 15 minutes of league matches.

They got their wish by tea-time on Saturday.

Former Newcastle midfielder McLaughlin said: "We never know when we are beaten. We've got great spirit and the lads always come back, like all the best teams do."

"Look at how many points Manchester United have got in the past that way. We always thought we'd get goals. They came quite late, but it was brilliant."

Luton started this play-off six-pointer in sixth place, level on points with City in fifth but a goal worse off. And they did so at a terrific tempo, boosted by Godfrey Poku's urgency in midfield and recent signing from Hinckley, Gray, clearly feeling more confident after his debut goal against Grimsby.

He made it two in two in the fifth minute by holding off Chris Smith and firing past Michael Ingham from a tight angle.

York started to knit their passing game together after weathering the early Luton storm, and Jamie Reed was foiled by Mark Tyler just



ON HAND: James Meredith, far right, is in the right place to net York's late winner PICTURE: Gareth Owen

before Lanre Oyeabanjo hit a post from 20 yards.

Ingham denied Gray on 53 minutes, but from then on it was all York and after Oyeabanjo had clipped the crossbar, unmarked McLaughlin struck from the edge of the box when sub Eugen Bopp rolled a free-kick into his path.

Whether the set-piece should have been awarded was debatable. Luton left-back Jake Howells looked to have cleanly tackled ex-Hatter Jason Walker on the right byline.

But after McLaughlin struck left-footed into the bottom corner in the 81st minute, Tyler could only block a vicious Ashley Chambers drive, leaving Meredith pounced to guide the loose ball in from close range.

It gave York a sixth win over Luton in ten games since the latter dropped into Non-League, and a third in four games this term.

It was also the cue for chants of 'Brabin out' from the home fans, whose team haven't won in seven games in all competitions.

"Before the game I said that the

play-offs wouldn't be decided tonight," said Brabin. "It's a big disappointment because we've lost a little bit of ground, but we've still got that game in hand and we've got to get back to winning ways."

York manager Gary Mills said: "It's a massive three points for us. As I said before the game, we needed to pick the papers up on Sunday morning and see us still sitting in the top five."

Today's NLP will make happy reading for the Bootham Crescent boss, then!