



LEAGUE TWO

LUTON TOWN 1

Mackail-Smith (pen) 15

PORTSMOUTH 2

Evans 8, Tubbs 90

SUPER-SUB



IMPACT: Matt Tubbs celebrates netting the winner in front of the travelling fans
PICTURES: Gareth Owen

TUBBS BAGS LATE WINNER

Star Game

By Ed Langford

SUBSTITUTE Matt Tubbs may have bagged a 90th-minute winner but Portsmouth boss Paul Cook refused to take the credit despite seeing his side stretch their unbeaten run in League Two to five games.

Tubbs was introduced late on by Cook as the visitors went in search of a winner and the 31-year-old striker was on hand to tap in from six yards to give Pompey their third league win of the season.

Earlier in the game Gareth Evans had given Cook's side the lead on eight minutes, only to see the game levelled up on the quarter-hour as Craig Mackail-Smith netted his second of the season from the spot.

Tubbs' strike was the third last-minute goal Luton had conceded already this season and Cook knew he was leaving Kenilworth Road with a fortunate three points after a thrilling encounter.

"I didn't think we played that well. We started the game in total control of an away game, score a good goal but then we get sloppy," said Cook.

"You see what happens with the home fans when they get a goal - there's an ascendancy in the game.

"All in all it was one of those games where we won a game when a draw was probably a fair result. Still, late on I thought some of the lads



PLAY UP: Gareth Evans opens the scoring for Pompey after pouncing on a loose ball in the Luton area

were outstanding and bringing on McGurk and Tubbs showed our intent. And that's Tubbs' job, to score goals.

"He's paid to do that and even I'd have scored from there. In the end I look a tactical genius when I'm not. We got very lucky."

John Still made four changes to the side that lost last week at Yeovil but the early play wasn't in his side's favour as Pompey took the lead through Evans.

The winger pounced ten yards out after Luke Wilkinson's poor clearance cannoned into his own man inside the area before falling kindly to the 27-year-old.

But the home side weren't behind for long as Mackail-Smith drilled home a 15th-minute penalty after Nigel Atangana upended Josh

McQuoid as he dribbled into the Portsmouth area.

Luton, through commitment and work-rate, looked the better side for the rest of the half, with Cameron McGeehan firing just wide.

But the best chance before the break fell to Pompey, as Jayden Stockley forced Elliot Justham into a smart save with his feet.

The second-half started at a frantic pace with both sides creating openings. First McGeehan couldn't find the target when well placed on the angle before half-time substitute Ollie Lee cleared Evans' header off the line following Kyle Bennett's corner.

Stockley couldn't meet Bennett's cross just before the hour while the Pompey winger tried his own luck from 25 yards as they pushed for the decisive second.

And it was Tubbs who eventually supplied it, converting from close-range after Justham had parried Conor Chaplin's initial shot.

Despite the late heartache, John Still remained upbeat.

"I'm frustrated with the start but not disappointed. I would have expected us to have more points by now but I've been here before and we've got good players in a good side," said Still.

"I thought both teams played well but the game has been decided on two moments. Luke Wilkinson has cleared one into Scott Cuthbert then Scott's slipped at the end and they've scored two goals.

"As disappointed as I am to lose, I am happy with the performance. This is the first time we've put two good performances together."

Luton (4-5-1): Justham 6, O'Donnell 7, Cuthbert 9, Wilkinson 6, Griffiths 8, Hall 7 (Ruddock Mpanzu 82 5), McQuoid 6, McGeehan 8, Smith 6, O'Brien 5 (Lee 45 6), Mackail-Smith 8 (Marriott 71 6) **Subs not used:** Tyler, McNulty, Green, McCourt
Portsmouth (4-2-3-1): Murphy 6, Davies 7, Burgess 9, Clarke 7, Stevens 7, Doyle 7, Atangana 5, Evans 8, Roberts 7 (McGurk 82 6), Bennett 8 (Chaplin 75 7), Stockley 7 (Tubbs 73 7) **Subs not used:** Jones, Webster, Hollands, Haunstrup

