



Peter Anderson goes for the ball in front of the packed Roker Park terraces. More than 53,000 were there, a gate 40,000 bigger than an earlier league match.

Cup dream ends in tears

WHEN the draw for the third round of the FA Cup was announced for the 1972/73 season, a home pairing with Crewe from the old Division Four was seen by the Hatters as a passport to the next stage for the first time in 12 years.

A crowd of 8,411 gathered at Kenilworth Road on a bitterly cold day to see the Luton players make hard work of what should have been a simple exercise, but goals from Jim Ryan and Barry Buntin eventually saw off a fighting Crewe side who were ably prompted by ex-Town player Gerry Jones.

The reward for this less than glorious victory was a trip to First Division Newcastle United and from that moment the draw was made the club and national press were in their element.

The sports pages were filled with stories of the damage about to be caused by Malcolm Macdonald, who would be playing against his old side for the first time since his £180,000 transfer to Tyneside 18 months previously.

Macdonald, who by now was the hero of the Newcastle terraces, was never backward in coming forward when talking to the media and turned the match into a personal crusade to put one over his old team mates.

Despite the fact that the Town stood little chance of winning, several train loads of Luton supporters made the long trip north and were confronted by an intimidating atmosphere created by a partisan capacity crowd of 42,170 in a three-sided St James Park.



OUR super summer series **Magical Memories** continues with the day Hatters saw an FA Cup dream die in front of 53,000 fans at Sunderland. Columnist Roger Wash (left), the Luton Town club historian, is always on the look-out for pre-1965 Hatters memorabilia – to help keep you informed about **Magical Memories** from the past. Best prices are paid for programmes, press photographs, scrapbooks, tickets etc. if you have anything that might interest Roger, you can contact him on 01538 602551. **NEXT WEEK:** More magical memories.

The Hatters, turning out in an orange, black and white strip for the first time, had to endure the expected fierce onslaught in the opening minutes, with Macdonald, made captain for the day, missing an early sitter.

Gradually the Luton players increased in confidence and, out of the blue, took the lead in the 28th minute when the wily John Aston advanced on Newcastle goalkeeper Jim McFaul and calmly hit a left foot shot into the net.

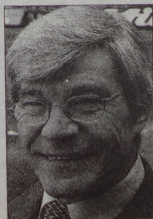
Again Newcastle pressed, but it was the Town who increased their lead just before half-time when Alan Slough broke down the right before cutting the ball back to Aston, who hit it into the top corner for a picture goal.

Not surprisingly it was "backs to the wall" stuff in the second-half and current Town coach John Moore put in one of his finest ever defensive performances even though the ball was sometimes blocked with unorthodox parts of his anatomy!

The only slight disappointment on a brilliant day out was that the trains arrived back too late for the travelling supporters to watch the game again on Match of the Day in

those pre-video days. If the Town were to reach Wembley they would have to do it the hard way as the fifth round draw saw the team travelling again, this time to Bolton, who were chasing promotion from the old Division Three.

Another partisan crowd greeted the train loads of Luton supporters, but the Bolton following among the



BEATEN: Malcolm Macdonald finished on the losing side.

crowd of 39,556 could never really get worked up as the Hatters took control of the game from the start. It came as no surprise when Alan Garner headed the only goal in the second-half to set up a quarter-final tie for only the fourth time in the club's history.

Cup fever had, by now, hit the streets of the town and the slight dampener of being drawn away again, this time to Sunderland, was tempered by the thought that the Hatters' away record that season was better than their form at Kenilworth Road.

The Town had already won at Sunderland in the league campaign and the week before the FA Cup clash the return at Luton saw the Hatters win 1-0.

Confidence was therefore sky-high but as in 1858, when Nottingham Forest were thrashed 5-1 just before the Cup Final, perhaps it was bordering on over-confidence.

Sunderland cleverly rested several

of their first choice players for the league game, which probably gave the Town a false sense of security but, to be frank, the team did not perform on the big day.

A massive crowd of more than 53,000 packed the Roker Park terraces – some 40,000 more than had turned up for the league meeting earlier in the season.

And the fans were in full voice right from the off as the men in red and white stripes tore into a surprisingly limp Luton Town rear-guard.

Sunderland were fully deserving of their eventual 2-0 win and it is history now that they went on to lift the trophy after beating Leeds in the final.

A glorious cup campaign that began with a whimper also sadly ended the same way and it was to be another 12 years before the Town would reach the quarter-final stage again.

But that is another story for another day!

Hatters and the sisters

HATTERS follower Peter Taylor recently asked News-Gazette readers if they could name the Luton Town players who had married sisters.

Several fans got in touch as it emerged that there were at least three cases of Luton players marrying sisters! Pam Gustard and Reg Coates pointed out that Joe Payne and Ted Duggan married sisters, while Don Abbott, Laureen Garner and Ann Budge confirmed that Gordon Turner and Les Slater did the same.

More recently, Tim Breacker and Jim McKitchoil made it three. This information was received from Phil Malcolm. Oo, thanks to all the people who responded.

Do you know of any more Luton Town

players marrying sisters? If so, please get in touch.

Our popular **Magical Memories** series has already got Luton Town fans, young and old, talking in the pubs and clubs throughout the town.

Do you remember the cup run featured by Luton Town club historian Roger Wash in this week's **Magical Memories** column?

If so, drop us a line and we will try to publish some of your letters. But please, please keep them short, so that we can get in as many views as possible.

The address to send to is: **Magical Memories**, News-Gazette, Sports Desk, Media House, 39 Upper George Street, Luton, LU1 2RD.