

Town Match Verdict ★★★★★

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● CELEBRATIONS: Youngsters take over the stand for the ritual last-match demonstration.

CHEERS! AND A PROMISE FOR NEXT SEASON

WITH SUPPORTERS delighted at the work done in the last 12 months, Town manager David Pleat promised this week that the next year will be even better for Luton Town's fans.

An emphatic victory over Wrexham concluded the season's entertainment at Kenilworth Road, and the manager was given a rousing reception as supporters stayed behind to cheer, and demand a curtain call from the directors' balcony.

It must have been a lovely moment for the young manager whose job looked rocky early in the season, when the Town were bundled out of the Football League Cup by Third Division Gillingham.

Mr Pleat cast his thoughts to 1981. He had gone into the game with his eye very much on the future, by resting Mick Saxby and Alan West, and giving League debuts to Neil Madden, 18, and 19-year-old Clive Goodyear.

Both showed up well, particularly Goodyear, who won just about everything in the air, and almost blotted out Dixie McNeil, one of the best strikers in the Second Division.

The burly forward got away from the young defender only once, just before half-time, and Jake Findlay made a flying reflex save to stop McNeil's header opening the score.

It was Findlay's only real chance to show why the Bobbers' Club had chosen him as their player of the year, although he should have been forced into action earlier than that.

Mick Vinter was through on his own in the 22nd minute when Mal Donaghy lost his footing, but shot wide as Findlay raced out to narrow the angle.

STIFLED

Wrexham's 4-4-2 style stifled most of the first-half action, with the Town knocking the ball into the air too much.

Ricky Hill scooped a reasonable chance over the bar, and Brian Stein was unlucky to see Eddie Niedzwiecki produce a quality save to a stinging drive.

But after the break the Town seemed to find an extra yard of space in midfield, and Wrexham were forced to concentrate all energies on a holding game.

As their attack faded Donaghy and Kirk Stephens joined in the Town's forward thrusts, and the Town's best soccer came in a delightful spell in the last 25 minutes.

Wrexham's goalkeeper did well to stop the bombardment as long as he did, but as Mr Pleat said later, some of the Town's incisive attacks were a manager's

Report by Brian Swain
Pictures: Mark Richards

dream, with moves working out just as they had been rehearsed in training.

Bob Hatton's wandering to the flanks bamboozled the eight-man defence, making space for others, and with Stein engaged in the same kind of operation a string of opening was created.

HALLMARK

Town players were queuing up to have a crack at goal, and when the ball broke kindly to David Moss the winger responded with the sort of classic goal that has become a hallmark of his performances, a perfect chip into the far corner from a narrow angle on the left wing.

Wrexham had little stomach for the fight, but survived more pressure until the final minute when another touch of panic stations ended with Stein ramming in the second goal from close range.

It made a nice finale, even if the ritual pitch in-

THE TOP TEAMS										
	P	W	D	L	F	A	P			
Leicester	41	20	13	8	57	38	53			
Birmingham	41	21	10	10	55	35	52			
Sunderland	40	20	11	9	66	41	51			
Chelsea	41	22	7	12	63	52	51			
Luton	41	16	16	9	64	43	48			
QPR	41	17	13	11	72	52	47			



● IT WENT THAT WAY: Goalkeeper Eddie Niedzwiecki, Wrexham's man of the match, turns and stares in disbelief as David Moss's 24th goal of the season goes past him.

Four battle for three places

AS IF missing promotion was not bad enough, the Town now seem condemned to facing Chelsea's supporters again next season.

Once favourites to win the Second Division championship, Chelsea are now favourites to be the odd team out among the top four still battling for promotion.

Leicester City are almost there after a 2-1 home win over Charlton put them a point clear at the top. They moved ahead of Birmingham,

who drew 0-0 at Cambridge.

Sunderland and Chelsea are joint fourth in terms of points, but Sunderland have a game in hand and a vastly superior goal difference thanks to a 5-0 thrashing of Watford at Roker Park, in front of the day's biggest Second Division gate 32,195.

Chelsea dropped to fourth place

after a 1-1 draw at Swansea, and the Town are still fifth.

Manager David Pleat believes that Leicester, Birmingham and Sunderland will be the three to go up. "Chelsea are like us—they need another year," he said.

In the Third Division Grimsby have clinched promotion, with Sheffield Wednesday and Blackburn near-certainties to go up with them, to replace Charlton, Burnley and Fulham.

Derby, Bristol City and Bolton are relegated from the First Division

Match Details

LUTON TOWN 2, WREXHAM 0

Half-time: 0-0

TOWN: Findlay; Stephens, Donaghy, Goodyear, Price; Hill, Grealish, Madden; Hatton, Stein, Moss. Sub: White, not used.

WREXHAM: Niedzwiecki; Jones, Whittle, Roberts, Davis; Hill, Arkwright, Fox (Buxton, 70 mins), Carrodus; Vinter, McNeil.

THE GOALS: David Moss, brilliant angled chip, 65 minutes, his 24th goal of the season; Brian Stein, 89th minute, from Neil Madden's headed pass.

OTHER GOAL ATTEMPTS: Town 12 saved and nine off target; Wrexham five saved and four off target.

ENTERTAINMENT: Better than the average end-of-season match once the Town had found the answers in the second half to a negative Wrexham 4-4-2 formation.

ATTENDANCE: 9,049—probably 3,000 better than it would have been for the last home match of the season but for the admission price reduction.

REFEREE: Ron Challis, Tonbridge—had a very good game, with both sides playing in the right spirit.

PLEASING PROSPECTS: Clive Goodyear and Neil Madden made their debuts. Madden was good, but has played better; Goodyear had an impressive game against 19-goal Dixie McNeil.



● FINALE: Brian Stein puts the finish to the last home attack of the season, and the Town are two u