



WE ARE UP!



● Celebrations start for Brian Horton and Kirk Stephens.

Champagne day

THE post-match Press conference was held in the dressing room among wild scenes of champagne celebrations.

DAVID PLEAT: "We have had the breaks at the right times this season. We're not fools, we know we didn't do it tonight. We played too many long balls. That's not us."

KIRK STEPHENS: "That's probably the worst we've played all season and we still won 4-1. Where's that champagne? This is once in a lifetime."

JAKE FINDLAY: "I'm looking forward to going back to Villa and Birmingham to show Ron Saunders he was wrong to let me go. I hope playing in the First Division will get me into the Scotland side."

REACTION TO PROMOTION

BRIAN HORTON: "I'll have a few tonight. Brighton has to be the big one for next season."

BRIAN STEIN: "I want to win the title. No-one remembers the runners-up, everyone remembers the champions. Some people have said we've lacked bite in the past, but we've been very determined this season."

RICHARD MONEY: "It will mean a lot to the lads going to Anfield next season. They will enjoy it."

CLIVE GOODYEAR: "This is happening in my first season in the first team. I still can't believe it. It will take a few days to sink in."

PRIDE engulfed Kenilworth Road on Friday night.

The moment the Oak Road Enders switched their chant from "Going up" to "We ARE up" First Division football became a reality.

It was a night of passion, an occasion to savour. The football became secondary to the taste of triumph.

The side David Pleat has been patiently building and moulding never wavered at the final hurdle, ramming home a four goal warning to the elite for next season.

The real celebration began four minutes from time. The crowd that had been baying for victory knew their prayers had been answered when David Moss squeezed in the fourth goal.

Ball

Referee Brian Hill wisely waited until he was clutching the ball before he blew the final whistle. The players made a mad dash to avoid the invading fans.

The supporters had been warned to keep off the pitch but who could blame them?

I confess to having done the same eight years ago, the last time Luton booked their place in the top flight.

Promotion is something the players will remember for the rest of their lives, but it's also a rare and memorable moment for the fans.

That surging sense of elation expressed by the supporters was echoed by wild scenes in the dressing room.

Reports by GRAHAM PUNTER

Happy Hatters, high on emotion and drunk with success, swigged champagne from the bottle and danced round naked as they went through the Oak Road Ender's repertoire.

Each beaming, bemused Hatter modestly refrained from chanting his own name as his turn came round.

Photographers seeking pictures of the players in the bath were splashed into beating a hasty retreat.

But anyone who escaped the bathwater soaking got showered in champagne.

It was a pity the loyal hard core of that 14,563 crowd could not share some of this joy.

As his players worked on imprinting the moment on their minds, David Pleat, the man who made it possible, shunned the limelight.

"What can I say?" he asked. "We've said it all." And they had.

	SECOND DIVISION									
	Home					Away				
	P	W	D	L	F A P	P	W	D	L	F A P
LUTON.....	38	15	2	2	44 16	7	10	2	33	24 78
Watford.....	39	11	6	2	41 15	10	5	5	28	23 74
Sheffield Wed....	39	9	8	3	29 22	10	1	8	21	23 66
Norwich.....	39	12	3	4	37 18	8	2	10	22	29 65
QPR.....	38	14	4	2	38 8	5	2	11	19	28 63
Barnsley.....	39	12	4	3	30 12	6	5	9	25	26 63
Rotherham.....	39	12	4	3	36 16	7	2	11	22	32 63
Leicester City....	37	12	4	3	30 17	5	7	6	22	23 62
Blackburn.....	39	11	3	6	25 14	5	7	7	20	23 58
Newcastle.....	39	13	4	2	26 8	3	4	13	20	35 56
Chelsea.....	39	10	4	5	34 26	5	6	9	22	29 55
Oldham.....	39	8	8	3	26 22	5	5	10	19	28 52
Charlton.....	40	11	5	5	33 22	2	7	10	17	38 51
Derby Co.....	39	8	8	4	29 21	3	3	13	18	41 44
Grimsby.....	38	5	8	7	29 29	5	5	8	21	30 43
Cambridge.....	39	9	4	6	26 19	2	5	13	16	32 42
Crystal P.....	38	8	2	9	22 23	3	7	9	8	18 42
Wrexham.....	38	8	4	8	19 20	2	7	9	15	26 41
Cardiff.....	39	9	2	8	26 28	2	6	12	16	29 41
Bolton.....	40	8	4	7	22 21	3	3	15	11	37 40
Shrewsbury.....	39	8	6	5	23 19	1	6	13	11	38 39
Orient.....	38	5	8	6	20 21	4	0	15	11	33 35

(● After Saturday's games)



David Pleat: 'What can I say? We've said it all'.

Four-goal finish

THE match that won promotion was far from a classic.

But classics are not usually born of such emotive occasions.

The fact is that Shrewsbury, fighting for their Second Division lives, came to play football.

So many lowly sides have arrived at Kenilworth Road determined to prevent Luton from playing and being content to settle for a point.

A nightmare back pass by Shrewsbury central defender Colin Griffin after 15 minutes let in Brian Stein who lobbed keeper Bob Wardle for the first.

But Shrewsbury battled and took advantage of the over-confidence that began to seep into Luton's play. Possession was lost as passing became casual.

In the 60th minute Shrewsbury looked like they were going to put the champagne on ice when David Tong's long cross was met on the half volley by Ian Atkins who slammed the ball into the roof of Jake Findlay's net.

LUTON 4
SHREWSBURY 1

With 15 minutes remaining Ricky Hill looked into his magic box and pulled out a snap volley to send the fans wild.

Shrewsbury were left with no options. They came forward and their right flank was exposed.

Two minutes after Hill's goal Steve White banged in a third for the Town.

Four minutes from time David Moss exposed the same weakness to score the goal that made promotion a certainty.

LUTON: Findlay, Stephens, Goodyear, Donaghy, Horton, Hill, Fuccillo, Stein, White, Moss. Sub: Antic.

SHREWSBURY: Wardle, MacLaren, Johnson, Turner, Griffin, Keay, Tong, McNally, Atkins, Cross, Bates. Sub: Petts.



● Above: Champagne in hand, a cool Brian Horton gives a TV interview regardless of his state of undress. Below: the crowd swarm on to the Kenilworth Road pitch.



● On its way. Brian Stein gives Luton the lead against Shrewsbury.