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Notts County v. Luton Town

SATURDAY, 16th APRIL, 1983, kick-off 3 p.m.



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We're now on the final lap of the season with only five league matches remaining . . . and I just hope we can finish in brighter fashion than last year.

It continues to frustrate me that over the same period last season, we managed to collect just one point.

Hopefully, history will not repeat itself and although some people seem to be taking it for granted that we are now free from relegation worries, I am not among them.

As far as I am concerned, we still need a couple more points to be absolutely safe. That's our immediate target but I'm anxious to see us finish with more points and a better league position than last season.

Judging by our last three performances, the signs are encouraging. Individually and collectively we didn't play well at Birmingham but I'm not unhappy about what I've seen since then.

Obviously you can never be completely satisfied unless you are winning every game convincingly and we are certainly not doing that.

But we applied ourselves much better at Stoke, were good winners against West Bromwich Albion on Easter Monday and looked a solid team at Ipswich.

If the performance is right, you don't lose many matches and hopefully we have regained a

reasonable level after a disappointing spell in March.

It would be nice to think that sometime between now and the end of the season we will actually have a full-strength squad of players to choose from.

Gordon Mair and Rachid Harkouk have both played three matches in the past week and it seems they are well on the way back to full fitness.

That only leaves Justin Fashanu on the list of long-term casualties and as he was due to see a hospital specialist about his leg injury on Thursday, I'm optimistic that he will soon be available again.

Injuries and suspensions have created a number of problems for us recently and on the law of averages, we are due for a break.

Having taken four points from our last two games, hopefully we can build on that and put together an unbeaten run.

But for the moment, our only concern is Luton Town and as points are absolutely vital to them, they are certain to provide stiff opposition this afternoon.





We were involved in a remarkable game with them at Kenilworth Road in September. We lost 5-3 but so many clear-cut chances were created at both ends that it could just as easily have been 8-7 either way.

Luton need the points, so do we and if the game is anything like as entertaining, the spectators will certainly have good value for their money.

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Jack Wheeler recalls his most memorable match

Jack Wheeler was renowned as one of the most reliable goalkeepers in the country during his playing days with Birmingham City and Huddersfield Town.

But the occasion he played outside-left against Alf Ramsey comes immediately to mind when pressed to recall his most memorable match.

That was in 1954 against Tottenham at White Hart Lane and Huddersfield were leading 1-0 when Wheeler was involved in a calamity midway through the first

He explained: "I dived at someone's feet and knew instantly that my left-arm had been broken. The trainer put a crepe bandage on it and told me to carry on but when Len Duquemin equalised, his shot struck my bad arm and almost took me into the net with it.

"There was no way I could continue so they sent me out in the second half with my arm in a sling to play on the left wing and we managed to hang on for a 1-1 draw."

That was a memorable occasion for Wheeler and so it was in 1938 when mighty Arsenal arrived at St. Andrew's with a team containing seven current internationals.

It was a daunting prospect for the 18-years-old goalkeeper making only his second league appearance for Birmingham and Wheeler recalls: "I had seen Arsenal at Villa a few weeks earlier and Ted Drake scored seven goals in that game.

"Arsenal were the best team in the country without a doubt at that time and had just smashed the transfer record by paying £14,000 for Bryn Jones.

"We lost that game 2-0 - Drake scored them both — but I must have done reasonably well because I managed to keep my place."

Wheeler remembers with regret how, during his Huddersfield days in 1955, Len White produced a dramatic late equaliser from Bobby Mitchell's cross in the sixth round of the F.A. Cup.

Two goals in extra time gave Newcastle victory in the replay and he said: "That was the best chance I everhad of reaching the final."

Wheeler, of course, has seen it all at Meadow Lane over the past 26 years, making more than 1,000 consecutive "appearances" in various league capacities.

But two matches take pride of place in his thoughts - two of the great occasions in County's long history.

"The first one that comes to mind was when we went to Leeds in 1976 and beat them in the League Cup. They were a great side at the time and on paper, we hadn't a hope.

"Bill Brindley had turned out for the Reserves the night before and injured a thigh but he had to play because Eric Probert wasn't fit. But he responded to the challenge . . . and so did the others.

"The ultimate, though, must be winning at Chelsea to clinch our place in the First Division because that was the fulfilment of all our dreams.

It's unbelievable to think how far this club has come since the days when we used to go to Accrington and Gateshead."

club before country in an effort of the season as a non-contract to establish a regular first-team player and hopefully, I can make place at Meadow Lane.

Finland play Poland in a a proper contract." European Championship match in Warsaw tomorrow and Lahtinen, happily now restored to full fitness, was in line for his 28th international appearance.

But he said: "I was anxious to the Blau-Wit Tournament. play against Luton and although I tried to make arrangements to fly straight to Warsaw after the game, It was not possible to representatives in the prestigious complete the journey in time.

"It is important to me to try and establish myself with Notts qualifying from their group, the international manager told me to stay in Nottingham."



Paul Manns, released by the concerned." Magpies on a free transfer in February, looks like winning the battle to re-build his career.

midfield with Fourth Division Chester and with two goals in his first four appearances, Manns Sealand Road.

Sainty, rang me a couple of days international caps. me for the first team.

Aki Lahtinen this week put "I'm with Chester until the end a big enough impression to earn



The Magpies have accepted an invitation to go into Europe next month when they take an Under-20's team to compete in

They will link up with Forest, Luton and Coventry as England's Dutch event from May 20th-24th.

Said coach Mick Walker: "We have taken part in the tourso as Finland have no chance of nament for the past two years it offers invaluable experience to the young players.

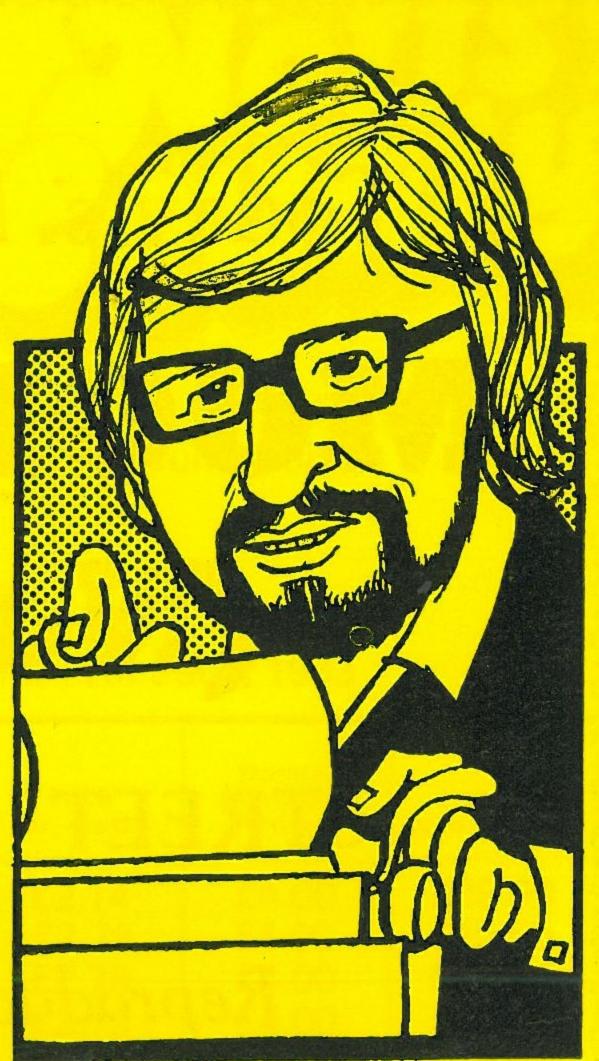
> "The standards are very high and although it involves the club in some expense, it is money well spent as far as I'm

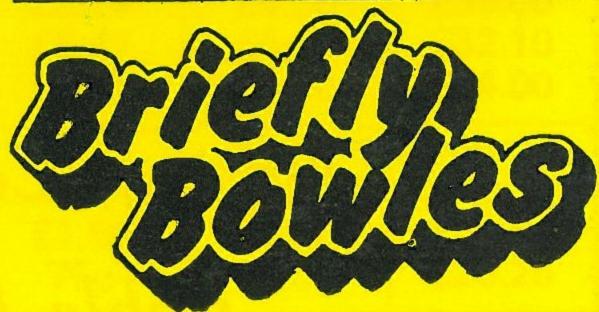


David Clarke's hamstring injury He's currently operating in forced him to withdraw from the England Youth squad for this week's game against Belgium.

And now the youngster must has made quite an impact at sweat it out, hoping the absence hasn't harmed his chances of He said: "The manager, John adding to his collection of

after I left Notts and invited me The UEFA Championships are selection soon and there are a to play in the Reserves. I must being staged in this country next couple of warm-up games before have done reasonably well month and Clarke said: "I'm the Championships begin so I'll because he immediately picked desperate to be in the team for just have to keep my fingers those matches.





"The squad is due for crossed that I get included."

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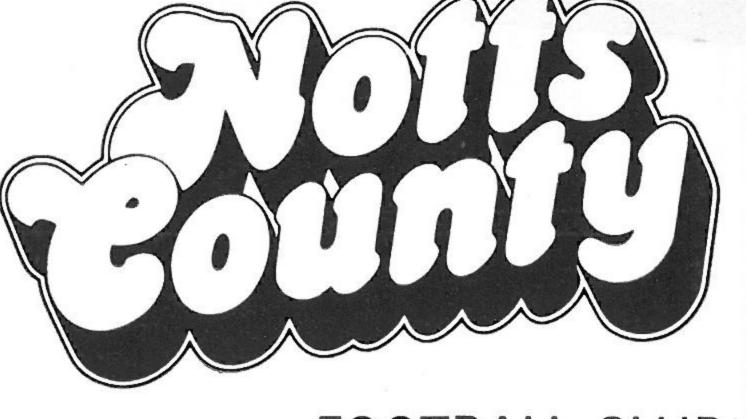
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HAITHEIRS

The emotional scenes at Kenilworth Road last Saturday were reminiscent of 12 months earlier when Luton Town clinched promotion to the First Division.

But survival is now the name of the game for David Pleat's men . . . and that victory against Aston Villa gave players and fans alike a glimmer of hope.

David Moss's injury-time winner not only provided Luton's first home win since Christmas but also ended a run of four consecutive defeats.

And if that dramatic goal does inspire them to claw their way to safety, the end-of-season cheers won't just be confined to Kenilworth Road.

Their refreshing style of play has earned praise and admiration throughout the country and Pleat deserves great credit for sticking to his principles during times of trouble.

Even though it could be claimed that their attacking approach has been the root of Luton's problems, there's been no suggestion of switching the accent onto defence.

When the manager jokingly said before the start of the season that Luton would score 70 goals and concede 100, little could he have realised his prediction would almost come true.

Although star striker Brian Stein has missed four months of the season with a troublesome foot injury, the goals have continued to flow.

But that applied at both ends of the pitch and Pleat was forced to take steps to tighten the leakiest defence in the First Division.

He did so — not by pulling extra men back but by introducing fresh players in a do-or-die action just before the transfer deadline.

Experienced goalkeeper Tony Godden was loaned from West Bromwich Albion and Pleat paid Charlton a six-figure fee for Paul Elliott, rated one of the best young central defenders in the country.

And when the manager could wait no longer for Stein to return to action, he returned to South London to buy striker Trevor Aylott from Millwall.

Aylott, who was previously with Barnsley and Chelsea, has settled in well at Kenilworth Road and his style compliments fellow-strikers Paul Walsh and David Moss.

Lutom im sight of safety

Walsh, a summer signing from Charlton, made a dramatic start to his Luton career . . . as we well remember.

But despite grabbing a brilliant hat-trick as Luton inflicted our first defeat of the season in September, the lively young striker has struggled to maintain a consistent scoring output.

Moss was also among the scorers in that eventful 5-3 victory against us and with his skill and ability to turn chances into goals, he's always a menacing opponent.

Luton's driving force in midfield is the experienced Brian Horton, who has fully justified Pleat's faith in him.

Horton was bought from Brighton at the start of last season in the hope that he would inspire a promotion success and help settle the club in the top flight.

He's done just that and at the same time, has had a major influence on the development of Ricky Hill who is now recognised as one of the classiest and most creative midfield players around.

The versatile pair of Wayne Turner and Yugoslav Raddy Antic have also carried out their share of midfield duties in recent weeks.

Kirk Stephens is now re-established in the right back position and playing well after a spell out of favour while former Fulham and Liverpool player Richard Money is a regular at No. 3.

That's the shirt that used to belong automatically to Northern Ireland international Mal Donaghy but after figuring in a variety of positions lately, it seems he has now settled down alongside Elliott.

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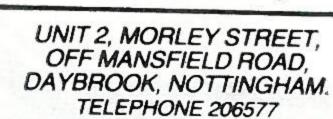
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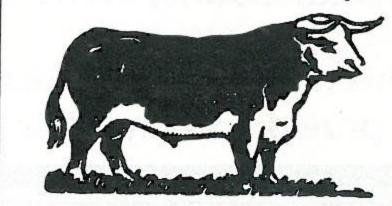
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SOCCER SEARCH

Can you find the hidden names of the 12 non-league clubs who took part in the second round of this season's F.A. Cup. The names read horizontally, vertically or diagonally either forwards or backwards and some letters may be used more than once.

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F G H J	Southampton v Liverpool Swansea City v Stoke City Tottenham H. v Ipswich Town Watford v Forest		Т	League - Division 3 Lincoln City v Wrexham	
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GRANTHAM

In addition to the main "Player of the Year" function, our Grantham branch have traditionally made their own "Player of the Year" presentation. Each week when returning from games at Meadow Lane votes are cast on the coach as to the player of the match and their award goes to the player with the most votes over the season. I'm told that voting is extremely close with at least four players still in the running.

The Grantham branch will make their award at the Blue Man, West Gate, Grantham, on Wednesday, 27th April (from 8 p.m.). Admission is free of charge and all Notts supporters are welcome to attend. Two old Magpies favourites Cyril Hatton and Terry Bly will be on hand to make the presentations.

AWAY TRAVEL

Our next away game is only over the bridge to the City Ground to face Nottingham Forest so we won't be running any coaches. Your support, however, is still required. Stand tickets for the game are now on sale from the General Office.

Today tickets go on sale for the Notts County "Player of the Year" Dance which, this year, for the first time, will be held here at Meadow Lane, in the Meadow Club, on Monday, 9th May. Tickets for the event which includes star cabaret, a disco as well as the "Player of the Year" Presentations are priced at £2.50 and are on sale from the Meadow Club. Since the Meadow Club capacity is less than our traditional City Centre venue demand is likely to exceed supply and you are strongly advised to purchase your ticket without delay. A late bar has been applied for.

All Supporters Club members are entitled to vote for the Notts County "Player of the Year" Award, so if you haven't already done so you can complete the Voting Form below and send it to me, Peter Dennis, Secretary, Notts County Supporters Club, Meadow Lane, Nottingham.

NOTTS COUNTY "PLAYER OF THE YEAR" 1983 VOTING FORM

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THE POINT Notts gained from the goalless draw at Ipswich on Saturday was another extremely valuable one in the continuing battle to ensure First Division safety, a battle which Notts seem well capable of winning with some ease. So what has all the fuss been about since?

The bother began at the Press conference immediately after the game which turned out to be a more strenuously contested affair than the uninspiring match which preceded it!

I do not think I have known two rougher Press conferences than those on successive Saturdays at Stoke and Ipswich, and both followed much the same pattern as Jimmy Sirrel and Howard Wilkinson had a free for all with local and national writers, who charged them with employing negative and boring tactics.

Who has come the better out of the lively exchanges it is difficult to judge, but you can be assured that the games have been discussed with all the intensity of a heated shop floor confrontation.

By coincidence I think these occasions can only be set into some sort of context by reference to what occurred in the Press conference at Luton in September, after Notts had lost 5-3.

Most of the Press, reflecting I think what most spectators felt, were enthusiastic about a rip-roaring 90 minutes, full of lively action and plenty of goals.

Jimmy and Howard somewhat stunned those around them at the Press conference by not sharing in the general euphoria. They quickly made it plain that many more results like that one, and any continuing tendency to surrender easy goals, would be no good for County's future, or their own.

One writer was so taken aback by their different opinion that he asked Jimmy whether he wasn't proud to have participated in such a game and, in the context of defeat, the Notts manager said quite simply: "No."

In a much more recent radio interview Sunderland manager Alan Durban, accused of playing unimaginative football, said his first responsibility was to the football club which employs him — a club which was languishing at the bottom of the First Division at Christmas but which now looks certain to stay in the top flight after a healthy revival.

Messrs. Sirrel and Durban have effectively been owning up to the classic dilema facing football chiefs. They all want their teams to entertain but they all need their teams to achieve a certain level of points, and sometimes the two aims are incompatible, given a shortage of real quality players.

Durban made the point that other clubs' supporters would have been much happier with Sunderland's displays if they had continued to play as they did at Watford early in the season, when they crashed by eight goals. But he isn't paid to get results like that.



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Date Opponent ATT'D F A 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12	FO	OTBALL LEAGUE DIVISION ON	JF 1982	-83	Home	matches a	and scorer	s in heavy	type t	Player w	rithdrawn	* Subs	stitute Use	ad		
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	Jan Ma Ap	7 WEST HAM UTD. (M.C.4) 11 Manchester United 18 WEST HAM UNITED 21 West Ham (M.C.4) Replay 27 West Bromwich Albion 28 STOKE CITY 1 Liverpool 3 SUNDERLAND 8 Leicester (FAC3) 15 Swansea City 22 ARSENAL 29 Middlesbrough (FAC4) 5 Everton 15 SOUTHAMPTON 19 Manchester City 26 COVENTRY CITY 17. 5 TOTTENHAM HOTSPUR 18 Aston Villa 12 Watford 19 NORWICH CITY 26 Birmingham City 27 WEST BROMWICH A. 28 Ipswich Town 29 Ipswich Town 110 LUTON TOWN 21 Nottingham Forest 21 West Ham United	7,525 33,618 8,456 12,906 17,768 11,600 33,644 9,327 18,384 8,992 9,731 17,114 14,541 5,856 21,119 8,689 11,896 17,452 16,273 8,064 11,744 16,314 8,692	34232 51220 320 523 523 11	Avramovic Leonard Leonard Leonard Leonard Leonard Avramovic Avramovic Avramovic Avramovic Avramovic Avramovic Avramovic Avramovic Avramovic	Benjamin Goodwin Goodwin Goodwin Goodwin Goodwin Goodwin Benjamin Benjamin Benjamin Benjamin Benjamin Benjamin Benjamin Benjamin	Worth'ton Clarke Worth'ton Worth'ton Clarke Clarke Clarke	Hunt Hunt Hunt Hunt Hunt Hunt Hunt Hunt	Kilcline	Richards	Chiedozie	Christie Christie Christie Christie Fashanu Christie	McCulloch Fashanu Fashanu McCulloch	Hooks Hooks Goodwin Christiel	Mair Mairt Clarket Mair Mair Mair Mair Mair Mair Mair Mair	Goodwin* Clarke* Mair* Christie* Hooks* Hooks* Hooks* Christie* Christie* Christie* Christie* McParland* McParland* McParland* Harkouk* Clarke* Goodwin* McParland Harkouk* Clarke* Clarke* Goodwin* McParland McParland

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Southampton	36	14			47		52
Everton	36	14	9	13	55	45	51
Tottenham H	35	14	9	12	51	45	51
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Arsenal	35	13	10	12	46	47	49
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Luton Town	35	10	10		57		
Swansea City	36			18	45		
Brighton	36	8	11	17	34	62	35

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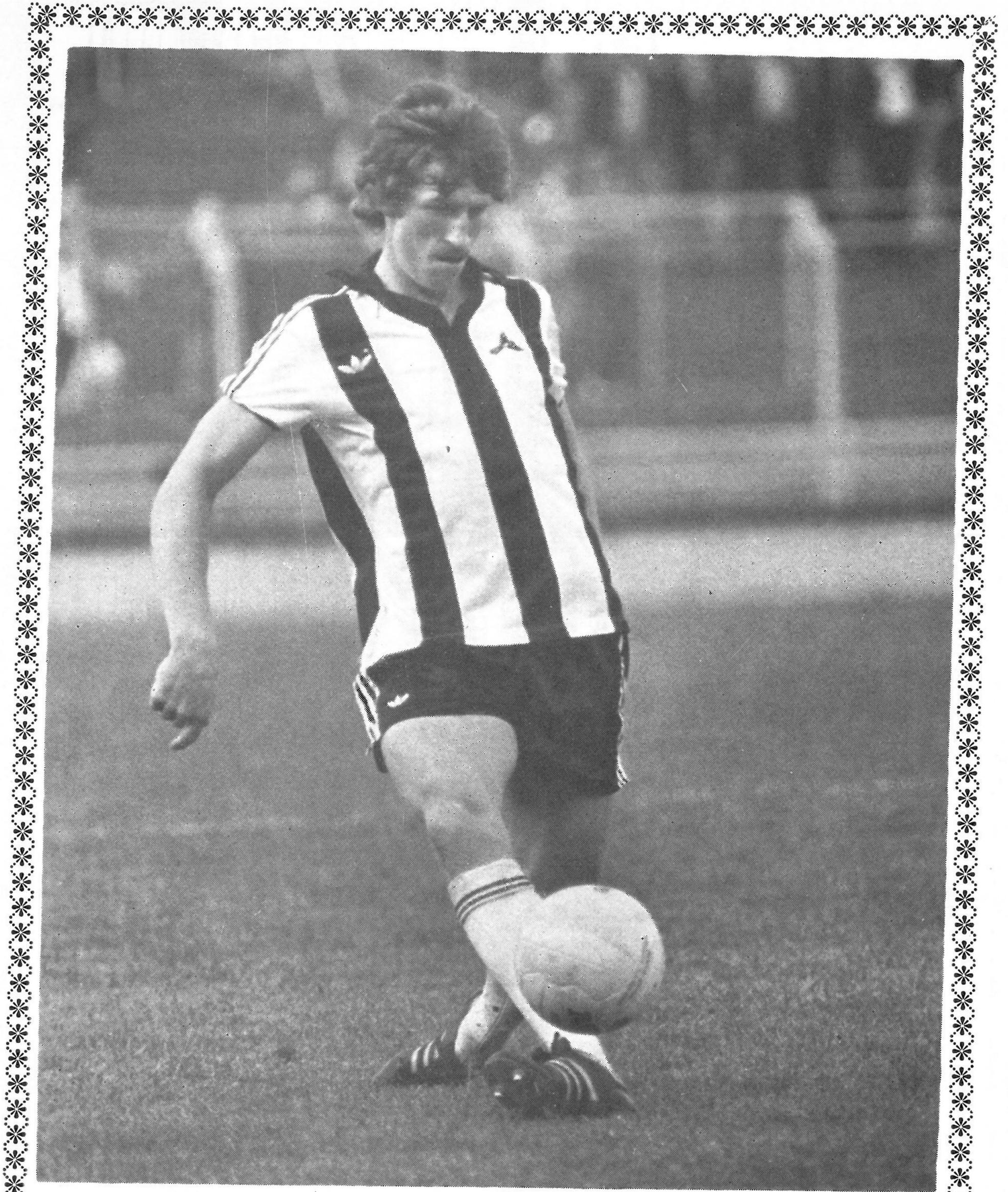
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IAIN McCULLOCH . . . scorer of 12 goals and striving to overtake last season's tally of 16.

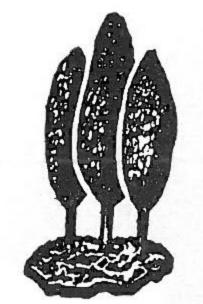
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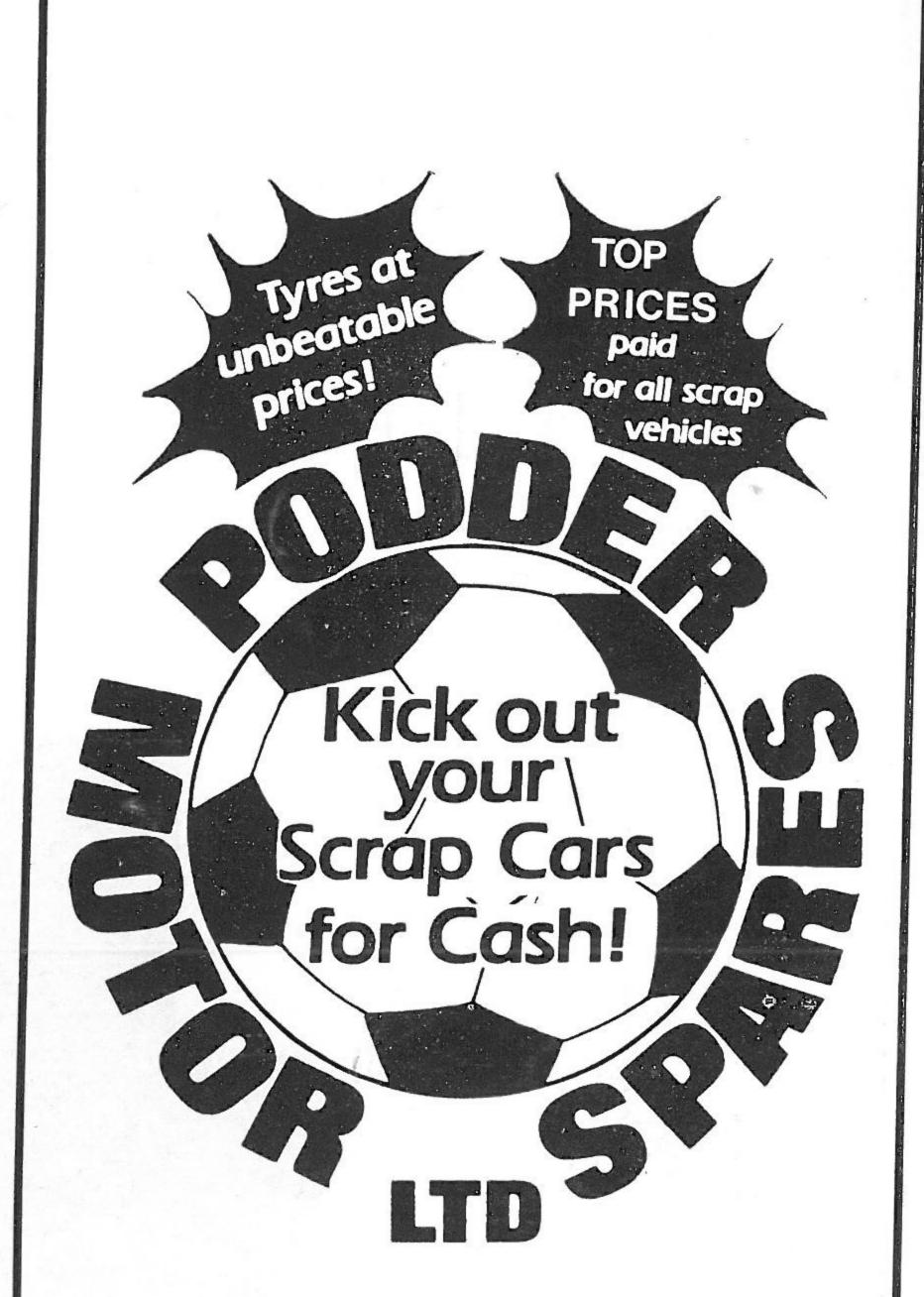
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- 6. Pedro Richards
- 7. John Chiedozie
- 8. Trevor Christie
- 9. lain McCulloch
- 10. Aki Lahtinen
- 11. Nigel Worthington
- 12. To be announced

HARKOUK

OFFICIALS

Referee:
P. N. WILLIS
(Meadowfield, Co. Durham)

Linesmen:
M. A. CLARIDGE
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C. J. WHITE
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