

## THE FA CUP LOCAL DERBY

## Town Match Verdict ★★★★★

# UNLIKELY HERO SETS UP WEMBLEY DREAM

LUTON TOWN 1  
SCORER: 4  
WATFORD 0  
SCORER:  
WALLSPAN

● UP IN LIGHTS: The message every Luton Town fan wanted to see on Saturday when the local derby went to its third and decisive match at Kenilworth Road.



● INSTANT HERO: Wayne Turner shoots the winner past Steve Terry and Tony Coton.

LAST NIGHT'S MATCH REPORT IS IN TODAY'S LUTON LEADER



● IT'S IN: A study in contrasting feelings as Wayne Turner's goal hits the net. Tim Breacker and Turner are the happy men, with the crowd just jumping to its feet as Coton and Terry suffer.



● IT HURT: Turner, who had been sent to bed with flu between the three derby games, finds helping hands as he leaves the field. He couldn't even have a proper drink to celebrate a champagne performance.

Report by Brian Swain  
Pictures: Mark Richards

emerged against Watford in Saturday's third attempt to settle the fifth round tie as the quiet hero who deserves a share of the limelight that has been directed at others so often.

Luton Town have rarely had a better chance of cup success, with last night's quarter-final the fourth successive round with home advantage.

Watford were as hard to beat as ever, and if Saturday's game was less than a classic between two sides who knew each other so well, it was justice when the best move and the best strike of the match should decide the five-hour marathon.

John Barnes was a late surprise inclusion in the Watford side as both managers looked for the elusive variation of strategy to throw the other team off balance.

Twice he enlivened a dull and dour first half with powerful running and good shots, with Les Sealey doing well to stop them.

But with Steve Foster and Mal Donaghy imperious in their general defending, Luther Blissett was unable to form the double spearhead Watford wanted in attack, and the Town took command in the second half.

Watford yielded grudgingly, but with Garry Parker introduced into the Town's midfield in place of Ray Daniel there was more

cohesion and threat from that department than in the previous Watford clashes.

Early in the second half Tony Coton had to dive smartly at Meka Nwajobi's feet as the pace of the striker almost matched the quality of a through-ball from Turner. The goalkeeper did even better to catch a header from Mick Harford, who caused the Watford central defence all sorts of problems.

With so much at stake, both teams looked fearful of making errors, but the decisive goal was very much a product of positive thought and application.

Ricky Hill started it with a short free kick to Tim Breacker, and the Town built a triangular passing movement on their right in midfield.

Brian Stein contributed, and Parker played the final pass, 20 yards and weighted perfectly to take it through a square Watford defence.

Breacker and Turner were both already taking up forward positions, with Turner getting there first and cracking a low shot past Coton for his first goal since September 1982.

Celebrating his 24th birthday, Turner became the instant darling of the crowd, and doubtless of some who had jeered cruelly in the past when he found First Division football difficult.

The fairy-tale aspect of events was not lost on Turner, the only Luton boy in the side. With two defences just about holding the attacks, the game needed something special from an unexpected quarter to settle it.

"First goal of the season?" asked the Press observers. "Probably the first time I got into their box!" replied the man who will never give his club a better birthday present.

Turner had got out of a sick bed to play, after a bout of flu, and on Saturday night his celebration drinking was confined to Lucozade.

"I waited a long time for that," said Turner this week as a succession of fans sought him out to offer congratulations and thanks. "But I felt awful on Saturday night. I went out with my girl-friend and couldn't have a drink. I went home early to watch it on TV."

Television failed to show how far Turner and Breacker had run to break through the Watford defence, but did suggest that Watford were unlucky not to get a first-half penalty when Mitchell Thomas broke clear with a bounding ball and apparently made

contact with his hand.

"I don't think it was intentional," said Town manager David Pleat after seeing the re-run.

Graham Taylor, the Watford manager, supported his team's appeals when the incident happened. He believed his side should have been given a penalty, and that the result might well have been different.

But that only emerged a couple of days after the game: at the post-match Press conference at Kenilworth Road he made no mention of the incident. He was unwilling to sound off and spoil Luton's day.

"It was just unfortunate that either side had to lose," he said.

There was no moaning from Watford about the result, and once more both clubs were delighted that for all the hard physical endeavour there were no bookings, and hardly any trouble on the terraces.

But the last word should be about the match-winner, listened to Chiltern Radio's recorded description of his memorable goal and enjoyed it immensely—except for a reference to him being in the team only because Peter Nicholas was cup-tied.

It had been a blow to his pride, he admitted, when, after playing well earlier in the season, he was axed to make way for the new man bought from Crystal Palace.

Nicholas had to become first choice, but as Turner said the day the Welsh international was signed: "I suppose I still might play for Luton Town at Wembley."

No-one could do more in the effort to make such an unlikely dream come true.



● AIRBORNE ATTACK: Mick Harford, a regular worry to Steve Terry with his heading power, shows that he can take off and use his feet as well, as Watford come under increasing attack in the second half on Saturday.

## Match Details

LUTON TOWN 1 WATFORD 0  
HALF TIME: 0-0

TOWN: Sealey; Breacker, Foster, Donaghy, Thomas; Parker, Turner, Hill; Nwajobi, Stein, Harford. Sub: Moss, not needed.

WATFORD: Coton; Sinnott, McClelland, Terry, Rostron; Taylor, Jactett, Lohman; Callaghan, Barnes, Blissett. Sub: Bardsley, not used.

THE GOAL: Wayne Turner, on his 24th birthday, in the 58th minute with a crisp low drive from a superb through-pass by Gary Parker.

OTHER STRIKES: Town nine saved, four wide; Watford eight saved, five wide, one cross-cum-shot by Barnes hit the outside of a post. Corners: 9-5 to Watford.

ATTENDANCE: 15,586, lowest of the three matches because the Watford following was well down on the other two. Total attendance for the three games: 53,959.

REFEREE: Jeff Bray, Hinckley. Earned the thanks of both teams, despite Jimmy Hill's TV suggestion that Watford should have had a penalty for hands by Mitchell Thomas.

ENTERTAINMENT: Too tension-ridden for open football to flourish, but the result made it a marvellous day for Town fans.



● NEARLY: Brian Stein powers in a shot.