

Town match verdict ★★



● **SHOOTING STAR:** David Preece with an early drive that was just wide.

WITHOUT JEWELS

Action pictures: Josh Levy

learner, and in First Division terms the same is true of Philip Gray.

I thought one of the brightest spots was the display by Matthew Jackson, after going on as sub for Beaumont.

Still only 19, he looks capable of growing into the sort of quality managers and directors will love.

By the time he went on the one-sided contest was over.

Power

And to rub salt in our wounds, Paul Elliott and Kerry Dixon, both with Luton connections, were two of the players who did much to give Chelsea their first win of the season.

Overall, Chelsea were more powerful than the Town, a lot stronger physically, and quicker and much more accurate in passing.

The pattern was set from the third minute

when Dreyer, wide on the Town's left, played Kevin Wilson on for a ball down the middle by Jones, and Chamberlain came to the rescue at full stretch.

A shot by Preece which went narrowly wide, after a good low cross by Pembridge, lifted our spirits briefly.

Let-off

So did Jones's greediness, when he beat the offside trap and tried to outsmart Chamberlain on the near post. He shot into the side netting when a cross was wanted by Dixon and Kevin Wilson, both in better striking positions.

Jones soon made amends. With 19 minutes gone his simple ball over the top found Graeme Le Saux on the left wing. He tussled with Beaumont, the defender fell over, and Le Saux despatched the

chance perfectly, with the Town appealing in vain for a free kick.

Thirteen minutes later the defence stood and watched as the Town lost possession from their throw-in deep in the Chelsea half. Two quick passes, by Le Saux and Wilson, cut through the middle and Townsend helped himself to an easy goal.

McDonough lost possession to start the move which led to Jones feeding Dixon for the third goal just before the interval.

Reward

The Town tried to get more men upfield in the second half, and got quick reward.

Farrell went clear down the left wing, banged over a hard low cross, and Hitchcock's fumble gave Gray a gift for his first league goal.

'He's Luton's leading scorer... he'll be up for sale tomorrow,' said a Pressbox wag.

But there was nothing for Town fans to smile about.

If Chamberlain had not been on top form it would have been a worse rout.

But he was left without cover again when Dixon went past Beaumont to set up Wise to make it 4-1.

The Town managed a couple of excursions to the other end, and after



● **ON THE BALL:** Philip Gray, who broke the Town's long duck with the first goal of the season.

an appalling back-pass by Dixon Kurt Nogan, sub for Farrell, should have scored in the 72nd minute.

He was brilliant in the dribble that took him round Hitchcock, but with the net gaping wide he shot against a post, and Gray put the rebound wide.

Chelsea evened that up by missing a 79th-minute penalty.

I disagreed with the ref's verdict when he ruled that Dreyer had backed into Elliott as both went up for a corner.

But justice was done when Wise smashed the spot kick against the bar and Dixon blazed wide from the rebound.

The season so far

THE TOWN'S record to date:

BARCLAYS LEAGUE DIV 1

August	
17 West Ham (a) 0-0	25,079
21 Coventry (a) 0-5	10,084
24 Liverpool (h) 0-0	11,132
27 Arsenal (a) 0-2	25,898
31 Chelsea (a) 1-4 (Gray)	17,457

LEAGUE APPEARANCES, including as sub in brackets: Five each by Chamberlain, Beaumont, Rodger, Dreyer, Pembridge, Preece, McDonough, and Stein; Black 4, Harvey 3, Farrell 3 (1), Gray 3 (2), Peake 2, Jackson (2), Nogan (1). Number of players used: 15. Last season's total: 21.

A bet you can't lose: it's free

FANCY A football flutter, a bet you cannot lose? It's on offer to our readers today, in a free competition sponsored by Coral the bookmakers.

The winner of our soccer quiz contest will be given a £100 free bet, to put on any football wager he or she chooses with Coral.

You can put it all on one bet, for instance a 250-1 shot on Luton Town winning the League title, or split it on any soccer wagers that take your fancy.

Five £10 consolations

We also have five consolation prizes of £10 free bet vouchers for runners-up.

Entry is free, but under-18s cannot take part.

All you have to do is answer the following three questions about Luton Town correctly.

List your answers to these three questions:

1. Who scored Luton Town's final goal of last season?

2. Who was the Luton Town manager before David Pleat first got the job?

3. How many times have Luton Town played in the FA Cup semi-finals?

CORAL

Competition rules

Send your entries on a postcard, or on the back of a sealed envelope, to the Coral Competition, Sports Desk, Luton News, Grosvenor House, Alma Street, Luton LU1 2PL, or the Dunstable Gazette, 83 High Street North, Dunstable, LU6 1JJ.

The closing date for entries is a week from today, at 9 am on September 11.

We anticipate that Town fans will not have too much difficulty in getting the answers right, and the winner will be the first all-correct entry drawn out by the Sports Editor.

● The competition is now open to employees of the News/Gazette of Coral, nor their immediate families.

● There are no cash alternatives to the prizes offered.

● The prize vouchers may be used to place wagers on soccer at any Coral betting office, and bets so placed will be subject to Coral's rules.

● The Sports Editor's decision will be final, and no correspondence will be entered into.

Cup draws

THE FIRST CUP draws of the season have given the Town an excellent chance of making progress in two competitions.

In the Rumbelows Cup they face Third Division Birmingham City over two legs in the second round.

The Town will be at home on September 25 (7.45), with the return at St. Andrew's on Tuesday October 8, with an 8 pm kick-off, which should help Town fans wanting to get there.

Birmingham had an easy first-round victory over Exeter City, who are bottom of the Third Division despite the best efforts of manager Alan Ball and player-coach Steve Williams.

It was 1-0 to Birmingham in Devon and 4-0 at St. Andrew's.

First Division clubs have been given plenty of notice of their entry into the Zenith Data Systems Cup. The Town already know that in the second round, on October 23, they will be away to Bristol Rovers or Ipswich Town. Their first round match is at Twerton Park, Bath, on October 4, and many of us will be hoping for a Rovers win, to see the Town on a ground they have not played on before.

BEAUMONT IN THE STIFFS

DAVID Beaumont, who has looked out of place at right back, was put into the reserves on Monday, in his old central defensive position.

A shotless team lost 1-0 to Arsenal in the first Football Combination match to be played at Creasey Park, Dunstable.

It might have been worse,

because Andy Petterson saved a penalty and left back Ken Gillard kicked two off the line.

The reserves were beaten 3-0 at Ipswich last Wednesday. The nearest they came to a goal was when Kurt Nogan hit the bar late on.

The youth team lost 2-1 to Swindon in the South East

Counties League, with Paddy McDonough, no relation to Dasmio, their scorer.

They play Bournemouth at Oakley Road on Saturday (11 am) and on Tuesday (7.30) meet Norwich at Kenilworth Road in the Southern Junior Floodlit Cup.

The reserves play Charlton at Creasey Park on Monday (7.30).



● **BEST FOOT FORWARD:** Brian Stein tries his luck.

Match details

CHELSEA 4 LUTON TN 1

Half-time: 3-0

TOWN: Chamberlain; Beaumont (Jackson 61 mins), Rodger, Peake, Dreyer; Pembridge, McDonough, Preece; Stein, Gray, Farrell (Nogan 66 mins).

CHELSEA: Hitchcock; Clarke, Elliott, Monkou, Boyd; Wise, Jones, Townsend, Le Saux; Wilson (Allon 75 mins), Dixon. Other sub Myers, not needed.

THE GOALS: Three in the first half for Chelsea: Graeme Le Saux, 19 minutes, after bundling David Beaumont off the ball; Andy Townsend, 32 minutes, after the Town were split by a quick break; Kerry Dixon, 44 minutes, beating Graham Rodger for pace after Darron McDonough lost possession in midfield to enable Vinny Jones to set it up. Philip Gray for the Town, 47 minutes, his first in the league, after reserve goalkeeper Kevin Hitchcock dropped a low cross by Sean Farrell. Denis Wise for Chelsea, 59 minutes, from Dixon's run and left wing cross.

OTHER GOAL ATTEMPTS: Town one saved, four wide and one hit a post; Chelsea seven saved, nine wide and a penalty by Wise hit the bar. Corners: 6-5 to Chelsea.

BOOKED: Joe Allon for a foul on Matthew Jackson. REFEREE: Michael Pierce, Portsmouth. Always in control, and like Chelsea found the Town easy to handle.

ATTENDANCE: 17,457, boosted by a long-suffering 500 from Luton.

ENTERTAINMENT: Another shattering experience for the Town and their fans.