

West Ham.....2 Luton Town....2 (Half-time....0-0)



Brian Swain reports

A RED hot revival,

fighting back from

two down in the last

24 minutes,

delighted the

frozen Luton Town

fans who made the

trip to Upton Park

After a slow start in

near-zero temperatures the game caught fire to

warm up West Ham's

biggest attendance of

Hairy

early in the second.

on Monday.

Action pictures: Josh Lew



● DEBUT CHALLENGE: Martin Williams, 19, starting a league game for the first time in his life, pictured doing one of the day's most imporant jobs at Upton Park, closing down Julian Dicks, a full-back who likes to attack.

RESULTS showing Town score first, goalscorers, gates and league position:

AUGUST	
15 Leicester (a) 1-2 (Campbell)17,421	3 -
22 Bristol City (h) 0-3	22
29 Charlton (a) 0-0 6,302	21
SEPTEMBER	
2 Newcastle (a) 0-227,054	21
5 Tranmere (h) 3-3 (Claridge, Linton, Oakes) 6,801	23
13 Brentford (a) 2-1 (James, Gray)	19
19 Birmingham (h) 1-1 (Claridge pen) 8,481	21
26 Motts Co (a) 0-0 5,992	21
OCTOBER	
3 Portsmouth (h) 1-4(Dreyer)	22
10 Barnsley (a) 0-3 5,261	23
17 Derby (h) 1-3 (Johnson)	23
25 Peterborough (a) 3-2 (Gray 2, Telfer) 7,125	22
31 Southend (h) 2-2 (James, Gray)	22
NOVEMBER	
3 Cambridge (a) 3-3 (Oakes, Gray 2) 5,715	22
7 Grimsby (h) 1-4 (Gray)	22
14 Oxford (a) 0-4 5,760	22
21 Millwall (h) 1-1 (Gray)	23
29 Watford (h) 2-0 (Benjamin, Oakes)	21
DECEMBER	
5 Bristol Rov (a) 0-2	22
12 Wolves (a) 2-1 (Gray 2)	19
19 Sunderland (h) 0-0 8,286	20
28 West Ham (a) 2-2 (Hughes, Dreyer)	20

BARCLAYS LEAGUE DIV I

APPEARANCES (as sub in brackets): Ever-presents, 22 each: James and Gray. Preece 21, Peake 17, Linton 16(3), Rees 16, Salton 15, Johnson 14(2), Petterson 14, Dreyer 13, Kamara 12, Oakes 10(11), Hughes 9, Chamberlain 8, Telfer 7(1), Benjamin 4 (2), Campbell 2(7), Williams 1(2). BEFORE TRANSFERS: Claridge 15(1); Matthew (loan) 3(2).

Number of players used: 20 (32 last season).

GOALS: Gray 10, Oakes 3, Claridge 2 (1 pen), James 2, Dreyer 2, and one each by Campbell, Linton, Johnson, Telfer, Benjamin and Hughes.

ASSISTS: Gray 4, Preece 3, Claridge, Rees, Hughes and

Johnson and Dreyer.
THE COCA-COLA CUP
Round 2, first leg: Sep 23 Plymouth (h) 2-2 (Claridge 2)

29 Bristol City (h) 1-1 (Claridge) APPEARANCES: Two each by Petterson, Linton, Salton, Rees, James, Kamara, Claridge and Gray. Preece 1(1), Campbell 1(1), Peake 1, Johnson 1, Dreyer 1, Matthew 1, Oakes (2).

Quick double changes the **Bubbles tune**

Two-goal reply

earns point in a

holiday cracker

away game, at work.

The second half was pulsating stuff, and while both sides could have nicked victory the result was about right. For the Town it was the right. fair reward for a mixture

of honest toil, defiance. He did well, without and a determined hitting the high spots. refusal to accept defeat. He concentrated on not Skipper Trevor Peake doing anything silly and emerged as my man of his most valuable conthe match, imperious tribution was as a halfand solid in defence way line defender, despite taking a bit of a working to restrict the overlapping runs of West Ham left back

The defence survived Little Jason Rees was some hairy moments in a sort of front sweeper, the first half, and West and he showed that his game is not only about to make a breakthrough running his legs off. He stood tall, all 5ft 5ins of And when Tim Breacker scored against his old mates in the 66th Clive Allen and Trevor minute it should have been all over, and would

Julian Dicks.

have been against a they needed. But the Town roared Dependable back, and every man played his part as they

earned their point, the Paul Telfer getting back two subs included. towards his dependable So did manager David best, and Ceri Hughes Pleat, who reverted to and David Preece both the five-man midfield slaved away in a midformation which did the field that had to get

business in the previous through a lot of hard

Wolverhampton. I got the feeling that
If anything, it worked Hughes was happier on better at West Ham, and the ball than we have it looked as though the seen him since before his players were happier early season injury. with it at the second time He was certainly very

much involved: he gave A pre-match surprise away a penalty, scored, was the decision to give and then got booked. 19-year-old Martin The Hammers under Williams his first start in Billy Bonds have more league football, wide on muscle than they used to have in the days when they entertained a lot,

> And they put a lot of pressure on the Town

and won little.

But it took a penalty to crack it, with Julian James putting in another storming performance. It including a booking for a foul on Dicks, his third yellow card of the At left back Marvin

Johnson had to hang on in the first half when the pace of Mark Robson had a hangover threatened, but he stuck him, to ensure that to his job, and turned in Hammers dangermen a very disciplined display, while John Morley were given little Dreyer put the icing on a of the quality service solid performance alongside Peake with

the equalising goal.

Town players have so much faith in Alec feeling was that the It was good to see Chamberlain that he came in for some ribbing at the end for not saving the penalty which Dicks blasted into the roof of

But he made a couple Town showed m

West Ham opened at a

The Town were

caught dallying by quick free kick, an Chamberlain parried fierce cross-shot h Robson, then regaine his feet instantly to say Peter Butler's hear

> Long range On run of play Wes

Ham had much th better of the first half but could not make it count because th Town's deep defen kept them at long range But we had a scare i

the 22nd minute whe Robson cut in pa Johnson and fired in low cross which zippe turned into the net Morley. The roar from the crowd was still goin on as referee Mi Pierce accepted the side decision from

half strike came from a

run by Williams which

ended with a cros

Miklosko caught.

Preece cracked a sharp

20-yarder which Ludek

At the interval m

Town had done well

was the likely outc

But we began to thin

of winning when the

ittled West Ham with a position. It looked We were to realis promising until later that the linesman cker upended him was probably more n the edge of the box, his game than the re even the Hammers some of whose decis around me could believe it when no about them. kick was awarded. The Town's best first

Penalty

fer whipped in a

hich left Miklosko

lieved to see the ball

ntil then we had

little of Phil Gray,

indering, and much

ie when Morley Jown the left and

not. The celebratory the Town replied straight from the restart. Hughes decided to run at West Ham, and did so from the centrecircle. Defenders stood

push were in the bag.

test as the Hammers lost

their inhibitions and

Mr Pleat responded

went looking for the kill.

by changing the pattern.

and Scott Oakes going

on to put more accent on

still further, but seemed

to have backfired in the

66th minute when Kevin

Breacker hit a super

shot into the net from

outside the penalty area.

Relief

You could feel the

sigh of relief among

players and fans alike as

West Ham decided that

three valuable points to

Except that they were

off, and he made them pay with a low 25-yard of the net, to strangle the Suddenly, the Town their match. had just started. HE FULL MATCH DETAILS

OWN: Chamberlain; James, Peake, Dreyer, Johnson; Williams

UTD: Miklosko; Breacker, Potts, Martin, Dicks; Robson, Butler,

51 mins: Julian Dicks penalty, after Ceri Hughes nudged Mark

in the left half-cleared and Tim Breacker hit a 25-yard screamer

ins: John Dreyer near post header from a corner by Hughes.

EMPTS: Town four saved, six wide and one hit a post; West Ham

wide and one netted and disallowed for offside. Corners: 10-3 to

Mike Pierce, Portsmouth. Made a lot of decisions that looked

eutrals in the Pressbox, although he was right about the penalty

s from Trevor Morelyy went in from the left; 2-0, 66 mins: Kevin

hates; 2-1 30 seconds later: straight from the restart West Ham

ughes ran at them before lashing a 30-yarder low into the corner

), Telfer, Rees (Oakes 64 mins), Preece, Hughes; Gray.

en; Morley, C. Allen. Subs: Parris, Jones, not used.

Ham-were rattled. Debutant Williams

Benjamin went on, and the Hammers wer flummoxed by the Within four minute Dreyer flicked in the

was taken off and la

• EQUALISER: John Dreyer, despite being outnumbered by opponents, is in front

of them at the near post to make it 1-1 with a brave header from a corner by Ceri

their manager, Billy Bonds, had no complaints about the goal being given.

Hughes. Some Hammers players claimed that the ball was cleared off the line, but

equaliser from a righ wing corner by Hughes ill at ease, with Alvin Martin no longer the master of Gray, and th centre-forward and Oakes both had half chances to make the

But in the last te minutes it was the Hammers who looked more likely to grab the

Chamberlain pulled off a smart save from Clive Allen, and was let off the hook when Morley and Martin Allen both shot wildly in the frenzied finale.

But it was gripping way through to the fourth minute of injury time played by Mr fans as the Hammers 'Bubbles' anthem that battered away, but met

had been lifted and West Ham were rattled The First Division

	¥						1		10		
	HOME					AWAY					
P	W	D	L	F	A	W	D	L	F	A	P
Newcastle 23	9	2	1	25	7	8	0	3	20	14	53
Tranmere 23	9	4	0	31	9	4	1	5	13	18	44
Millwall 23	8	3	0	26	8	2	6	4	9	12	39
West Ham 23	6	2	2	23	10	5	4	4	20	15	39
Portsmouth 23	8	1	1	22	3	2	6	5	20	25	37
Leicester City 23	6	3	3	16	13	4	2	5	13	15	35
Wolves 24	5	5	2	22	15	3	5	4	12	13	34
Swindon 22	7	2	3	25	17	2	4	4	16	21	33
Derby 23	3	0	7	17	20 -	7	3	3	23	13	33
Brentford 23	6	3	4	21	15	3	3	4	14	12	33
Charlton 24	5	6	2	16	10	3	3	5	11	13	33
Grimsby 23	5	3	3	18	16	4	1	7	16	16	31
Peterborough 20	2	6	4	16	18	6	1	- 1	15	8	31
Watford 24	4	5	3	17	17	3	4	5	15	20	30
Barnsley 23	6	2	4	14	9	3	1	7	15	18	30
Oxford Utd 22	4	6	2	20	12	2	5	3	14	15	29
Sunderland 22	5	2	4	15	13	3	2	6	7	18	28
Bristol City 23	5	4	3	17	16	2	2	7	11	28	27
Bristol Rovers 24	4	1	7	18	26	2	3	7	14	27	22
Luton Town 22	1	5	4	12	21	3	4	5	13	22	21
Southend 23	3	3	4	12	11	2	3	8	12	22	21
Cambridge 23	4	2	5	13	17	0	6	6	10	25	20
Notts County 23	2	5	4	9	14	2	3	7	14	28	20
Birmingham 20	4	1	4	12	16	1	4	6	6	19	20

Day off put to very good use

Managers' viewpoints

Day disappointment to the Park.

The manager said that he and all his players were frustrated and unhappy when the Boxing Day home game with Swindon was called off because the pit-

But it gave him the chance to go to worked out his tactics for the trip to And he was delighted with the way

he five-man midfield kept West Ham's attack quiet, and with the Town's reply after going two down. West Ham had kept four clean sheets before conceding

been as urgent and sharp as it might have been, but picked up nicely after

"Just before the penalty we were

DAVID Pleat turned a Boxing

Ceri Hughes had done well to help keep Mark Robson quiet. The Town boss knew the potential of the West Town's advantage at Upton Ham midfielder, because as manager at White Hart Lane he had bought him from Exeter.

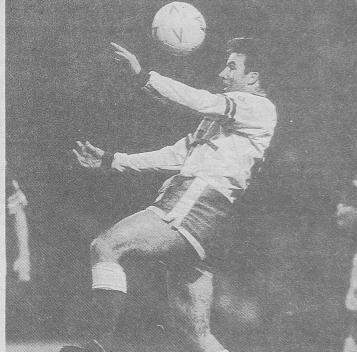
The manager had no complaints about the penalty, although Hughes claimed that he was not guilty of a shove on Robson

The debut of Martin Williams gave The Valley to see West Ham's 1-1 draw the boss pleasure. The 19-year-old had with Charlton, and it was there that he not been intimidated by Julian Dicks, one of the most forceful players in league football.

Billy Bonds, the West Ham manager, thought it was a case of two points dropped rather than one gained, but said he drew consolation from the fact that the two teams had put on good entertainment for a big crowd. He added: "I think we went to sleep

At half-time he felt his side had not after going two up. We should have won. We needed to defend sensibly for five minutes after the second goal but

"Ceri Hughes was unopposed as he beginning to play the way we wanted ran at us, and Ludo Miklosko should to," he said. "Then we changed things have saved. It was unprofessional twice, and I am grateful to the players defending but I am glad it was a good game to watch.



HEADS UP: Phil Gray sends a header just too high.

• QUICK REPLY: Ceri Hughes hits the Town's first goal, 30 seconds after West Ham had gone two up.

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es and Ceri Hughes, both for fouls.

2: 18,786, West Ham's highest of the season so far, with 1,096 MENT: A real Christmas cracker in the second half as the Town