

● **DEBUT BOY:** David Greene, who played the first league match of his career at Blundell Park. (See back page interview).

forget.
He won't, of course,
and one result of a
woeful team show at

Welcome lift up the table

DAVID Pleat spoke of the irony of the victory over Oxford at Kenilworth Road which lifted the Town to 17th place in the league table for a few days, their highest of the season.

"That was one of our poorer performances," he said. "We did not play as well as we did when we lost at Portsmouth."

Oxford Boss **Brian Horton** found it a very unhappy return on his first visit in charge to the ground where he was such a good player. Just awful was one of the milder comments from him about Oxford's performance.

The Town, with **Martin Williams** preferred to **Ceri Hughes** in midfield, had looked the better of two struggling sides in the first half, but had only one goal to show for it, a careful looping header by **David Preece** after Oxford keeper **Paul Reece** made a hash of trying to cut out a right wing cross by **Williams**. **Kerry Dixon** nearly made it two, but **Reece** produced the save of the match to flick his header round a post.

But confidence drained after **Nick Cusack** headed an equaliser in injury time at the end of the first half.

Luton Tn.....3
Oxford Utd..1

With neither side on top form, the second half was mediocre, with the smallest league crowd of the season beginning to jeer the mistakes of both sides before the Town raised themselves in the closing stages.

The Town defence had some excuse: skipper **Trevor Peake** played despite the onset of the flu attack which then kept him out of the team at Grimsby, and **Julian James** and **Marvin Johnson** were both carrying knocks from their superlative efforts at Fratton Park.

Phil Gray was put away by **Preece** to thump in a tremendous drive for his fifth goal in as many games with 13 minutes to go, with the help of a deflection, and three minutes from time **Scott Oakes** latched on to a quick throw by **Johnson** and crashed in a superb volley from the edge of the box to make the result a little flattering, but very welcome on a night when all the other struggling teams were beaten.

Match details

TOWN: Chamberlain; James, Peake, Dreyer, Johnson; Williams (Rees 66mins), Telfer, Preece, Oakes; Gray, Dixon. Other sub: Linton.

OXFORD: Reece; Smart, Evans, Melville, Ford; Robinson, Magilton, Lewis; Beauchamp, Cusack, Penney. Subs not used: Allen, Phillips.

GOALS: 1-0, 16 mins: David Preece header from cross by Martin Williams; 1-1, first half-stoppage time: Nick Cusack, diving header from centre by David Penney; 2-1, 77 mins: Phil Gray, cracking 25-yard drive from high through ball by Preece; 3-1 87 mins: one similar, tremendous volley, by Scott Oakes, from a throw-in by Marvin Johnson.

OTHER ATTEMPTS: Town nine saved and eight wide; Oxford four saved and nine wide. Corners: 8-3 to the Town.

REFEREE: David Elleray, Harrow. Not bad, but his linesmen were not so hot.

BOOKED: John Dreyer, for a trip on Jim Magilton.

ATTENDANCE: 6,687, lowest league gate of the season so far at Kenilworth Road.

ENTERTAINMENT: Pretty fair in the end, although there were some dreadful nervous patches before the Town got it together again in the last 20 minutes.