Big match

Town six saved and six wide; Tranmere six saved, three wide and one netted by Aldridge but ruled out for offside. Corners:

ns for an earlier oul on Guentchev. ENDANCE: 6,680

of the season so far.

probably a good e for neutrals, bu

Dwight's miss adds to Town's misery

To add to their misery the point the Town deserved vanished in injury time when Dwight Marshall missed the best chance of the lot, shooting weakly at the goalkeeper after being put clear by David Oldfield.

Small wonder the manager is destable ackling a children by home the manager is destable ackling a children by home the manager.

perately seeking a striker who knows how to find the net regularly after the attack fired blanks for the fourth time in five starts. With John Taylor out for three

months Scott Oakes is to be asked to rediscover his sharpshooting boots his first game of the season

unscathed.

He was needed at Tranmere, because injuries robbed the Town of two others who might pop in the occasional goal, Johnny Vilstrup and

occasional goar, Johnny vissupCeri Hughes.
Almost inevitably John Aldridge,
at 37 still as sharp as a needle in the
box, accepted his customary goal
against the Town—his fourth-minute
winner was the seventh he has
notched in the last seven meetings
between the clubs.

It came after Graham Alexander attempted an over-ambitious cross-field pass in his own half. With the Town set to counter-attack, he deliv-ered the ball to Pat Nevin, and in a trice he had sent a pass beyond
Marvin Johnson for overlapping fullback Tony Thomas to chase.

Thomas got down the flank,

knocked over a perfect far-post cross

look easy. "Where was Bontcho?"
was the agonised cry from the Town bench.
From then on the Town defended well, with the occasional hiccup, like when Aldridge headed wide of an empty net after Ian Fueur beat out a piledriver from

Steve Davis was again a giant at the heart of defence, and in attack as well when he got the chance, with the Town gambling on leaving two at the back in the closing stages as they searched for an equaliser.

Gary Waddock came into the side to replace Hughes,

and tackled as ferociously as ever, and Paul McLaren, making his full debut at 18, did remarkably well in the unfamiliar surrounds of midfield after getting over a few

At the end, everyone agreed the Town had played the more attractive passing football, and had enjoyed more were often chasing shadows. But Guentchear were often chasing shadows. But Guentchear were often chasing shadows.



Aldridge heads killer

win football matches on points.

The Town managed only one on-target shot in the first

half, set up by McLaren and Alexander's harrying of Ged Brennan. Alexander won the ball, but his shot on the turn, under pressure, was saved by Danny Coyne.

Aldridge was pulled up for offside when he netted ter

minutes before the interval, and in the second half the Town threatened to take full control of the game.

Hughes Peake. Taylor.

Vilstrup

Thorpe

Woodsford

Thorpe

half-chances and the only real threat to Coyne came from long-range set pieces.

The Bulgarian was taken off after 63 minutes, and

David Oldfield arrived just in time to see the second Town shot on target, a blistering 20-yarder by Richard Harvey which was saved.

Coyne was in more trouble when first Harvey, and then Oakes, hit powerful free kicks from just outside the box, but the goalkeeper tipped both efforts over the bar.

From the corners Davis headed wide from the far post and Alexander cracked a shot too high.

The home fans were pleading for the final whistle when Oldfield sent Marshall racing clear in stoppage time. The pass was inch-perfect, and Marshall's anticipation and

stays

American.
"It's good for us, for him, and for West Ham," said the Town boss. "We get a good

lenging Kasey Keller, Brad Friedel and Juergen Sommer for the USA's No. 1 shirt, Feuer is much happier playing his football in the First Division than in places like Crawley or Sutton United, which figure on West Ham's third XI fixture list.

Keeper

GOALKEEPER Ian Feuer is to stay at Kenilworth Road for at least another month. West Ham this week agreed to extend his loan, and Terry Westley wasted no time in re-signing the lanky

goalkeeper, the player gets league experience, and West Ham know he will be all the

better for that."
At this stage, there is no question of a transfer offer being made, with Westley hardly daring to ask the Hammers how much they want for a keeper who has not had to carry the can for any of the five goals that have been put past him in his five Town appear-

Reports and gossip from Town

OUTJUMPED: Goalkeeper Danny Coyne gets the better of Dwight

REPORTS BY BRIAN SWAIN PICTURES BY GARETH OWEN

was spot-on as well. But the shot was hit no venom at all, and a relieved Coyne was

mis no senom at all, and a reactive was also save easily.

Tammer had no doubt about why the Town Inal where Watford had succeeded only a reck previously, Said Adridge: "Luton's passification was very good, but they were any playing it in front of us. They didn't get cought us, so it didn't hurt us."

Adridge and Trevor Peake, total ages 75 as and offered congratulations for what the size had achieved - they first thet when they are itsid playing against each other for

were kids playing against each other for Newport County and Lincoln City repsectively. And Peake confirmed what the crowd knew: And Peake confirmed what the crowd knew; be twen had played a lot of good football, but did not have enough attacking penetration, and did not twe enough scoring attempts. Those two ingredients are desperately needed to complete a creipe for First Division survival, surfing with West Brom's visit on Saturday.

Ceri misses

Welsh cap

THE knee injury that kept Ceri Hughes out of the Town side at Tranmere has also cost him the chance of his fourth Welsh cap.

But after staying at home this

to be fit to play against West Brom on Saturday. He is undergo

week for treatment and training, the 24- year-old midfielder expects



shoulders rest in the force a goal



League steps in to end Preece row

THE FOOTBALL League has stepped in to end the row between Luton Town and mid-fielder David Preece, over his departure in the

And chairman David Kohler is hailing the And chairman David Kohler is halling the League decision as a victory, proof that he was night all along in refusing to give the veteran player a free transfer a couple of months after his ten-year testimonial pay-off. Prece was refused a free transfer by the League, but had that decision overtuned by an appeal tribunal, and prompts of Darby County, where he was the proof of the country that the same part of the proof of the same part in his view the Town had been robbed of a transfer fee by the player's action. But now the League has told Derby that they league the player is action.

nobbed of a transfer fee by the player's action. But now the League has told Derby that they should pay a fee. Derby have agreed, which leaves kholer saying he has been vindicated. The Town have asked for £15,000 and Derby's first offer was £75,000. We will negotiate some more," said the Town charrence. "Blay the important thine is, that the

man. "But the important thing is that the League has said Preece was not entitled to a free transfer, and Derby have accepted that

Support for Aaron

A new contract extension has been offered to midfielder Aaron Skelton after he suffered the

mutateder Aaron seenor auce ne sutteeto un-latest in a series of crippling injury blows. The 20-year-old has been poised three times for promotion to the Town's league side, and each time injury has snatched it all away. The latest is cruciate ligament damage, and it means that he cannot kick a ball again in anger

until next season.
"It's unbelievable the bad luck he has had," said manager Terry Westley, who had great hopes for a player he has guided through the junior ranks in the past four years.

STRIKER John Taylor is already dreaming of a Happy New Year. For he will not be playing league soccer again until 1996 after a back operation at the weekend. Keyhole surgery was carried out to remove a particle of flooting bone from near his spine, and the operation was a complete success. He is already up and walking, and was expecting to be allowed to leave the clinic yesterday. Hunt goes on for target man

Striker has back op

STRIKER John Taylor is already dreaming of a Happy

From back page

Scott is 28 and made his name as a consistent striker with Lincoln, Wycombe and Swindon before joining Stoke last December.

But he has not gelled with Paul Peschisolido, and after three goals in 18 matches was discarded by Lou Macari. His record is 25 goals in 100 league games to date, but he is, like Wilkinson, also known as a provider in a two-man attack.

Westley said: "I have spoken to both clubs, and I have caultous optimism that we will be successful

have cautious optimism that we will be successful

is winning games.

with one or the other. "We need a target man, to add penetration to our game. I know that we are playing the right sort of football. At Tranmere we were on the right lines. But we didn't score, and the only thing that really matters

"We didn't play rubbish football, but we are on the "We didn't play rubbish football, but we are on the bottom of the table again, and we must have more penetration. And we have to know when not to be too elaborate. At Tranmere Richard Harvey and Graham Alexander did well getting down the flanks, but they were scared to hit high crosses because our attackers were all five-foot somethings." If am working like a lunatic trying to bring someone in."

The manager has already failed in attempts to sign Mick Harford and John Hartson on loan, and Wimbledon this week turned down an approach for

Gary Blissett, formerly of Brentford. And the boss made it clear where his priorities lie

among this week's fixtures.
"A win against West Brom on Saturday is absolutely vital," he said. "And I think we'll get it."



Kelvin gets Italian job

in the firing line tonight, in goal for Luton Town at Genoa in the Anglo-Italian Cup. Iain Feuer was left out of the 17-man squad that flew out yesterday at the request of West Ham.

But Johnny Vilstrup was included, and is expected to play at least some of the game, to confirm he has got over the thigh strain that kept

He looks set to return to league action against West Brom on Saturday, and Scott home appearance of the sea-son in the same game. He too s included in tonight's squad, to help him attain match fitness after his two months injury absence ended

at Tranmere.
Dwight Marshall, Gary
Waddock and Trevor Peake
were left at home, to enable them to rest before Saturday, with Waddock given extra wife is expecting a baby

lead the attack tonight, with manager Terry Westley will-ing him to do well. He has yet to score anything but penalties — three in 11 full penalties — three in 11 full league and cup matches – and Westley said: "He is getting took a lot away."



Kelvin Davis

anxious, and nervous. He needs a goal to restore his and is scoring goals. What' happening at the moment is killing him."

With Jamie Woodsford

likely to play alongside the Bulgarian in Genoa, another blank for Guentchev might cost him his place in the side

against West Brom.

But the manager said:
"That would be a difficult decision. If you leave a play-er out, what does that do for his confidence? And if you score again, what then?

"I only know we nee more goal threats from the team. And I will be pleased to see Vilstrup and Hughes back in the squad on

Irishman's doubts

A FIXTURE in the Irish under-21 squad, defender David Greene was in line for David Greene was in line for the property of the his 13th cap last night, against Latvia in Galway, but facing serious doubts over his future with Luton Town.

Reading between the lines of what was said at Kenilworth Road this week, I believe he could be on his way out of the club where he started as a boy four years

He feels he should have had a crack at First Division duty after the Town's poor duty affer in Lordon man-start to the season, and man-ager Terry Westley con-firmed that he and Greene firmed that he and Greene would seriously consider it."

has shown no sign of wantin to extend the defender's record of 23 league and cur

be interested, but Westley said that was not true. But he confirmed: "Like any player, David Greene is available at the right price, say around £300,000. He is finding it difficult to establish himself here and perhaps it is time he got into a league team some-where. He and I have spoken

Norwegian on trial

A 23-YEAR-OLD striker from Norway is the latest to come to Kenilworth Road for private trials, and a £100,000 transfer is

But manager Terry Westley stresses that the part-timer is

But manager Terry Westley stresses that the part-timer is not the answer to today's short-term crisis. The name of the player is being kept secret to avoid tipping off other clue in this country, but Westley said: "He looks a good prospet and at £100,000 it seems fair value. Clubs in this country are asking ridiculous prices for strikers, and I am sure that is why more and more managers are looking at for-

Town's season at a glance

DATE... OPPONENTS... RESULT... SCORERS... ATTENDANCE... LEAGUE POSITION **ENDSLEIGH LEAGUE DIV I** August 1995 16 6,427 17 8,550 20 7,076 22 7 Tranmere (A) 0-1 8.680 24

COCA-COLA CUP (First Round) August 1995

5 Bournem'th (H) 1-1 (Marshall) 15 Bournem'th (H) 1-1 (Marshall) 2,728 22 Bournemouth (A) 1-2 (aet) (M Johnson) 4,844 (Bournemouth win 3-2 on aggregate).
ANGLO ITALIAN CUP September 5 1995
Perugia (H) 1- 4 (Guentchev pen) 2,352

How they stand

Birminghan Tranmere Charlton Grimsby Ipswich Southend Reading Sheff Utd C. Palace Stoke

ENDSLEIGH LEAGUE FIRST DIVISION

Hughes . Marshall Davis . . . Taylor Guentcher

Cup goals Marshall M. Johnson Assists S Davis Anglo Italian Cup K Davies S Davies Evers. . Thorpe Hughes Woodsford

Assists

Coca Cola Cup

APPEARANCES... GOALS

. 6 (3)

4 (1)

James . . Waddock

Guentchev

M Johnson

Hughes

better for that.'

ing three days of concentrated fit-ness work at a rehabilitation clinic at Twickenham which specialises in sports injury treatment Hughes's dreams of a recall to the international scene were lifted when he was called up as a And with ambitions of chalreplacement for the injury-hit Welsh squad for tonight's

European Championship clash with Germany. But on Friday he hurt his knee in training, and had to withdraw. esterday he said: "It's coming on OK. It wasn't worth risking it in the Anglo-Italian Cup, but I think I will be all right for Saturday.