

Sport 3

Endsleigh League soccer

Big match facts

TOWN: Feuer, Peake, Davis, Marvin Johnson; Alexander, Hughes, Vilstrup (Waddock 51 mins), Harvey; Oakes (Gavin Johnson 76 mins), Oldfield, Marshall (Guentchev 87 mins).

IPSWICH: Forrest; Stockwell, Linlithgow, Mowbray, Taricco; Uhlenbeek, Sedgley (Tanner 27 mins), Williams, Slater; Mathie (Gregory 81 mins), Marshall. Unused sub goal-keeper Andy Petterson.

THE GOAL: David Oldfield, 24 minutes, his first since returning to Luton, with a waspish right-footer which beat Craig Forrest on his near post after Oldfield's dribble turned David Linlithgow inside out.

OTHER ATTEMPTS: Town three saved and six wide. Ipswich seven saved and seven wide. Corners: 6-3 to the Town.

REFEREE: Trevor West, Hull: had a good game, resorting to the book only when he had to.

BOOKED: Ceri Hughes for the 16th-minute foul that forced Steve Sedgley out of the game.

ATTENDANCE: 9,123, Portman Road's lowest of the season, but for a match shown live on TV.

ENTERTAINMENT: Not awfully pretty, but a cracking day out for Town fans as the whole team battled to hold on to a much-needed win that lifted the Town off the bottom of the First Division.

Boss jumps for joy

From back page

For everyone involved it was a perfect day, not least for David Oldfield, the subject of cruel jeers in home matches.

He produced a moment of magic to grab the lead, and the rest of the Town side then battered down the hatches to frustrate Ipswich and their supporters.

The second away win of the season lifted the Town out of the bottom three relegation places of the First Division and if home results can be brought into balance we can dream of better things - the play-off area is currently only eight points above the Town!

Westley has had to get used to rumours about his likely sacking and knows it will happen if errors are bad.

In the Press room at Portman Road, where he was once a failed schoolboy player and later in charge of the Ipswich school of excellence, his grin almost cut his head in two.

And with justification: at the final whistle, after the Town had soaked up pressure and Ipswich had wasted a lot of possession, I felt the same sort of emotions that sparked Pleat into his dance of delight more than a decade ago.

Ipswich fans were saying their fourth consecutive home defeat - including one against Second Division Stockport in the Coca Cola Cup - was self-inflicted.

True, they looked a poor team, very much the also-rans of the Premiership which they were last season.

Manager George Burley said: "It was a disaster. We were looking for three points. We had one or two chances before we conceded the goal, but didn't take them, and Luton made it difficult for us after they went a goal up. We had enough chances to know it was a soft goal. In the second half we put them under pressure, and had chances to bury them."

He was right, but that fails to give credit to the way the Town fought like

REPORT BY BRIAN SWAIN
PICTURES BY GARETH OWEN

tigers to hold on to what they had after Oldfield stunned the crowd, and his Luton critics, with his first goal for the club since he helped the Town win 2-0 at Goodison Park in September 1988.

Ian Marshall missed a golden chance to give Ipswich an early lead when he headed across the face of the goal, and wide from a far post cross by speedy Dutch right winger Gus Uhlenbeek. But the Town defence settled down after that sixth-minute scare, and from then on the rearguard was brilliant. Ian Feuer blotted out sight of his goal when Ipswich might have scored, with three excellent saves, and Trevor Peake, Steve Davis and especially Marvin Johnson put up a wall of frustration for the home side.

Oldfield missed a half-decent chance just before his goal, blazing wildly high and wide after a shot by Ceri Hughes had been charged down.

But the finishing was spot on in the 24th minute when Town put together one of their best moves of the match.

It started with Davis heading clear from defence. Johnson switched the ball to Richard Harvey, and he in turn fed Johnny Vilstrup in midfield. It was a department that never functioned as well as it can, but on this occasion the Dane's pass was inch-perfect to send Oldfield down the left wing.

The unfortunate David Linlithgow tried to hold up Oldfield. But he could do nothing as Oldfield dribbled around him, then lashed in a right-foot drive

which beat Craig Forrest low down in his near post. From then on it was a battle for survival, with the Town getting behind the ball in numbers and soaking up Ipswich pressure which became less and less threatening as Feuer and Co coped with everything.

The Town looked dangerous on the break, but with little real threat in the final third of the field, although Gavin Johnson's first touch as sub might have brought a goal when he just failed to beat Mick Stockwell to a low cross by Dwight Marshall.

The last quarter of an hour was nail-biting stuff. You feared that if Ipswich broke

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Reports and gossip from Town

as a dream comes true

IPSWICH 0
LUTON TOWN 1

through once they could go on to win, but the Town were resolute and composed.

The biggest danger to Town fans' cardiac health came with 90 seconds to go, when Ipswich had a free kick just outside the penalty area. The drama was intensified as it took an age for the ref to agree on the right line for the wall. Pessimistic thoughts were that on balance of play Ipswich deserved an equaliser, even if the Town's gritty display did not deserve to concede one.

But Ipswich's Marshall let us all off the hook, players and fans alike, by whacking his shot well wide, and we knew then that three lovely points were safe.

The whole team joined the manager in the sort of final whistle celebrations that are usually reserved for Wembley, but it really was that sort of feeling - an overwhelming sense that this result was something special.

Even if Westley was man enough to admit to journalists: "In terms of passing the ball that is perhaps the worst we have played for six games. You only saw Luton passing football every now and again."

"But it was an emotional match. It's about winning, isn't it? And we knew we had to win this game."



BREAKING CLEAR: Ceri Hughes launches a Town counter-attack, with the Portman Road scoreboard giving a delightful message for visiting fans and players. **JUMP TO IT:** (below) The Ipswich goal under pressure from a corner, on a day when the flag kick count was 7-3 in favour of the Town.

Clive Allen is back

FOUR years after he turned down the wages David Pleat offered to try to get him to sign for Luton Town, Clive Allen is at Kenilworth Road again, training with Terry Westley's squad and prepared to talk business.

The former England international is now 34, and looking for a club. He said: "I am fit, and ready to go."

His best days were with Pleat at Tottenham. Playing as a lone striker Allen hit 49 league and cup goals and was the Football Writers' Association player of the year after Spurs finished third in the table in 1987, and were runners-up in the FA Cup.

He has played for Bordeaux in France, and his other clubs in this country have been QPR, Arsenal - where he was bought and sold without kicking a ball - Crystal Palace, QPR, Manchester City, Chelsea, West Ham and Millwall. His league record is 181 goals in 385 matches.

Freed by Millwall, Allen has had trials with Bristol City and Carlisle since doing pre-season training with West Ham. But he lives with his wife and three young children at Chelmsford, and is looking for a club closer to home. He turned down an offer at Bristol, and the travelling to Carlisle, on the Scottish border, horrendous.

Westley said Allen was welcome to train with the Town, but he would probably not consider a contract.

David Pleat's bid to recapture
Scott Oakes gets cold shoulder

(Continued from back page)

They know the Town have watched him in reserve games, but on Saturday the 30-year-old former soldier was in Wednesday's Premiership side for the first time this season because David Hurst was suspended and Marc Degryse was injured.

Whittingham scored in a 1-0 win at Coventry, and is rated at £1 million. Town fans might best remember him when he was with Portsmouth, his first league club, scoring a hat-trick through the puddles at Kenilworth Road three years ago.

Pompey sold him to Aston Villa for £1.2 million a few months later, but he could not command a regular place there and after a loan spell with Wolves went to Sheffield Wednesday for £700,000 last December.

Pleat phoned Kenilworth Road a couple of weeks ago to enquire about Oakes, and after turning him down Westley thought that was an end of

the matter.

But after Pleat's comments to his local Press Westley said: "There was an interest from Sheffield Wednesday. They talked of £1.3 million, and my answer was that for Oakes to go for that sort of money they would say I was a player as well."

Ruel Fox recently moved for £4 million. He's nearly 28. So what is Westley's answer? "I would say £2 million at the very least."

But the fact is I don't want to lose him. We have watched Guy Whittingham, but we have not made an offer. We have been keeping an eye on him in Sheffield Wednesday's reserves for a month, and I know he will always score goals. But we need something different from what Whittingham - a young Mick Harford, I need something different from what Whittingham - a young Mick Harford, and I don't think anything will come of the contact between us and Sheffield Wednesday."

LUTON TOWN
FOOTBALL CLUB

WHILE new signing Vidar Riseth hopes to be given the chance to make his Luton Town debut on Sunday, fitness worries about other midfielders might help to ease his way into the side.

Johnny Vilstrup is under treatment again for the thigh strain that has bothered him for the past three weeks. He had to be subbed in the second half at Ipswich.

Scott Oakes, playing only his second league game of the season at Portman Road, also had to be withdrawn. He had been ready to accept a pain-killing jab to enable him to play at Ipswich, and although that was not needed this week he was still feeling sore from his calf muscle injury.

Dwight Marshall is the other doubt as the Town try to chalk up their first back-to-back wins of the season.

He was kicked in the calf at Portman Road, and did well to keep going because the injury stiffened up rapidly and affected his running.

The bonus for the Town is that once more they have an extra day to get everybody ready as TV cameras come to Kenilworth Road for live coverage of the match, for the first time this season.

It will be on LWTV, with highlights incorporated into Anglia's programme featuring Norwich v Tranmere.

Terry Westley said: "It was a tremendous day out to the ground to help us, and have lost only one of their away games, but we can beat them."

Westley will take the opportunity to see Charlton in action tonight, when they are away to Wolves in the Coca Cola Cup.

Darren Patterson is back in training

DEFENDER Darren Patterson resumed full-time training this week, and if there is no adverse reaction after his long battle against tendonitis could make his first Luton Town appearance for the reserves within the next fortnight.

The 26-year-old Northern Ireland international was bought in the summer from Crystal Palace for £150,000, and manager Terry Westley said: "I brought him in to be a member of the first team squad."

"His injury has been terrible luck for him and for us, but once he is fit it will be very interesting in terms of competition for places."

Patterson's target is a Luton debut for the reserves at Wimbledon next Wednesday and Westley said: "He will need at least a couple of games to get match fit before he is in contention for the league squad."

Town's season at a glance....

DATE... OPPONENTS... RESULT... SCORERS... ATTENDANCE... LEAGUE POSITION

ENDSLEIGH LEAGUE DIV I					
August 1995					
13 Norwich	(H) 1-3 (Guentchev, pen)	7,848	-		
19 Southend	(A) 1-0 (Thorpe)	4,630	-		
26 Leicester	(H) 1-1 (Hughes)	7,612	16		
29 Grimsby	(A) 0-0	4,289	10		
September					
2 Derby	(H) 1-2 (Marshall)	6,427	17		
9 Reading	(A) 1-3 (Marshall)	8,550	20		
13 Millwall	(A) 3-1	7,076	22		
16 Sunderland	(H) 0-2	6,955	23		
23 Wolves	(A) 0-0	23,659	24		
30 Portsmouth	(H) 3-1 (Marshall, Davis, Guentchev, pen)	7,795	23		
October					
7 Tranmere	(A) 0-1	6,680	24		
14 West Brom	(H) 1-2 (Harvey)	8,042	24		
22 Ipswich	(A) 1-0 (Oldfield)	9,123	21		
COCA-COLA CUP (First Round)					
August 1995					
15 Bournemouth	(H) 1-1 (Marshall)	2,728			
22 Bournemouth	(A) 1-2 (aet) (M Johnson)	4,844			
(Bournemouth sub 3-2 on aggregate)					
ANGLO-ITALIAN CUP					
September 5 1995					
Perugia	(H) 1-4 (Guentchev, pen)	2,352			
October 11					
Genoa	(A) 0-4	3,759			

How they stand

ENDSLEIGH LEAGUE FIRST DIVISION												
HOME						AWAY						
P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts	P	W	D	L	F	A
1	2	2	2	10	10	5	2	0	12	5	25	25
2	2	2	6	6	5	2	0	9	4	25	25	25
3	5	1	1	10	4	2	2	9	24	24	24	24
4	3	0	12	4	2	1	3	10	9	22	22	22
5	2	3	1	8	6	3	3	1	7	6	21	21
6	2	3	1	13	8	2	1	7	4	20	20	20
7	2	3	1	13	7	1	3	2	5	6	20	20
8	2	3	1	7	4	2	3	11	10	20	20	20
9	3	3	1	11	12	2	1	3	9	19	19	19
10	3	3	1	10	7	1	3	2	7	18	18	18
11	2	4	2	12	8	1	4	5	12	17	17	17
12	3	4	0	6	4	2	1	4	5	16	16	16
13	4	1	7	4	1	5	5	12	17	15	15	15
14	4	0	3	14	11	0	4	2	6	8	12	12
15	3	2	1	2	10	5	2	5	12	15	15	15
16	1	4	2	5	6	2	2	8	15	12	12	12
17	1	4	1	5	5	2	3	9	12	15	15	15
18	2	2	2	9	8	1	3	3	8	14	14	14
19	3	2	9	7	2	3	7	10	14	14	14	14
20	1	3	2	7	8	2	2	6	7	14	14	14
21	1	3	2	7	8	2	2	6	7	14	14	14
22	1	3	2	7	8	2	2	6	7	14	14	14
23	1	3	2	7	8	2	2	6	7	14	14	14
24	1	3	2	7	8	2	2	6	7	14	14	14
25	1	3	2	7	8	2	2	6	7	14	14	14
26	1	3	2	7	8	2	2	6	7	14	14	14
27	1	3	2	7	8	2	2	6	7	14	14	14
28	1	3	2	7	8	2	2	6	7	14	14	14
29	1	3	2	7	8	2	2	6	7	14	14	14
30	1	3	2	7	8	2	2	6	7	14	14	14

APPEARANCES... GOALS

League appearances (as sub in brackets)		Assists		Goals	
Harvey	13	Davis	1	M Johnson	1
Steve Davis	12	Oldfield	1	McLaren	1
Marshall	12	Oakes	1	Vilstrup	1
M Johnson	12	Alexander	2	Oakes	1
Oldfield	10 (1)	Taylor	1	Alexander	1
Alexander	10	Guentchev	1	Guentchev	1
Guentchev	8 (4)	G Johnson	1	Hughes	1
Waddock	6 (4)	Marshall	1	Coca Cola Cup	1
Peake	5 (3)	S Davis	1	Sommer	1
Hughes	8	Feuer	1	M Johnson	2
Feuer	7			Oldfield	2
James	6 (3)			Alexander	2
Waddock	6 (4)			Waddock	2
Kelvin Davis	4			Marshall	2
Marshall	5 (3)			Taylor	2
Linton	5			Marshall	2
Vilstrup	5			Guentchev	2
G Johnson	4 (1)			Hughes	2
Marshall	4			Marshall	2
Oakes	4			Marshall	2
Sommer	2			Marshall	2
Skelton	2			Marshall	2
S Davis	1 (3)			Marshall	2
Woodford	1 (2)			Marshall	2
Thomas	1 (1)			Marshall	2
McLaren	1 (1)			Marshall	2
Woodford	1 (2)			Marshall	2
Marshall	3			Marshall	2
Guentchev	2			Marshall	2
Hughes	2			Marshall	2
Harvey	2			Marshall	2
Waddock	1			Marshall	2
Marshall	1			Marshall	2
Woodford	1			Marshall	2
Oldfield	1			Marshall	2