

# Sport 3

## Big match facts

**TOWN:** Feuer, Peake, Davis, Marvin Johnson; Alexander (Linton 79 mins), Hughes (Riseth HT), Waddock (Guentchev 79 mins), Harvey; Oakes, Oldfield, Marshall.

**CHARLTON:** Salmon; Humphrey, Chapple, Rufus, Stuart; Newton, Walsh, Bowyer, Robinson; Nelson (Grant 79 mins), Leaburn. Unused subs Robson and Chandler.

**THE GOAL:** Gary Nelson, 16 mins, collecting an over-the-top pass by Colin Walsh, and going round Ian Feuer after the goalkeeper hesitated long enough to let Nelson get to the ball first.

**OTHER ATTEMPTS:** Town six saved, six wide and shot by Scott Oakes hit the top of the bar; Charlton six saved and three wide. Corners: 8-4 to the Town.

**REFEREE:** John Kirkby, Sheffield. Certainly no homer and to Town eyes he boomed when allowing Mike Salmon's leaping challenge that flattened Dwight Marshall in the second half.

**BOOKED:** Charlton's Colin Walsh for time-wasting over a throw-in two minutes before the end.

**ATTENDANCE:** 6,270, lowest league gate of the season.

**ENTERTAINMENT:** Poor in the first half, when the Town threatened to do well, but spoiled it by dreadful final passes and centres, better after the break, when quality football was still in short supply but at least the Town got stuck in and showed a bit of passion and commitment. But five home defeats in seven home games to date is the mathematics of relegation.

# Salmon's leap leaves

From back page

"It was a battle, and Luton put us under pressure, but we never got going, which is why I am delighted with the win.

"Luton gave us a tough game, and if they keep playing like that they will be OK.

"I feel sorry for Terry Westley. Young managers have to be given a chance, and it's frustrating when you have so much pressure and lose. But his side did well and they gave him everything. I hope people leave him alone to get on with the job, and I hope it goes well for him."

It had been a day when the cruelties of football were underlined: one mistake by Ian Feuer, in the Town goal, led to Charlton snatching the lead, while at the other end Mike Salmon escaped unscathed when he might have been sent off for flattening Dwight Marshall, and thus was still on the park to make an incredible save from David Oldfield when the Town hammered away at Charlton after the break.

We saw two sides of Luton Town either side of the interval. In the first half there was a lot of promising passing football, but with nothing on the end of it because just about every final pass or cross was poorly hit.

After the break it was "blood and thunder" in Westley's words, with Charlton on the ropes but avoiding a knock-out.

Scott Oakes, coming back to match fitness in his third game, kept the midfield ticking, but after the Town got down the flanks, men in the middle waited in vain for the right kind of service.

Referee John Kirkby and his linesmen had a dodgy afternoon. Charlton's counter-attacking soccer was aided by marginal offside decisions going their way, but Gary Nelson timed his run perfectly when he grabbed the winner after 16 min-



## REPORT BY BRIAN SWAIN PICTURES BY GARETH OWEN

utes. Colin Walsh, an expert veteran in a young Charlton team, lofted a pass over the Town's back three and Nelson got clear.

Feuer started to advance, then hesitated just long enough for Nelson to beat him to the ball and go round him before walking it into the net.

"Ian has put his hand up," said Westley. "It was a mistake, but he was due one. It's the first he has made since he joined us."

The bar saved Charlton two minutes later. Marshall delivered a decent low cross to the back of the penalty area, David Oldfield sold the Charlton defence a dummy, and Oakes hit a side-footed shot which

curled onto the top of the bar and into the crowd.

The game opened up after the break, when the Town, with a touch of desperation taking over, stormed onto the attack.

Ceri Hughes, who had looked forceful before the interval, was kept in the dressing room at half-time through sickness, a mixture of stomach trouble and flu.

That led to an extra striker being used, and Norwegian Vidar Riseth did enough on his debut to suggest he might be a useful asset.

He looked strong and determined, but for all the Town's pressure they could not find a way through a

**ATTACKING DEFENDER:** Marvin Johnson heads powerfully, but wide, from a free kick by Scott Oakes as the Town piled on the second-half pressure.

Charlton side that defended doggedly, and in depth.

Marshall was inches wide with a near-post header, Marvin Johnson suffered a similar fate from Oakes' free kick, and with Steve Davis forsaking defence for attack the skipper drove in two off-target efforts.

It was desperate stuff, with the Town piling on the pressure, and I was certain that the ref dropped an enormous clanger when he allowed Salmon to get away with a challenge on Marshall which left the striker in need of two minutes' treatment on the side of the pitch.

Marshall and Phil Chapple were chasing Davis's chipped pass, and

# Sport 4

# Hatters fishing for points

Salmon raced out to flatten the Luton man. I thought it was a red card offence and a penalty, but Mr Kirkby saw no foul.

Charlton were restricted to breaks, from one of which Feuer made a tremendous save to keep out a 25-yard pile-driver by John Humphrey.

The Town changed to an even more attacking formation when Bontcho Guentchev and Des Linton were sent on for the last 11 minutes.

Within three minutes it almost paid off: Guentchev crossed from the right, Riseth headed down and Oldfield, who had missed a couple of half-chances earlier, produced a blinding right foot volley from about ten yards. It was worth a point, but Salmon made a brilliant save, and that turned out to be the final effort from a Town side that seemed to know it was not their day.

With everything gambled on attack, the defeat could have been heavier, because in the last five minutes Charlton broke purposefully, and Lee Bowyer, the 18-year-old being watched by Liverpool and Arsenal, should have doubled the lead. Feuer saved well, but will be remembered less for that good work than for the one moment of dumb that struck him in the build-up to the game's only goal.

And the fact that Charlton went home admitting they were lucky to win will also be forgotten when the record simply shows another home failure.



**KNOCKED OVER:** Dwight Marshall is clattered, and Town fans yell for a penalty. But referee John Kirkby saw no foul by Charlton keeper Mike Salmon.

## Allen sent on his way

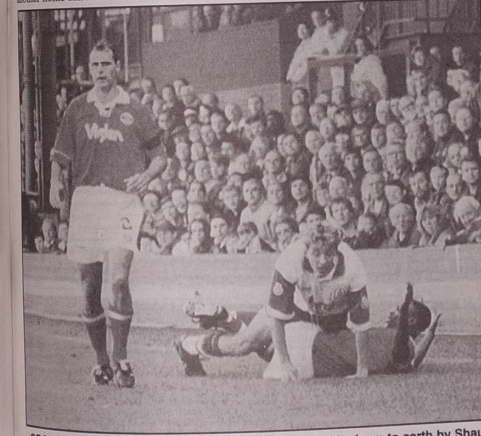
WITH A TOUCH of cruel irony, veteran striker Clive Allen has been sent on his way for his company and sent on his way after training with the Town for a week. Four years ago David Pleat wanted to sign him, but then it was the player who said "Thanks, but no thanks."

On that occasion the former England international walked away because he thought he was worth higher pay than Pleat was offering.

Now 34, he was offered a month's trial on Sunday, but refused to take it, saying he felt he did not need to prove himself in view of his record.

"That's all in the past," said Terry Westley, who took over from Pleat. "Clive Allen would have to do very well on trial to persuade us to sign him and perhaps block the progress of our younger players."

"We enjoyed his company and I wish him well, and I hope he finds a club because I agree that he has something to offer somewhere. But he is not what we are looking for."



**GROUNDING:** Norwegian Vidar Riseth is brought quickly down to earth by Shaun Newton after making his Town debut.

## Westley turns to attack with Riseth set to start

(Continued from back page)

That has seen the Town drop back into the last three places of the table, but Westley is still convinced the team is more than good enough to put that right.

He said: "We are creating chances, but we need more men able to take them. Midfielders have got to get into the opposition's box quicker, and we have to work harder at winning the second ball in the last third of the pitch."

"Against Charlton we had a lot more crosses than they did, but the quality was nowhere near good enough. We got into attacking positions, but didn't deliver."

"With Wadd, we now have someone worth

aiming for on the back post.

"He's a good runner, comfortable with the ball, and has a decent touch, and I am pleased with what I have seen of him so far."

"But he can't carry the can for us, and we will do a lot of work in training on improving the goals output. We will work on getting better into and around the box, with more support from midfield arriving at the right time."

"And I am convinced that we can turn the corner. The dividing line between success and failure is very narrow. If Scott Oakes had scored instead of hitting the bar two minutes after Charlton's goal, Sunday would have been a different story."



A FLU bug could solve a midfield selection poser for Terry Westley as he prepares for Saturday's trip to Stoke, who are just three points above Luton Town in the First Division's basement zone.

It struck Ceri Hughes on Saturday, and after battling against it for 45 minutes against Charlton he had to drop out, letting in Vidar Riseth for his debut.

The counter-balancing good news is that Johnny Vilstrup is making rapid progress after his high strain, and looks certain to be available again for the match at Stoke after missing the Charlton game.

"He has struggled to regain his general fitness, but he will probably be OK," said Westley.

Defender Marvin Johnson collected an Achilles tendon strain against Charlton, but early indications are that it is not serious, and he should be fit to retain his place.

If he is not, Des Linton, after returning as a sub against Charlton, is ready to return in a reshaped defence.



**TERRY WESTLEY**

But Julian James is still battling against two problems, a bug similar to the one that hit Hughes, and a groin strain. Otherwise, except for John Taylor's recuperation period after his back operation, the Town have a clean bill of health.

And midfielder Aaron Skelton has been given some good news. A fortnight ago he was facing an operation to cure a medial ligament problem that seemed to have ended his season. But the surgeon has had another look, and says the injury is not as serious as first thought.

Rather than carry out a tricky operation, he has recommended a period of treatment and training, and says that might cure Skelton's knee without recourse to surgery.

## Another Italian job

AFTER 44 fans made the budget-conscious overland trip by coach to see the Town in Genoa, interest in Wednesday's Anglo-Italian game in Genoa has ebbed considerably.

There will be no coach trip this time, but the Town have two packages on offer, travelling by air. A luxury three-day deal is priced at £350, or a two-day trip at £265 plus the cost of tickets to the game.

Fans who intend to travel

are asked to contact club secretary Chris Newbery to organise vouchers for match tickets.

At least one supporter is thinking of driving to the game, leaving very early on Tuesday and arriving home late on Thursday. He reckons if three others share expenses the journey will cost £100 each at the most, including a fare through the Channel Tunnel. He can be contacted on Luton 493605.

## Youngsters' cups and downs

THE YOUTH team enjoyed smashing success and crushing failure with the last week. On Saturday, in the FA Youth Cup, they won 9-1 at Cambridge City, with Andrew Barr scoring five times. Stuart Douglas bagged a hat-trick and Andrew Fotiadis was also on target.

But on Saturday, in a South East Counties League Cup replay, John Moore's lads were beaten 4-1 at Crystal Palace, with Chris Willmott netting the consolation goal.

They are at home to

# Town's season at a glance....

DATE... OPPONENTS... RESULT... SCORES... 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 Walsley  | (H) | 1-1 (Hughes)         | 7,612 | -  |
| 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) | 0-1                                   | 7,076  | 22 |
| 16 Sunderland | (H) | 0-2                                   | 6,955  | 23 |
| 23 Wolves     | (A) | 0-0                                   | 23,850 | 24 |
| 30 Portsmouth | (H) | 3-1 (Marshall, Davis, Guentchev, pen) | 7,795  | 23 |

October

|              |     |                |       |    |
|--------------|-----|----------------|-------|----|
| 7 Tranmere   | (A) | 0-1            | 6,680 | 24 |
| 12 West Brom | (H) | 1-2 (Harvey)   | 8,042 | 24 |
| 22 Ipswich   | (A) | 1-0 (Oldfield) | 9,123 | 21 |
| 29 Charlton  | (H) | 0-1            | 6,270 | 22 |

## 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 win 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  | D | L  | F  | A  | Pts |              |             |
| Millwall     | 14   | 3 | 2 | 8  | 7  | 5  | 2    | 0 | 9  | 4  | 28 | 8   | M. Johnson   |             |
| Birmingham   | 14   | 3 | 0 | 12 | 4  | 3  | 1    | 3 | 12 | 10 | 25 | 4   | Oldfield,    |             |
| Leicester    | 14   | 2 | 3 | 12 | 13 | 2  | 12   | 5 | 25 | 25 | 25 | 4   | Alexander,   |             |
| West Brom    | 14   | 5 | 1 | 10 | 4  | 2  | 2    | 3 | 10 | 11 | 24 | 4   | Peake,       |             |
| Sunderland   | 14   | 3 | 3 | 10 | 7  | 3  | 3    | 1 | 7  | 6  | 24 | 4   | Hughes,      |             |
| Tranmere     | 13   | 3 | 3 | 1  | 13 | 8  | 2    | 3 | 1  | 8  | 5  | 21  | 4            | Feuer,      |
| Norwich      | 14   | 3 | 3 | 1  | 8  | 5  | 2    | 3 | 2  | 11 | 21 | 4   | Waddock,     |             |
| Charlton     | 14   | 3 | 3 | 1  | 10 | 7  | 2    | 3 | 8  | 6  | 21 | 4   | James,       |             |
| Oldham       | 14   | 4 | 2 | 1  | 13 | 7  | 1    | 3 | 3  | 6  | 8  | 20  | 4            | Taylor,     |
| Grimsby      | 14   | 4 | 0 | 7  | 4  | 2  | 1    | 4 | 7  | 11 | 20 | 4   | Widdows,     |             |
| Ipswich      | 14   | 4 | 0 | 3  | 14 | 1  | 4    | 2 | 10 | 10 | 19 | 4   | Vilstrup,    |             |
| Barnsley     | 14   | 3 | 3 | 1  | 11 | 12 | 2    | 1 | 4  | 10 | 15 | 4   | G. Johnson,  |             |
| Huddersfield | 14   | 4 | 1 | 2  | 12 | 8  | 1    | 2 | 4  | 5  | 12 | 18  | 4            | Kevin Davis |
| Derby Co     | 14   | 2 | 4 | 1  | 7  | 6  | 2    | 3 | 9  | 12 | 18 | 4   | Oakes,       |             |
| Southend     | 14   | 4 | 2 | 1  | 4  | 1  | 1    | 3 | 5  | 12 | 18 | 4   | Sommer,      |             |
| Wolves       | 14   | 3 | 2 | 2  | 10 | 8  | 1    | 3 | 8  | 11 | 17 | 4   | Thorpe,      |             |
| C. Palace    | 13   | 3 | 1 | 3  | 7  | 8  | 3    | 2 | 9  | 9  | 17 | 4   | Wiedersheim, |             |
| Reading      | 14   | 3 | 1 | 3  | 13 | 4  | 0    | 5 | 2  | 5  | 8  | 15  | 4            | Thomas      |
| Sheff Wed    | 14   | 1 | 4 | 2  | 5  | 6  | 2    | 3 | 10 | 13 | 15 | 4   | McLaren,     |             |
| Watford      | 14   | 2 | 3 | 2  | 9  | 7  | 1    | 2 | 9  | 14 | 14 | 4   | Riseth,      |             |
| Portsmouth   | 14   | 2 | 2 | 3  | 10 | 10 | 1    | 2 | 4  | 9  | 13 | 13  | 4            | League      |
| Luton Town   | 14   | 1 | 1 | 3  | 7  | 12 | 2    | 3 | 3  | 5  | 12 | 4   | Marshall,    |             |
| Sheff Utd    | 14   | 2 | 1 | 4  | 9  | 13 | 1    | 1 | 5  | 8  | 11 | 4   |              |             |
| Port Vale    | 14   | 0 | 2 | 5  | 5  | 12 | 3    | 2 | 7  | 6  | 11 | 4   |              |             |

## APPEARANCES... GOALS

|                                         |        |                   |           |                             |        |
|-----------------------------------------|--------|-------------------|-----------|-----------------------------|--------|
| League appearances (as sub in brackets) | Davis  | 1                 | M Johnson | 1                           |        |
| Harvey                                  | 14     | Harvey            | 1         | McLaren                     | 1      |
| Steve Davis                             | 13     | Oldfield          | 1         | Vilstrup                    | 1      |
| Marshall                                | 13     | Assists           |           | Oakes                       | 1      |
| M Johnson                               | 13     | Alexander         | 2         | Alexander                   | (1)    |
| Oldfield                                | 11 (1) | Guentchev         | 1         | Goals                       |        |
| Alexander                               | 11     | G Johnson         | 1         | Guentchev                   | 1 pen  |
| Peake                                   | 9 (3)  | Marshall          | 1         | Hughes                      | 1      |
| Hughes                                  | 9      | S Davis           | 1         | Coca Cola Cup               | 1      |
| Guentchev                               | 8 (5)  | Feuer             | 1         | Sommer                      | 2      |
| Feuer                                   | 8      | Cup goals         |           | M Johnson                   | 2      |
| Waddock                                 | 7 (4)  | Marshall          | 1         | S Davis                     | 2      |
| James                                   | 6 (3)  | M Johnson         | 1         | Oldfield                    | 2      |
| Taylor                                  | 5 (3)  | Assists           |           | Alexander                   | 2      |
| Linton                                  | 5 (1)  | S Davis           | 1         | Marshall                    | 2      |
| Vilstrup                                | 5      | Alexander         | 1         | Taylor                      | 2      |
| G Johnson                               | 4 (1)  | Anglo Italian Cup |           | Guentchev                   | 2      |
| Kevin Davis                             | 4      | K Davies          | 2         | Harey                       | 2      |
| Oakes                                   | 3      | James             | 2         | Thorpe                      | (2)    |
| Sommer                                  | 2      | Skelton           | 1         | Thomas                      | 1 (1)  |
| Thorpe                                  | 1 (3)  | S Davis           | 2         | James                       | 1      |
| Woodsford                               | 1 (2)  | Evers             | 1         | Hughes                      | 1      |
| Thomas                                  | 1 (1)  | Thorpe            | 1 (1)     | Waddock                     | 1      |
| McLaren                                 | 1      | Linton            | 2         | Matthews                    | (1)    |
| Riseth                                  | (1)    | Guentchev         | 2         | Goals                       |        |
| League goals                            |        | Hughes            | 2         | Marshall and Marvin Johnson | 1 each |
| Marshall                                | 3      | Harvey            | 2         | Assists                     |        |
| Guentchev                               | 2 pens | Waddock           | (1)       | Steve Davis and Alexander   | 1 each |
| Thorpe                                  | 1      | Marshall          | (1)       |                             |        |
| Hughes                                  |        | Woodsford         | (2)       |                             |        |

**NEW BOY IN TOWN:** Vidar Riseth, Luton's £100,000 Norwegian import, watches from the dug-out, alongside manager Terry Westley, before making his debut at Kenilworth Road as a second-half sub against Charlton.