



● **LEFT:** Marvin Johnson has a chase for the ball with a Wrexham attacker.

RIGHT: Dwight Marshall beats Wrexham goalkeeper Andy Marriott, only to be ruled offside.



Hapless Hatters' pile on the agony

Luton Town 0 Wrexham 0
BEFORE the match Luton boss Lennie Lawrence complained his players had not seen much action on grass during a 23 day freeze-out.

Perhaps that explains why the team looked far better on paper than it ever did during 90 minutes on the pitch.

The plight of hapless Kim Grant summed up the whole afternoon when he somehow managed to pick up an ankle injury during the pre-match warm-up, forcing Lawrence to hastily push Des Linton on to the bench just minutes before kick-off.

Dwight Marshall's first touch was poor and he left the frame totally exhausted after just an hour's play, and though Tony Thorpe showed flashes of skill he struggled to find any sort of form.

Report by PETE KENYON

Passes went everywhere except where intended, and if things ever looked like getting exciting, referee Robert Styles could always be relied on to blow his whistle.

On the bright side, Hatters' defence never really looked troubled – despite the Welshmen's tally of eight on target – and Luton kept pace with the leaders by grinding out a draw.

But for that they owe a debt of gratitude to Steve Davis who risked having his block knocked off to head a rasping Tony Hume shot off the line as early as the second minute.

Thorpe might have done better early on, but he failed to bring down Davis's angled header back across goal when he was unmarked and only six yards

from goal.

Ian Feuer had to fling himself at full stretch to deny Carl Connolly, whose dipping header looked to be going into the net until a timely intervention from the Luton goalkeeper.

Dwight Marshall had the ball in the net only to have the effort ruled out for offside following a beautifully angled and weighted through ball from one of Hatters' few star men on the day Paul McLaren.

After that there was precious little action worth mentioning and despite three substitutions, a change in personnel failed to break the deadlock.

After the match Lennie Lawrence said the quality of the play had come as little surprise bearing in mind Luton's enforced three-and-a-half week break.

"That's the longest time any of my teams have gone without a game during the season in my career – it was no surprise that

we looked rusty.

"We picked up in the second half but their back four was very solid and we found it very difficult to break them down.

"We did create a few chances and there were one or two high quality crosses, which on other days you would expect someone to get on the end of.

"It goes without saying we will have to improve significantly against Bolton on Tuesday night to have a chance of progressing in the cup.

"I think it is good that this game came before the Bolton one because if we had played the Division One team after such a long layoff I think we could have had a problem".

Team: Feuer, James, Thomas, McLaren (Linton 73), Davis, Johnson, Hughes, Alexander, Showler (Guentchev 78), Thorpe, Marshall (Oldfield 60).
Bookings: Guentchev 85.
Attendance: 5,734.



● Ceri Hughes on the attack for Hatters