DAVE FLETT REPORTS: FANS TURN ON LAWRENCE AFTER WATFORD BITE TO FIRST DERBY WIN IN A DECADE

Hornet hammering has a sting in the tail for Lennie!

● HANDS OFF: Tony Thorpe keeps his eye on the ball with Watford full back Peter Kennedy ready to dispossess him

THE HALF-HEARTED chorus from despondent Hatters fans on Saturday was "If only took ten years," but for bitter rivals Watford their first derby win for a decade was well worth the wait.

So by far the kindest moment of a so far depressing season, the home supporters' wasn't even realised a sketching on in horror as Graham Taylor's table-topper tore their team to shreds.

A look at the team sheet suggested Lennie Lawrence's team could have the fire power to trouble their high-flying visitors with a patched up Phil Gray joining Tony Thorpe in attack.

The important question however, in view of recent defensive performances, was always going to be could they hold out at the back.

Half an hour and four goals into the game the home crowd had their answer and the pressure cooker atmosphere prevalent at the start of the game turned into one of unprecedented hostility at Kenilworth Road.

Lennie Lawrence was the target of the majority of the fans' wrath and when the fourth goal hit the back of the net, angry supporters made numerous attempts to assault the Hatters' manager, search the dug-out and give special from the ground after pitch invasions.

One discourteous fan, fed off by home captain Gary Waddock, looked completely exasperated and close to tears.

Stewards coped manfully in their protection of the Hatters' manager with what has to be said minimal assistance from the apparently ill-prepared police presence.

Ironically, Hatters' midfielder Paul McLaren had come closest to opening the scoring when his curling free-kick narrowly cleared the bar, but as in recent games, the opposition with their first attack of the game and subsequently scored from there on.

The Hornets first goal came on five minutes when Rosenthal shielded the ball well before laying it off to striker Richard Johnson who fired home from 18 yards.

Johnson tried his luck with a low shot through a crowded area and the ball seemed to go straight through to Davis, who was either unsighted or deceived by a slight deflection.

Watford fall back Peter Kennedy enjoyed the freedom of the left wing throughout the opening stages and it was no surprise when his cross led to a second goal.

Hesitation between Bryan Small and Kelvin Davis allowed Thomas and although Davis saved his first effort, striker made no mistake with the rebound.

On 27 minutes, it was three when Kennedy volleyed past the despairing dive of Davis after the ball had bounced around the home team's penalty area without being cleared, and two minutes later, the left back had his second goal through the defence with embarrassing ease.

Mclaren, cautioned earlier for a trip on Adam Rachel, escaped a red card for a second bookable offence when Terry Hellbiton, taking into account the atmosphere, decided against the card and booked Thorpe instead for simulating was a sensible decision and probably one that prevented a scale riot.

Similar thinking must have gone into his refusal when Rosenthal a penalty when Lee Allen White went down, operated by the shell-shocked Davis.

It was once again all too obvious that the home side lacking a voice of some kind to organise and motivate the low defenders.

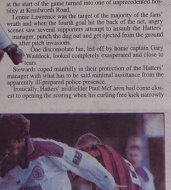
The introduction of Julian Jones on a second half substitute was a step in providing this but it is to be hoped that the Hatters are struggling and with Steve Sims and Steve Lovell back, putting the two together at the heart of defence could improve matters.

Watford took their foot off the gas after the interval and best chances fell to the home team.

Thorpe, Harvey and Gray all went close but for the fans, that they were chasing a foul came after the "Always Look on the Bright Side of Life" at the game must have been the most inappropriate and bizarre choice of record in the history of football public address.

HATTERS 0
WATFORD 4
Thomson 5, Thomas 19, Kennedy 27, 29
Att: 8,041

● IN A STU: Watford defender Keith Millen clears under pressure from Stuart Douglas



● PAUL'S BALL: Hatters' Paul Mclaren battled in vain and at times on his own in the home side's midfield

LENNIE'S VERDICT

HATTERS BOSS LENNIE LAWRENCE SAID:

"I'm sick and disappointed. My fears about our defensive inadequacies were fully realised and we let the fans down with a couple of gifts from our defence. Our goalkeeper was as a police of describing their second time. Pressure forces us get these in the other end, we can't hope to win games.

FIRST SIGHT: Simon Davies embarks on a rare foray down the left flank and (above) challenges Watford's Thomas. But the ex-Manchester United star was largely ineffective and replaced at half time.

Pictures: Gareth Owen

LUTON TOWN FC 1997-98 THE FULL STORY

	Opponents	Score	Scorers	Att	Pos
August					
Sat 9	Blackpool	W 3-0		5,427	1
Tues 12	Bournemouth (CC1)	L 1-2	Thorpe 87	2,491	-
Sat 16	SOUTHEND	W 1-0	Douglas 32	5,146	12
Sat 23	BRISTOL	L 0-1		5,142	15
Tues 26	COLCHESTER (CC1)	L 1-3	Thorpe 34	1,618	-
Sat 30	OLDHAM	L 0-1	Thorpe 80	5,404	12
September					
Tues 2	MILLWALL	0-2		3,781	15
Tues 9	Northampton	L 0-2		7,291	18
Sat 13	SCUNTHORPE	W 2-1	Marshall 43	4,661	14
Tues 16	WEST BROM (CC2)	L 0-1	Douglas	3,487	-
Sat 20	WREXHAM	L 2-5	Davis 18, 41; Gray 90	5,247	23
Tues 23	West Brom (CC2)	L 2-4	Davis 18, 38; Thorpe 73	2,502	-
Sat 27	Bristol City	0-3			
October					
Sat 4	WATFORD	L 0-4		8,041	20
Sat 11	PLYMOUTH ARG	L 3			
Sat 18	Wigan Athletic	A 3			
Tues 21	Carlisle United	L 1-4	Allen		
Sat 25	BRENTFORD	H 3			
November					
Sat 1	BURNLEY	H 3			
Sat 8	Huddersfield	H 7-45			
Sat 15	PRESTON	H 3			
Sat 15	FA Cup 1				
Tues 18	Grimsby	H 7-45			
Sat 22	WALSALL	H 3			
Sat 29	York City	H 3			
December					
Sat 6	GILLINGHAM	H 1-45			
Sat 13	Chesterfield	A 3			
Sat 20	BRISTOL ROVERS	H 3			
Fri 26	NORTHAMPTON	H 3			
Sun 28	Millwall	A 3			
January					
Sat 3	Southend (FC 3)	A 3			
Sat 10	Oldham (FC 4)	A 3			
Sat 17	DUKE	H 3			
Sat 24	FULHAM	H 3			
Sat 31	BOURNEMOUTH	H 3			
February					
Tues 3	Preston	A 7-45			
Sat 7	Wrexham	A 3			
Sat 14	Burnley	A 3			
Sat 21	BRISTOL CITY	H 3			
Tues 24	Walsall	A 7-45			
Sat 28	Plymouth Arg	A 3			
March					
Sat 7	WYCOMBE	H 3			
Sat 14	Burnley	A 3			
Sat 21	GRIMSBY	H 3			
Sat 28	Fulham	A 3			
April					
Sat 4	YORK CITY	H 3			
Sat 11	GILLINGHAM	A 3			
Tues 14	Chesterfield	A 7-45			
Sat 18	Bristol Rovers	A 3			
Sat 25	Wycombe	H 3			
May					
Sat 2	CARLISLE	H 11			

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HATTERS LEAGUE DIVISION TWO

Includes October 4 1997

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts	GS
Watford	10	7	3	1	18	8	23	18
Northampton Town	10	6	3	1	16	7	21	15
Bristol Rovers	10	6	2	2	14	11	20	11
Bristol City	10	5	3	2	17	11	18	11
Preston North End	10	5	3	2	14	9	18	11
Millwall	8	5	3	3	14	9	15	14
Gillingham	10	5	2	3	14	11	17	11
Oldham Athletic	10	5	2	3	17	12	17	11
York City	10	5	2	3	17	12	14	11
Fulham	10	4	4	3	17	17	13	17
Wycombe Wdrs	10	4	4	3	17	13	13	17
Wigan Athletic	10	4	3	3	15	13	13	15
Blackpool	10	4	2	4	16	19	12	16
Luton Town	10	3	3	4	9	11	12	12
Grimsby Town	10	3	3	4	11	14	12	11
Brentford	10	3	2	5	11	14	11	13
Wrexham	10	3	2	5	13	17	11	13
Carlisle United	10	3	2	5	12	17	11	12
Bristol City	10	3	2	5	12	14	11	12
Burnley	10	3	2	5	10	14	11	10
Southend United	10	3	1	6	11	18	10	11
Plymouth	10	3	1	6	8	18	10	8
Luton Town	10	3	0	7	9	18	9	9
Burnley	10	0	3	7	5	11	3	5

BAD BOYS

Player	Yellow Cards	Red Cards
Paul McLaren	3	0
Gavin McGowan	0	0
Steve Davis	2	0
Gary Waddock	2	0
Simon Davies	2	0
Stuart Douglas	2	0
Kelvin Davis	1	0
Dwight Marshall	1	0
Mitchell Thomas	1	0
Tony Thorpe	1	0
Totals	13	0

● Tony Thorpe picked up his first caution of the season in Saturday's derby defeat

APPEARANCES & GOALS

Player	Appearances	Goals
	Sub	Tot Lge Cup
Kelvin Allen	0(1)	0 0 0
Graham Alexander	4(1)	0 0 0
Simon Davies	4(1)	0 0 0
Steve Davis	4(1)	0 0 0
Kelvin Davis	4(1)	0 0 0
Andy Dawkins	4(1)	0 0 0
Gary Doherty	0(1)	0 0 0
Stuart Douglas	4(1)	1 1 0
Scott Grimes	0(3)	0 0 0
Ian Foster	2(1)	1(1) 0 0
Andrew Edlands	1(1)	0 0 0
Liam George	1(1)	0 0 0
Gavin Hill	0(1)	0 0 0
Richard Harvey	4(1)	0 0 0
Julian Jenkins	4(1)	1(1) 0 0
Julian Johnson	0(1)	0 0 0
Robert Kelly	1(1)	0 0 0
Kevin Marshall	1(1)	0 0 0
Paul McLaren	4(1)	0 0 0
Gavin McGowan	4(1)	0 0 0
Trevor Peake	0(1)	0 0 0
Tony Thorpe	4(1)	3(1) 0 0
Steve Sims	0(1)	0 0 0
Matthew Spring	0(1)	0(1) 0 0
Michael Thomas	4(1)	0 0 0
Tony Thorpe	4(1)	3(1) 0 0
Gary Waddock	1(0)	0(1) 0 0
Ian White	0(1)	0 0 0

STAR TURNS

PAUL McLAREN: was the Hatters star man against Watford for never giving up on a lost cause

MAN OF THE MATCH

Player	MoM
Steve Davis	2
Gavin McGowan	2
Paul McLaren	2
Kelvin Davis	1
Stuart Douglas	1
Julian James	1
Bryan Small	1
Michael Thomas	1
Tony Thorpe	1
Gary Waddock	1