■ DAVE FLETT REPORTS: YOUNG GUNS FIRE LATE DOUBLE TO HELP THE HATTERS PRIZE THREE POINTS FROM PLYMOUTH

● SHOOT ON SIGHT: Steve Davis fires in the Hatters first shot on target in the 47th minute and contributed to a strong defensive display by Lennie Lawrence's men.

● SHEFFIELD APPEAL: David Oldfield falls over Plymouth's Darren Jackson during action against the Aussie strike force.

● FOT A GUY: Relieved manager Lennie Lawrence congratulates goal-hero Andrew Fotiadis who left the pitch after being winded in the game's final minute.

Schoolboy pals saw up Argyle sweater

● SHEFFIELD STEAL: Andrew Fotiadis capitalises on a poor Jason Rowbotham back header to nod the ball past home keeper Jon Sheffield.

OLD mates Andrew Fotiadis and Sean Evers combined to make the Hatters fans' long pilgrimage to South Devon a rewarding one.

Fotiadis and Evers were spotted by Town scouts playing for the same North Hertfordshire Schools' team, graduated from the same Hatters junior team and, on Saturday, were both celebrating goalscoring firsts.

Fotiadis' 79th-minute deadlock breaker was his first goal of an injury ravaged season, while Evers' strike was the first of his professional career and, at the end of a week that had left the club's supporters reeling from the sale of Tony Thorpe, the appearance of two of the club's less celebrated members on the scoresheet was cause for some encouragement, as was another distinguished performance from in-form keeper Kelvin Davis.

Davis once again excelled in the Hatters goal, pulling off three first-class saves to frustrate the struggling home team.

The pick of an impressive bunch came in the 67th minute when Pilgrims' midfielder Martin Barlow unleashed a tremendous half volley that was destined for Davis' top corner the moment it left his boot.

Demonstrating all the agility of an Olympic gymnast though, Davis flung himself across goal and fingertipped the ball over to receive generous applause from all corners of the ground.

Forgettable

Just minutes earlier, the Hatters' number one had denied Mick Heathcote with an excellent two-handed save after the Pilgrims' skipper had headed towards the same top corner and, in the first half, he was called upon to make a fine double block.

In the most exciting moment of an instantly forgettable opening period, Davis raced off his line to smother a Carlo Corazzin shot after Barlow's through ball had caught the visitors' defence flat footed.

The ex-England Under-21 international fisted the ball away before spreading himself well to prevent Manchester City loan striker Darren Jackson scoring a debut goal and then watched as Barlow lofted a third chance well over.

As avoiding defeat was clearly the main objective for both sides, this game was never going to be a classic and their cagey approach, aided and abetted by gale-force winds, was probably made for a less than entertaining spectacle.

The Hatters failed to test home keeper Jon Sheffield once in the first 45 minutes and Plymouth's only other chances were wasted by Antoni Littlejohn and top scorer Corazzin, who both found space in the visitors' penalty box after Chris Billy crosses had failed to get their efforts on target.

A lack of midfield creativity and attacking spark in Lennie Lawrence's men was countered by some determined defending, with Darren Patterson again demonstrating his versatility by making the switch from full-back to centre-back look effortless and Graham Alexander putting in a sterling performance as the Irish international's replacement at right back.

Two minutes into the second half, the visitors finally managed a shot on goal when Steve Davis strode forward in typical fashion and exchanged passes with David Oldfield before firing a 20-yard effort straight at Sheffield.

Two minutes later, Oldfield was the centre of controversy when, having received a well-weighted pass from Davis, he rounded Sheffield only to fall in theatrical heap.

Referee Andy D'Urso waved aside Hatters' appeals for a penalty kick with the home keeper being upfield to remonstrate with the Billericay official, accusing Oldfield of unsportsmanly conduct and demanding some kind of action against the Aussie striker.

D'Urso again relented and Sheffield's scrub was transferred to centre-half Jason Rowbotham whose act of defensive suicide gifted 71-minute winner Fotiadis the opening goal.

A hopeful header into the box by Evers appeared harmless until Rowbotham sold his keeper short with a dreadful back-header and the grateful Fotiadis swept home a furious Sheffield.

Rochdale-bound Rowbotham afterwards said, as the Hatters equalised, he was responsible.

"First of all, I had a chance to clear it but I took my eye off the ball. I turned to take it to touch but it went straight to my feet and his (Fotiadis') first touch was perfect."

Mark Stimson, who was sent on for Davis in the 70th minute, then fired home the winner from Fotiadis' cross a minute later.

On his second appearance, Evers was rewarded for his work rate with a well-taken goal.

Hatters' manager Lennie Lawrence said: "It was a very managerial performance. We had to be patient and we kept at it. We knew it was just one goal, it's better in the world, it was just whether we were going to draw or win. We've been treading water recently and while we've been reasonably solid defensively that was the best they've done as a unit.

"In the second half, we pushed them back and, when the game opened up in the last 20 minutes, we cashed in. We had a stroke of luck with their penalty appeal but you have to be philosophical about these things because we had two perfectly legitimate ones turned down last week."

Of his keeper's growing stature, Lawrence added: "Not only did he make one or two good saves but his general awareness, support of the defence, handling of the ball and most of all his punching were excellent. He looks the man and at the moment he is."

PLYMOUTH: Jon Sheffield, Simon Collins, Paul Williams, Mark Saunders, Mick Heathcote, Jason Rowbotham (Paul Wouton, 83), Martin Barlow, Barry Conlon, Adrian Littlejohn, Carlo Corazzin, Chris Billy. Subs not used: Richard Logan, Earl Jean.

HATTERS: Kelvin Davis, Darren Patterson, Darren Thomas, Gary Waddock, Steve Davis, Paul Harrison, Sean Evers, Paul McLaren, David Oldfield, Phil Gray, Dwight Marshall (Andrew Fotiadis, 71, Gary Doherty, 89). Sub not used: Simon Davis.

PLYMOUTH 0
HATTERS 2
Evers 79, Fotiadis 88
Attendance: 4,846

● EVERS SMILE: Sean Evers claims his first senior goal for the Hatters with Saturday's second against Plymouth after Phil Gray's effort hit the goalmouth.

LENNIE'S VERDICT

● It was a game that had we lost, it would have been the biggest injustice in the world. It was just whether we were going to draw or win.

Pictures: Gareth Owen

LUTON TOWN FC 1997-98 THE STORY SO FAR ...

August	Opponents	Score	Scorers	Att	Pos
Sat 9	Blackpool	2-1		6,047	-
Tues 12	Bournemouth (CC1)	1-0	Thorpe 82	4,000	-
Sat 23	SOUTHEND	0-0	Thorpe 75	6,142	-
Sat 30	Cardiff	1-1	Thorpe 23	5,112	-
Tues 26	COLCHESTER (CC1)	1-0	Thorpe 90	3,000	-
Sat 30	OLDHAM	1-1	Thorpe 90	5,404	12
September					
Tues 2	WILLWALL	0-2		4,000	-
Tues 9	Northampton	0-1		7,246	18
Sat 13	Bristol City	1-1	Marshall 43	6,681	14
Tues 16	WEST BROM (CC2)	1-0	Davidson 81	3,000	-
Sat 20	WREXHAM	3-3	Davis 2, Gray 90	5,421	21
Tues 23	West Brom (CC2)	0-0	Davis 33, Mc Thorpe 73	5,000	-
Sat 27	Bristol City	0-3		8,509	23
October					
Sat 4	WATFORD	1-1		6,241	21
Sat 11	PLYMOUTH ARG	2-0	Thorpe 56, Sh. Davies 82	4,851	23
Sat 18	Brian Athens	0-0		4,000	23
Sat 25	Carlisle United	1-2	Thorpe 90	4,341	21
Sat 1	SHREWSBURY	1-1	Alexander 20, Thorpe 59	5,212	21
November					
Sat 1	Wycombe	2-2	Oldfield 66, Thorpe 74	4,215	16
Tues 4	Bournemouth	1-2	Alexander 45	5,000	-
Sat 8	Watford	0-2		6,000	19
Tues 11	PORTSMOUTH (FACU)	3-1	Thorpe 2	3,445	-
Sat 15	BRISTOL ROVERS	2-1	Thorpe 2	5,235	22
Sat 29	York City	3-1	Alexander 13, Thorpe 72	3,636	20
December					
Tues 2	GILLINGHAM	2-0	Davis 23, 25, Thorpe 77	4,806	21
Sat 6	Swindon	1-1	Davis 90	5,000	21
Tues 9	BRISTOL ROVERS	1-1	Allen 5, Oldfield 7	5,286	21
Fri 26	NORTHAMPTON	2-2	Oldfield 88, Thorpe 90	6,026	22
Sat 27	Gillingham	2-2	Davis 23, Pk. Davies 90	7,483	22
January					
Sat 3	Bristol City	3-1	Alexander 4, 74	6,006	19
Sat 10	BLACKPOOL	3-1	Thorpe 33, 75, 90	5,215	18
Tues 6	BRENTFORD (AMB)	3-1	Thorpe 31, Oldfield 83	-	-
Sat 17	Bristol City	2-1	Thorpe 2	6,007	18
Sat 24	FULHAM	1-0	Thorpe 45	5,342	18
Tues 27	Fulham (AMB)	1-2	Thorpe 90	3,102	-
Sat 31	BOURNEMOUTH	2-1	Thorpe 2	5,468	19
February					
Sat 7	Wrexham	1-0	Davis (3) 90	3,597	20
Sat 14	Stoke	1-1	Alexander 81	11,183	20
Tues 17	Bournemouth (MAN)	0-1		5,300	20
Sat 21	Manchester CITY	1-1	Davis 90	5,000	20
Tues 24	WIGAN	1-1	Oldfield 29	4,646	19
Sat 28	Wrexham Arg	2-1	Alexander 79, Evans 90	3,000	19
March					
Sat 7	Brentford	2-1		-	-
Sat 14	WYCOMBE	1-1	Davis 90	5,000	19
Sat 21	Swansea	1-1		-	-
Sat 28	Northampton	2-1		-	-
April					
Sat 4	Bristol City	1-1		-	-
Sat 11	YORK CITY	2-1		-	-
Tues 7	Grimsby	1-1		-	-
Sat 18	Gillingham	1-1		-	-
Sat 25	Bristol Rovers	1-1		-	-
Sat 18	Bristol Rovers	1-1		-	-
Sat 25	Watford	1-1		-	-
May					
Sat 2	CARLISLE	1-1		-	-

NATIONWIDE LEAGUE DIVISION TWO

Up to Saturday 9th	Total							
		W	D	L	F	A	Pts	GD
Watford	34	20	7	7	64	37	67	27
Fulham	34	20	6	8	57	38	66	19
Bournemouth	34	19	9	6	57	29	66	28
Brentford Town	33	15	9	9	48	35	54	13
Bristol Rovers	34	14	9	11	45	37	51	8
Fulham	34	14	9	11	45	37	51	8
Gillingham	34	14	9	11	45	37	51	8
Wrexham	34	12	13	9	47	36	49	11
Wycombe	34	12	13	9	47	36	49	11
Bournemouth	34	12	13	9	47	36	49	11
Chesterfield	35	11	14	10	34	33	47	34
Blackpool	34	13	10	11	40	40	49	0
York City	34	13	13	10	40	46	43	-6
Wycombe	34	11	10	13	42	46	43	-4
Millwall	34	11	10	13	42	46	43	-4
Bristol Athletic	33	11	7	15	45	51	40	-6
Plymouth	34	11	7	16	45	51	40	-6
Wycombe	34	10	9	15	33	37	39	-4
Luton Town	34	9	12	13	33	39	39	-6
Carlisle	34	9	11	14	33	45	38	-12
Brentford Arg	34	9	11	14	33	45	38	-12
Burnley	34	9	11	14	33	45	38	-12
Bristol Rovers	34	8	7	19	38	62	34	-24
Brentford	34	8	15	10	34	54	34	-20

APPEARANCES & GOALS

Player	Appearances	Goals
Graham Alexander	34	0
Steve Davis	34	6
Kelvin Davis	34	0
Darren Patterson	34	0
Paul McLaren	33	0
Andrew Fotiadis	32	1
Gary Waddock	32	0
Sean Evers	31	1
Richard Harvey	31	0
Paul Harrison	31	0
Gary Doherty	31	0
Robert Kerr	31	0
Dwight Marshall	31	1
Paul Davidson	30	0
Paul McLaren	30	0
Darren Thomas	30	0
Phil Gray	29	0
Trevor Peake	29	0
Steve Davis	28	0
Kevin Ellison	28	0
Paul Davis	27	0
Paul Wright	27	0
Gary Hooper	26	0
Gary Hoskins	26	0
Gary Doherty	25	0
Paul Wright	25	0
Kevin Ellison	24	0
Bryan Small	24	0

BAD EGGS

Player	Yellow Cards	Red Cards
Graham Alexander	7	0
Kelvin Davis	7	0
Steve Davis	7	0
Darren Patterson	7	0
Paul McLaren	6	0
Paul Davidson	5	0
Paul Harrison	5	0
Gary Doherty	4	0
Gary Waddock	4	0
Chris Allen	3	0
Tony Thorpe	3	0
Ian Wilson	3	0
Graham Alexander	3	0
Trevor Peake	3	0
Gary Waddock	3	0
Chris Allen	2	0
Tommy Robinson	1	0

STAR TURNS

KELVIN DAVIS - was the Hatters star man at Plymouth, providing the only real moments of skill in a game generally bereft of inspiration with a string of fine saves.

MAN OF THE MATCH RANKINGS

Player	Mom
Steve Davis	6
Paul McLaren	4
Tony Thorpe	4
Ian Wilson	4
Graham Alexander	3
Trevor Peake	3
Gary Waddock	3
Chris Allen	2
Kelvin Davis	2
Richard Harvey	2
Gavin McCormack	2
Darren Thomas	2
Stuart Douglas	1
Trevor Peake	1
Bryan Small	1