



▲ **1987 FOOT POWWOW**- Skipper Steve Davis leads the charge against Wycombe Wanderers



**BEST FIRST FORWARD:** Wycombe keeper Martin Taylor denies Hatters Dwight Marshall.

**More misery for Lennie's**  
**Wycombe squaderers!**

If possession was nine tenths of the law in football Luton Town would have a strong case for being further up the Division 2 table.

Unfortunately it isn't and, with four from the bottom five looking increasingly like the most probable permutation for the dreaded drop into football's basement division, Lennie Lawrence's shot-shy strugglers are staring relegation firmly in the face.

As in their previous two home games against Bristol City and Wigan Athletic, the Hatters enjoyed territorial advantage over Wycombe Wanderers but, with their attacking play possessing all the thrust of a neutered poodle, they again took one point instead of three.

A woeful Wycombe side took 77 minutes to threaten Kelvin Davis' goal when a tame Keith Scott header drifted harmlessly wide and then another seven minutes to get their first shot on target, a long-range Dave Carroll effort that Davis saved with relative comfort.

For the Hatters, Dwight Marshall traded places with David Oldfield, moving inside from the left wing to partner Phil Gray in an experienced frontline.

Between them Saturday's strikeforce have scored 60 goals for the Kenilworth Road club but, more significantly, only three this season and neither looked seriously like adding to that paltry total against frustrating Wycombe.

Marshall dragged the best chance of the game wide in the 29th minute when Sean Evers pumped the ball into the box and Steve Davis superbly killed the ball and laid it into the path of the Jamaican striker with one touch.

In the second half, Marshall failed to get on the end of two excellent Graham Alexander crosses and his disappointing afternoon was brought to a premature end shortly afterwards with his 65th-minute replacement by Andrew Fotiadis.

On 13 minutes, he forced Wycombe keeper Martin Taylor into a fine diving save after a fine shot at the

...also a free-kick saving with a firm edge on the goal-keeper's chest, but then proceeded to make life easy for the Derby County stopper, heading into his hands at the far post following a Mitchell Thomas cross and hitting another volley straight at Taylor in the final minute.

The goalscoring responsibility currently bestowed on Gray needs to be eased though and the arrival of a natural striker on loan alongside him could yet underline the

|                                                                                   |                     |                                                                                   |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|  | HATTERS . . . . . 0 |  |
|                                                                                   | WYCOMBE . . . . 0   |                                                                                   |

Aside from Gray and Marshall, nobody else even came close to threatening Taylor's goal in a white shirt.

Defenders Davis and Thomas both got into advanced positions without getting breaks in the visitors' penalty box but goals from midfield continue to be an unknown phenomenon at Kenilworth Road and perhaps

it is time for Simon Davies, surely the most expensive Lacoste carrier in the country, to be given his opportunity, because in that area of the pitch Lawrence is rapidly running out of options.

Davies was introduced into the action for the last 16 minutes on Saturday but probably displayed more directness, and

urgency in his play than any of his midfield teammates. Teenager Matthew Spring, as always, didn't let himself down, but

In the ninth minute,

Spring got on

● **THE PHIL GUY:** Hatters striker Phil

Gray is sent flying by Wycombe Wanderers skipper Keith Ryan on a day when the visiting defence stood firm.

the end of an intricate passing movement involving Thomas O. Field, Gray and Marshall before going down in the visitors' penalty box to hopeful, rather than serious, appeals and the longer he put went on the more exhausted of creative ideas to break down

Paul McLaren, still waiting for his first goal of the season, led his usual variety of long-range efforts high and wide and the final table Buckinghamshire club, who showed no interest in coming away from Kenilworth Road with anything other than a point, it

At the final whistle, the general mood hanging over the club supporters and management pulling in opposite directions and it's ugly head once again when assistant manager John Stone demonstratively questioned the IQ of one abusive supporter as

**Cutting edge**

ment of the season," a disappointed Lawrence admitted afterward. "what we've put right in the last seven or eight games is the defensive side of things, we don't look like letting goals in. Half of it's right but the other half, scoring goals and getting wins, isn't."

"For 10 to 15 minutes in the first half, it looked like we were going to score but, other than that, we were hoping for a deflection, a bit of good fortune or a goal from a set play. We lack a spark in and around the penalty area but the man who scored half the goals in the last season and a half has gone.

"The pressure is relentless and will be until the end of the season. Some of these players have been under pressure for three years. It's that's life and there's no point moaning about that. In some applications, commitment work rate and defending, we look up to them."

What will concern Lawrence most is, having failed to take maximum points off lesser opposition in Preston, Wigan and Wembley, his under-pressure side face two difficult fixtures against a full-strength Grimsby and trips to strong play-off hopefuls Bristol Rovers and

**HATTERS:** Kelvin Davis, Graham Alexander, Michael Thomas, Matthew Spring (Simon Davies, 74), Steve Davis, Darren Patterson, Sean Evers, Paul McLaren, David (80)

**WYCOMBE WANDERERS:** Martin Taylor, David Kendall, Jason Kavanagh, Keith Ryan, Jason Cousins, Nicky Mahon, Maurice Harkin, 70.

McGarvin, Steve Brown. Subs not used: Michael Forays, Simon.

**MIGHT HAVE BEEN:** Dwight Marshall is about to screw the ball wide of the far post as Lu...  
the chance to shatter the deadlock against a defensive-minded Wycombe side.

## LENNIE'S VERDICT

“The pressure is relentless and will be until the end of the season. Some of these players have been under pressure for three years, but that's life and there's no point moaning about that. In terms of application, commitment, work rate and defending, we look capable of staying up, in other areas we don't.”

*Pictures: Gareth Owe*

| LUN TOWN FC 1997-98  |                    |       |                         |     |
|----------------------|--------------------|-------|-------------------------|-----|
| THE STORY SO FAR ... |                    |       |                         |     |
| August               | Opposition         | Score | Scorers                 | Pts |
| Aug 1                | Colchester (C)     | 1-0   | Thorne 31               | 2   |
| Aug 8                | Colchester (C)     | 1-1   | Thorne 30               | 2   |
| Aug 15               | Colchester (C)     | 0-0   |                         | 0   |
| Aug 22               | Colchester (C)     | 0-0   |                         | 0   |
| Aug 29               | CLICHAM            | 1-0   | Thorne 30               | 2   |
| September            |                    |       |                         |     |
| Sept 5               | MILMALL            | 0-2   |                         | 0   |
| Sept 12              | Colchester (C)     | 0-0   |                         | 0   |
| Sept 19              | Colchester (C)     | 1-1   | Marshall 43             | 2   |
| Sept 26              | Colchester (C)     | 1-1   | Donaghy 35              | 2   |
| Oct 3                | WIDEMAN            | 2-0   | Donaghy 31, Gray 36     | 4   |
| Oct 10               | WIDEMAN            | 2-0   | Donaghy 28, Thorne 73   | 4   |
| Oct 17               | Rich Colts         | 0-0   |                         | 0   |
| October              |                    |       |                         |     |
| Oct 24               | PLYMOUTH           | 1-0   |                         | 0   |
| Oct 31               | PLYMOUTH           | 1-0   | Thorne 36, Dennis 85    | 2   |
| Nov 7                | Wym. Athletic      | 0-1   | Orford 56               | 0   |
| Nov 14               | Wym. Athletic      | 0-0   |                         | 0   |
| Nov 21               | BENFORD            | 2-0   | Alexander 25, Thorne 78 | 4   |
| November             |                    |       |                         |     |
| Nov 28               | BENFORD            | 0-0   |                         | 0   |
| Dec 5                | BURNLEY            | 2-0   | Gray 35, Thorne 78      | 4   |
| Dec 12               | BURNLEY            | 0-0   | Thorne 35               | 0   |
| Dec 19               | TORREY TRAFFIC (1) | 0-0   |                         | 0   |
| Dec 26               | Torrey Traffic     | 0-0   |                         | 0   |
| January              |                    |       |                         |     |
| Jan 2                | York City          | 2-1   | Alexander 31, Thorne 72 | 4   |
| January              |                    |       |                         |     |
| Jan 9                | BELLINGHAM         | 0-2   | Allen 32, Thorne 77     | 0   |
| Jan 16               | BELLINGHAM         | 0-2   | Allen 32, Thorne 77     | 0   |
| Jan 23               | ROVEROL ROVERS     | 2-1   | Allen 3, Orford 25      | 4   |
| Jan 30               | ROVEROL ROVERS     | 2-1   | Allen 3, Orford 25      | 4   |
| Feb 6                | WIMBORNE TRAMPTON  | 0-0   |                         | 0   |
| Feb 13               | WIMBORNE TRAMPTON  | 0-0   |                         | 0   |
| February             |                    |       |                         |     |
| Feb 20               | Southend           | 2-1   | Alexander 62            | 2   |
| Feb 27               | BLACKBURN          | 0-0   |                         | 0   |
| Mar 6                | BENFORD (AWAY)     | 2-1   | Thorne 21, Orford 83    | 4   |
| Mar 13               | BENFORD (AWAY)     | 2-1   | Thorne 21, Orford 83    | 4   |
| Mar 20               | FULHAM             | 1-0   | Thorne 44               | 2   |
| Mar 27               | FULHAM             | 1-0   | Thorne 44               | 2   |
| April                |                    |       |                         |     |
| Apr 3                | BOURNEMOUTH        | 1-1   | Johnson 72              | 1   |
| April                |                    |       |                         |     |
| Apr 10               | Wytham             | 1-0   | Dennis 10               | 2   |
| Apr 17               | Wytham             | 1-0   | Johnson 9               | 2   |
| Apr 24               | Wytham             | 1-0   |                         | 0   |
| Apr 30               | WYCOMBE            | 0-1   |                         | 0   |
| May 7                | WYCOMBE            | 0-1   |                         | 0   |
| May 14               | SPRIMBY            | 0-0   |                         | 0   |
| May 21               | SPRIMBY            | 0-0   |                         | 0   |
| May 28               | SPRIMBY            | 0-0   |                         | 0   |
| May                  |                    |       |                         |     |
| May 14               | WYCOMBE            | 0-1   |                         | 0   |
| May 21               | WYCOMBE            | 0-1   |                         | 0   |
| May 28               | WYCOMBE            | 0-1   |                         | 0   |
| May                  |                    |       |                         |     |
| May 14               | WYCOMBE            | 0-1   |                         | 0   |
| May 21               | WYCOMBE            | 0-1   |                         | 0   |
| May 28               | WYCOMBE            | 0-1   |                         | 0   |
| May                  |                    |       |                         |     |
| May 14               | WYCOMBE            | 0-1   |                         | 0   |
| May 21               | WYCOMBE            | 0-1   |                         | 0   |
| May 28               | WYCOMBE            | 0-1   |                         | 0   |
| May                  |                    |       |                         |     |
| May 14               | WYCOMBE            | 0-1   |                         | 0   |
| May 21               | WYCOMBE            | 0-1   |                         | 0   |
| May 28               | WYCOMBE            | 0-1   |                         | 0   |
| May                  |                    |       |                         |     |
| May 14               | WYCOMBE            | 0-1   |                         | 0   |
| May 21               | WYCOMBE            | 0-1   |                         | 0   |
| May 28               | WYCOMBE            | 0-1   |                         | 0   |
| May                  |                    |       |                         |     |
| May 14               | WYCOMBE            | 0-1   |                         | 0   |
| May 21               | WYCOMBE            | 0-1   |                         | 0   |
| May 28               | WYCOMBE            | 0-1   |                         | 0   |
| May                  |                    |       |                         |     |
| May 14               | WYCOMBE            | 0-1   |                         | 0   |
| May 21               | WYCOMBE            | 0-1   |                         | 0   |
| May 28               | WYCOMBE            | 0-1   |                         | 0   |
| May                  |                    |       |                         |     |
| May 14               | WYCOMBE            | 0-1   |                         | 0   |
| May 21               | WYCOMBE            | 0-1   |                         | 0   |
| May 28               | WYCOMBE            | 0-1   |                         |     |

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