

DAVE FLETT sees Hatters' Cup success continue... lowly Hull stand in

LENNIE'S VERDICT

Realistically we were never in danger of losing but we needed a replay like we need a hole in the head. It was a very nervy last ten minutes. They were up for it. I can't make out their league position. They played well above themselves but it's never easy as Emley and Hendon proved by drawing with league sides. I felt we just deserved to win.



of a place in the Third Round



● CLOSE THING (left): Sean Evers hits the post, but Phil Gray (above) exploits poor marking to head Hatters in front.

PHIL-GOOD FACTOR!

PHIL GRAY celebrated his Northern Ireland call-up with two goals to end stubborn Boreham Wood's interest in this season's FA Cup.

In front of the Sky TV cameras, the Hatters striker provided international boss Lawrie McMenemy with a timely reminder of his finishing talents ahead of tonight's European Championship qualifier at home to Moldova.

Gray settled the visitors' nerves on 34 minutes, added a second early in the second half and then chipped to the far post for captain Steve Davis to head in a third.

The Irish forward has now scored seven times in his last nine games and, on Sunday, became the first Hatters player to score two goals from open play in one game since Tony Thorpe's hat-trick against Blackpool in January.

At Meadow Park, Gray proved the difference between the Nationwide League Division Two promotion challengers and the Ryman Premier Division strugglers.

With tin foil FA Cups, ex-Hatter Kerry Dixon leading the line and a substitute called Dave Hatchett all the ingredients for a cup shock were in evidence.

And when Lennie Lawrence's men got off to a sluggish start and the part-timers grew in confidence the chance of an upset increased.

Both teams ran out to "Hot Stuff," from the Full Monty sound track, but the Hatters start could only be described as tepid with famous names from the past including David Pleat, John Hartson and Tony Thorpe all looking on anxiously.

Wood dangerman Tony Samuels was prominent in the early stages. Capitalising on a Marvin Johnson stumble in the ninth minute, Samuels was only denied a clear shot on goal by a tremendous Steve Davis recovery tackle and,

Gray's double spells new Cup windfall

BOREHAM WOOD

HATTERS

2

3

12 minutes later, he forced Kelvin Davis to tip over his 15-yard effort after he'd got behind Graham Alexander.

A subdued Stuart Douglas, often lost in the shadow of his man-mountain marker Garry Nisbet, had earlier wasted a good opportunity, firing straight at home keeper Martin Taylor after being released by Sean Evers.

Wood captain Nisbet enjoyed an inspirational game and, as well as contributing to Douglas' 67th-minute substitution, also got his name on the scoresheet and sent a spectacular swirling 40-yard effort just over Davis' crossbar.

Luckily for the Hatters, their skipper was in an equally determined mood and it was largely due to Davis' efforts and those of Gray and Paul McLaren that the Hatters avoided this particular banana skin.

McLaren returned to the starting line-up in place of the rested Matthew Spring and provided the steal against the part-timers, bravely testing his knee ligaments with several crunching challenges.

In a disappointing first half few away players matched McLaren's desire for battle and it was

in rather fortunate circumstances that the football league outfit took the lead. Boreham Wood had been stretched for five minutes after losing Dominic Grime with a cut eye.

Instead of replacing Grime, home manager Bob Makin decided to wait for physio Gary Anderson to stitch up the wound but the numerical advantage seemed to galvanise the Hatters into action.

Alexander sent in a corner that an unmarked Gray hung in the air for and nodded confidently into the bottom corner.

Minutes later, Gavin McGowan and Kofi Nyamah both curled shots wide before Grime's re-introduction evened matters again.

After the interval, Davis drilled a corner wide and Evers hit the post after the best move of the match involving Alexander, Gray and Douglas.

On 54 minutes, Gray doubled his side's advantage firing high into an empty net after Douglas had picked up the loose ball from a strong Evers run and squared the ball to his striking partner.

But before you could say 'Open the Floodgates' the home team had pulled a goal back.

Rather than opt for damage limitation, home boss Makin urged giant defender Nisbet forward and the big man responded by getting on the end of a classic Dixon flick and drilling past Kelvin Davis.

Dixon might be a few pounds heavier than in his Kenilworth Road and England days but the Boreham Wood player coach proved he can still be an

aerial threat.

Two minutes later, Nisbet almost added a second but Kelvin Davis' blushes were spared when the ball bounced wide off the home skipper after the Hatters keeper had dropped Mark Brown's free kick.

The visitors were in need of respite not for the first time in the afternoon but they had to wait until the 76th minute for it when Davis' header from Gray's cross was only helped into the bottom corner by Taylor.

Even then the home team were not finished and substitute Mark Xavier ensured the outcome was in the balance right until the final whistle when, on 83 minutes, he coolly finished with the outside of his right boot after the ball had squirmed into his path in the area off McKinnon's head.

Referee Paul Alcock, of Paulo di Canio infamy, then made matters even more interesting by awarding an indirect free kick on the penalty spot after Steve Davis' inadvertent back pass at the death.

A replay at Kenilworth Road was avoided when Jason Shaw drilled the free kick into the wall and Gray went on to squander an opportunity for his hat-trick by volleying over in the six-yard box.

BOREHAM WOOD: Martin Taylor, Steve Sanders, Alan McCarthy, Jason Shaw, Garry Nisbet, Mark Brown (Steve Daly, 88), Dominic Grime, Steve Heffer, Kerry Dixon, Tony Samuels (Mark Xavier, 73), Matthew Brady (Simon Ireland, 67).

HATTERS: Kelvin Davis, Graham Alexander, Gavin McGowan, Paul McLaren, Steve Davis, Marvin Johnson, Ray McKinnon (Matthew Spring, 90), Sean Evers, Stuart Douglas (Gary Doherty, 67), Phil Gray, Kofi Nyamah (Michael McIndoe, 62).

TOP HATTER: Phil Gray.



● KERRY'S ANGUISH: Dixon was

from Steve Davis (inset) seals Wood's fate. Far left, Phil Gray Hatters' goal hero.

LUTON TOWN FC 1998-99

August	Opponents	Score	Scorers	Att	Pos
Sat 8	Wycombe	1-0	Davis (S) 36	5,252	10
Tues 11	OXFORD UTD (WC1)	2-3	Alexander 59 (pen), 63 (pen)	3,165	-
Sat 15	PRESTON	1-1	Marshall 54	5,392	7
Tues 18	Oxford Utd (WC1)	3-1	Gray 37, Evers 48, McLaren 70	5,099	-
Sat 22	Reading	0-3		18,108	12
Sat 29	COLCHESTER	2-0	Douglas 62, Davis (S) 82	5,005	9
Mon 31	Wigan Athletic	3-1	Davis (S) 41, Evers 78, Gray 81	3,778	5
September					
Sat 5	BURNLEY	1-0	Douglas 47	5,554	2
Tues 8	Wrexham	1-1	McKinnon 36	2,951	3
Sat 12	BRISTOL ROVERS	2-0	Davis (S) 7, Alexander 9	5,558	3
Tues 15	Ipswich (WC 2)	1-2	Douglas, 60	9,032	-
Sat 19	Blackpool	0-1		5,695	5
Tues 22	IPSWICH (WC 2)	4-2	Fotiadis 52, Douglas 83, Davis (S) 99	5,655	-
Sat 26	WALSALL	0-1	Johnson 120	5,530	7
October					
Sat 3	Fulham	3-1	Gray 3, Douglas 48, Davis (S) 65	11,856	7
Sat 10	York City	3-3	Douglas 22, Evers 43, Gray 55	3,780	4
Sat 17	OLDHAM	2-0	Gray 82, Scarlett 90	5,447	4
Tues 20	NORTHAMPTON	1-0	Alexander 19	6,087	3
Sat 24	Gillingham	0-1		5,602	4
Tues 27	COVENTRY (WC 3)	2-0	Gray 50, Davis (S) 78	9,051	-
November					
Sat 7	Stoke City	1-3	Douglas 81	12,964	6
Tues 10	BARNLEY (WC4)	1-0	Gray 82	8,435	-
Sun 15	Boreham Wood (FA1)	3-2	Gray 33, 53, Davis 76	1,772	-
Sat 21	Lincoln City	A	3		
Sat 28	MANCHESTER CITY	H	3		
December					
Tue 1	Sunderland (WC5)	A	7.45		
Sat 5	HULL CITY (FA2)	H	3		
Sat 12	Macclesfield	A	3		
Sat 19	MILLWALL	H	3		
Sat 26	READING	H	Noon		
Mon 28	Bournemouth	A	3		
January					
Sat 2	Colchester	A	3		
Sat 9	WYCOMBE	H	3		
Sat 16	Preston	A	3		
Sat 23	WIGAN ATHLETIC	H	3		
Sat 30	BOURNEMOUTH	H	3		
February					
Sat 6	Burnley	A	3		
Sat 13	WREXHAM	H	3		
Sat 20	Bristol Rovers	A	3		
Sat 27	BLACKPOOL	H	3		
March					
Sat 6	Walsall	A	3		
Tues 9	FULHAM	H	7.45		
Sat 13	STOKE CITY	H	3		
Sat 20	Chesterfield	A	3		
Sat 27	GILLINGHAM	H	3		
April					
Sat 3	Oldham Athletic	A	3		
Tues 6	YORK CITY	H	7.45		
Sat 10	Northampton	A	3		
Wed 14	Manchester City	A	3		
Sat 17	LINCOLN CITY	H	3		
Sat 24	Notts County	A	3		
May					
Sat 1	MACCLESFIELD	H	3		
SAT 8	Millwall	A	3		
TBA	NOTTS COUNTY H, CHESTERFIELD H				

DIVISION TWO

Up to November 14 1998

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Stoke City	18	12	1	5	27	15	37
Fulham	16	11	3	2	26	12	36
Walsall	18	11	2	5	28	23	35
Preston	17	9	5	3	32	17	32
Gillingham	18	7	8	3	28	18	29
Chesterfield	16	8	4	4	17	10	28
Manchester C	18	7	6	5	23	18	27
LUTON TOWN	16	8	3	5	21	16	27
Millwall	18	7	5	6	18	20	26
Blackpool	17	7	4	6	24	23	25
Bournemouth	16	6	6	4	24	19	24
Wigan Athletic	17	7	2	8	22	18	23
Reading	17	6	5	6	20	24	23
Bristol Rovers	18	5	6	7	21	22	21
Notts County	17	5	6	6	20	21	21
Wrexham	18	5	6	7	17	24	21
York City	17	5	5	7	22	30	20
Burnley	18	5	5	8	21	25	20
Colchester Utd	17	5	5	7	16	22	20
Macclesfield	18	4	6	8	16	23	18
Northampton	18	3	8	7	17	21	17
Wycombe Wdrs	18	3	5	10	16	25	14
Oldham	18	3	4	11	14	28	13
Lincoln City	17	3	2	12	16	32	11

BAD BOYS

PLAYER	Y	R
Gavin McGowan	8	1
Steve Davis	5	0
Graham Alexander	3	1
Marvin Johnson	3	1
Stuart Douglas	3	0
Liam George	2	0
Phil Gray	2	0
Michael McIndoe	2	0
Paul McLaren	1	0
Jimmy Cox	1	0
Sean Evers	1	0
Ray McKinnon	1	0
Matthew Spring	1	0
Mitchell Thomas	1	0
Alan White	1	0
Total	36	3

GAMES AND GOALS

Player	Apps	Goals
Graham Alexander	16(0/70)	2 2
Hervé Bacqué	2(4/12)	0 0
Jimmy Cox	2(2/11)	0 0
Kelvin Davis	16(0/70)	0 0
Steve Davis	16(0/70)	5 3
Gary Doherty	0(1/01)	0 0
Stuart Douglas	14(0/60)	5 2
Sean Evers	16(0/70)	2 1
Andrew Fotiadis	1(7/12)	0 1
Liam George	2(3/02)	0 0
Phil Gray	15(1/60)	4 5
Marvin Johnson	14(0/70)	0 1
Dwight Marshall	3(1/30)	1 0
Gavin McGowan	13(1/70)	0 0
Michael McIndoe	7(2/22)	0 0
Ray McKinnon	14(1/11)	1 0
Paul McLaren	2(2/22)	0 1
Kofi Nyamah	0(0/11)	0 0
Andre Scarlett	0(1/00)	1 0
Matthew Spring	16(0/61)	0 0
Mitchell Thomas	7(5/20)	0 0
Alan White	2(6/02)	0 0
Nathan Abbey	0(0/00)	0 0
Simon Davies	0(0/00)	0 0

LUTON NEWS PLAYER OF THE YEAR STANDINGS

(No. of Top Hatter awards won)

Graham Alexander	5
Matthew Spring	4
Steve Davis	3
Phil Gray	3
Stuart Douglas	2
Sean Evers	2
Marvin Johnson	2
Kelvin Davis	1
Gavin McGowan	1
Ray McKinnon	1



● ALEXANDER

● MCGOWAN