



HE'S BACK: Former Luton Town goal king Tony Thorpe returned to Kenilworth Road on Saturday to help the Hatters to a 1-0 victory over play-off hopefuls Gillingham. Thorpe is on loan from Bristol City until the end of the season.

Gerry might come back

GERRY HARRISON has left Luton Town to join Hull City on loan but Lennie Lawrence hopes to resurrect a permanent deal in the summer.

Lawrence was told by receiver John Kelly and chief creditor Cliff Bassett that he could not buy the Sunderland utility man for a fee in the region of £50,000 after the end of his third month on loan at Kenilworth Road.

"He did so much for us," Lawrence said about the popular Harrison.

Of the other transfer deadline day outgoing, Lawrence said Graham Alexander's £50,000 move to Preston involved better personal terms than Luton were offering but worse than those offered at another club, believed to be Burnley.

Lawrence said: "Graham's biggest concern is playing first division football next season and Preston give him a good chance of that."

"His true value is probably £250,000 but, with Bosman on transfer deadline day, you take what you can get. You can't blame him, it's the system that's to blame."

Lawrence described Sean Evers' £500,000 switch to Reading plus various add-ons and regales as the "right market price," adding: "We had a written offer at first that was unacceptable but we got that jacked up."

"Sean was keen to go. He wasn't forced out."



SENT TO HULL: Gerry Harrison.

We ran it past the receivers and Cliff Bassett, who's the main man in all this."

The double loan capture of Bristol City pair Sean Dyche and Tony Thorpe also pleased Lawrence, who thanked receiver John Kelly for his understanding in sanctioning the deals.

"He allowed me to loan because I said it was to make safe our second division status," Lawrence said.

"He's impressive and let myself and Cherry Newberry get on with the transfer dealings."

Thorpe: 'I love it here'

TONY THORPE has admitted he would love to return to Luton Town but he is more likely to start next season in Division Two with Bristol City.

City manager Benny Lennartsson is likely to leave in summer if the Ashton Gate club are relegated with star striker Ade Akinbiyi also expected to go.

That would probably lead to a recall for Thorpe, who Luton could not consider buying while in receivership.

The Bristol City board, who bought Thorpe from Fulham for £1 million last summer, are believed to want the former

Kenilworth Road goal king back for next season.

Thorpe turned down a loan deal with Northampton to come to the Hatters and Bristol City have agreed to pay some of Thorpe's wages, believing that Luton is the best club for him to rediscover his form and match fitness.

After an impressive return to Kenilworth Road on Saturday, Thorpe said: "I would love to come back here. I felt as if I'd never been away. It was really weird."

"There's only a couple of new players. Bristol might want a lot of money for me. The chairman wants me back as soon as the

summer starts, the fans want me there, it's just that me and the manager don't see eye to eye."

"I'm not willing to play in the reserves at my age. I still live in St Albans and I'm just happy to come back here where my friends and family are and I want to grab it with both hands."

"I think Lennie is one of the best managers I've worked with. Good managers get the best out of players and he gets the best out of me."

● The Hatters reserves went down 3-1 at Arsenal on Monday, with Michael McIndoe on target.

Loan ranger Sean returns to shoot down the Gills!

SEAN DYCHE capped his loan return from Bristol City with a goal that gave the Hatters victory over play-off hopefuls Gillingham.

With a rousing performance in the Luton sunshine, it was as if winter had never happened. Saturday's display brought back happier memories of Kenilworth Road cup and league triumphs in late summer and autumn with the Hatters once more mentally strong enough to edge a close game and protect a clean sheet.

That they did was largely due to the brilliance of Kelvin Davis. The 22-year-old goalkeeper pulled off four breathtaking saves to deny a strong and determined Gillingham side.

When the two sides met in Kent this season, a Davis mistake cost Luton the points in a 1-0 defeat. He more than atoned for that error on Saturday.

In the first half, he beat away a stinging drive by the impressive Robert Taylor, palmed out a Nicky Southall effort and tipped over a Carl Asaba header.

After the break, the former England under-21 international was less busy but still needed to be on his toes to safeguard all three points in the 87th minute.

Taylor was again the man thwarted, Davis tipping the Gillingham striker's vicious volley over on his back foot.

But the game was far from just a one-man show. Lennie Lawrence's persuasive qualities should be applauded in bringing Dyche and Tony Thorpe back to the club with the permission of the receivers.

Aside from his goal, Dyche was excellent in defence, providing a commanding aerial presence to help keep hot-shots Asaba and Taylor off the scoresheet.

Thorpe was given a hero's reception from the home crowd and responded with one of his finest games in a Luton shirt without scoring. The former Kenilworth Road goal king has had a hard time at Fulham and Bristol City since leaving Luton just over

match facts

LUTON TOWN 1 GILLINGHAM 0

● **HATTERS:** Kelvin Davis, Chris Willmott, Mitchell Thomas, Matthew Spring, Sean Dyche, Marvin Johnson, Phil Gray, Paul McLaren, Stuart Douglas, Tony Thorpe (Alan White, 82), Gavin McGowan. Sub not used: Emmerson Boyce, Tresor Kandol.

● **GILLINGHAM:** Vince Bartram, Nicky Southall, Darren Carr (Mick Galloway, 86), Paul Smith, Gary Butters, Adrian Pennock, Mark Patterson, Andy Hessenthaler, Carl Asaba (Marcus Browning, 87), Mark Saunders (John Hodge, 70), Robert Taylor.

● **Shots on target:** Luton 3, Gillingham 7.

● **Off target:** Luton 7, Gillingham 8.

● **Comers:** Luton 8, Gillingham 6.

● **Attendance:** 6,705.

● **Referee:** Steve Baines (Chesterfield).

● **Top Hatter:** Davis – fantastic saves.

THE LUTON Town Supporters Club Player of the Season Presentation Evening is on Sunday April 25 at the Kent Social Club. The evening will kick-off at 8pm with all first-team players present. There will also be a raffle and a disco. Tickets are available from the Supporters Club kiosk on matchdays or Town-On-Tour travel coaches.

a year ago but looked a better, more mature player for the experience.

He was prevented from adding to his 60 goals for Luton by visiting keeper Vince Bartram, who pushed over his firm drive after a clever diagonal run across the Gillingham penalty box.

That was vintage Thorpe. What wasn't was the impressive link-up play, especially in the second half with Gavin McGowan in particular. McGowan was another

to impress in his natural wing back position as Lawrence employed a three-man defence well as a three-pronged attack.

Mitchell Thomas seemed to long in the tooth to fulfil the role on the other flank but Willmott once more proved comfortable alongside Dyche and Marvin Johnson.

Dyche's goal arrived 10 minutes when the Hatters were on the edge of the goal. Matthew Spring's inswinging corner was the only threat as the league prices and the office will be corner over the line after Sunday (10am-2pm) but closed on Good Friday.

Hatters juniors beat Reading 1-0 on Sunday with a Clifford Akurang goal.

Division 2 table

Team	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
1. Luton	37	26	6	5	63	26	84
2. Reading	37	21	9	7	68	35	72
3. Burnley	36	20	8	8	58	34	67
4. Bournemouth	37	19	10	8	51	40	68
5. Gillingham	37	17	14	7	52	28	65
6. Wrexham	37	16	14	7	59	34	62
7. Blackpool	35	15	12	11	48	49	57
8. Colchester	36	13	15	8	46	44	57
9. Walsall	34	16	7	11	54	35	55
10. Millwall	35	15	10	13	45	55	55
11. Macclesfield	36	15	9	12	41	34	54
12. Luton	37	11	13	13	35	42	46
13. Wrexham	37	12	9	16	43	51	45
14. Walsall	36	11	11	14	37	51	44
15. Wrexham	36	9	14	13	48	44	41
16. Wrexham	36	11	8	17	43	53	41
17. Wrexham	37	10	9	18	45	65	39
18. Wrexham	37	15	14	10	40	55	39
19. Wrexham	37	10	11	17	41	68	38
20. Wrexham	37	10	10	17	37	53	37
21. Wrexham	36	10	10	16	38	48	34
22. Wrexham	37	12	18	13	28	45	33
23. Wrexham	36	8	9	19	29	45	33

Lennie Lawrence's verdict

What a difference a week makes. Everybody was as down as they could have been at Chesterfield with the worst away result and performance for a long time. On Tuesday we went into receivership and since we've got four points from two good teams. The crowd and players responded to the call again. We got the win somewhat fortunately in the first half but deservedly in the second.



No changes for Oldham

LENNIE LAWRENCE looks likely to make his debut for the Good Friday trip to Oldham.

Midfielder Paul McLaren, sent off against Reading, will be available, serving a one-match suspension against York on Tuesday.

Ray McKinnon is not expected to be in contention for the trip to Boundary Park after missing Saturday's 1-0 victory over Gillingham with minor knee ligament injuries.

But Andrew Fotiadis played the second half of Monday's reserve game at Arsenal and could be on the bench, along with Michael McIndoe.

Shopper Marvin Johnson will miss the April 10 trip to Northampton after Sunday's booking against Gillingham.

Hatters fans travelling up to Oldham can expect to see a new face on the bench.

On the day with seat prices £12 for adults and £5 for juniors and OAPs. Tickets are on sale for the York game at Kenilworth Road on Saturday (10am-1pm) and Easter Sunday (10am-2pm) but closed on Good Friday.

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98-99

Story so far...

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	Davis (S) 7, Alexander 90	5,447	4
Sat 24	NORTHAMPTON	1-0	Alexander 19	6,087	3
Tues 20	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	BARNSELEY (WC4)	1-0	Gray 82	8,435	-
Sun 15	Boreham Wood (FA1)	3-2	Gray 33, 53, Davis (S) 76	1,772	-
Sat 21	Lincoln City	2-2	Gray 43, Doherty 76	4,893	6
Sat 28	MANCHESTER CITY	1-1	Doherty 76	9,070	7
December					
Tue 1	Sunderland (WC5)	0-3	-	35,742	-
Sat 5	HULL CITY (FA2)	1-2	Davis (S) 36	5,021	-
Sat 12	Macclesfield	2-2	Douglas 3, Gray 90	2,905	8
Sat 19	MILLWALL	1-2	Davis (S) 69	5,939	11
Mon 28	Bournemouth	0-1	-	8,863	14
January					
Sat 2	Colchester	2-2	Alexander (pen) 7, White 72	4,694	14
Sat 9	WALSALL (AWS 2)	0-3	-	1,870	-
Tues 5	WYCOMBE	1-1	Spring 16, Evers 69, Douglas 75	5,063	13
Sat 9	WYCOMBE	3-2	Fotiadis 15	11,034	12
Sat 16	Preston	1-1	-	4,934	13
Sat 23	WIGAN ATHLETIC	0-4	McKinnon 6, Doherty 53	5,426	14
Sat 30	BOURNEMOUTH	2-2	-	-	-
February					
Sat 6	Burnley	2-1	Fotiadis 34, Doherty 87	10,285	12
Sat 13	Wrexham	1-2	Doherty 47	4,759	13
Feb 20	BRISTOL ROVERS	0-1	-	6,361	13
Feb 27	NOTTS COUNTY	0-1	-	4,021	13
March					
Sat 6	Walsall	0-1	-	4,646	12
Sat 13	FULHAM	0-4	-	5,408	13
Tues 9	STOKE CITY	1-2	Alexander (pen) 47	7,424	13
Sat 13	Chesterfield	1-3	Gray 82	5,221	14
Sat 20	READING	1-1	Spring 12	3,921	14
Tues 23	GILLINGHAM	1-0	Dyche 42	5,527	14
Sat 27	GILLINGHAM	1-0	-	6,705	13

Matches still to come...

Match	Date	Opponent	Time
APRIL			
Fri 2	Oldham	A	3.30
Tues 6	York City	H	7.45
Sat 10	N'hampton	A	3pm
Wed 14	Man City	A	7.45
Sat 17	LINCOLN	H	3pm
MAY			
Sat 1	Notts Co	A	3pm
Tues 8	MAC'FIELD	H	7.45
Sat 22	Millwall	A	3pm
Sat 22	FA Cup final	-	-

Games and goals

	APPEARANCES (SUBS)		GOALS	
	Lge	Cup	Lge	Cup
Nathan Abbey	1(0)	1(0)	0	0
Graham Alexander	28(0)	9(0)	4	2
Hervé Bacqué	2(5)	2(2)	0	0
Emmerson Boyce	0(0)	1(0)	0	0
Jimmy Cox	3(5)	1(1)	0	0
Kelvin Davis	36(0)	9(0)	0	0
Steve Davis	20(0)	9(0)	6	4
Simon Davies	2(0)	0(0)	0	0
Gary Doherty	5(11)	2(2)	5	0
Stuart Douglas	33(0)	7(1)	8	2
Sean Dyche	9(0)	1(0)	0	0
Sean Evers	27(0)	10(0)	3	1
Andrew Fotiadis	6(8)	2(2)	2	1
Stuart Fraser	1(1)	1(0)	0	0
Liam George	6(4)	0(2)	0	0
Phil Gray	29(3)	9(0)	7	5
Gerry Harrison	14(0)	1(0)	0	0
Marvin Johnson	34(0)	8(0)	0	1
Trevor Kendall	0(1)	0(0)	1	0
Dwight Marshall	1(1)	3(0)	0	0
Gavin McGowan	23(4)	9(0)	0	0
Michael McIndoe	9(4)	3(3)	0	0
Ray McKinnon	26(1)	6(1)	2	0
Paul McLaren	13(9)	4(3)	0	1
Kofi Nyamah	0(0)	1(1)	0	0
Andre Scarlett	2(4)	0(2)	1	0
Paul Showler	2(1)	0(0)	0	0
Matthew Spring	36(0)	8(1)	2	0
Michael Thomas	1(5)	3(0)	0	0
Tony Thorpe	0(0)	0(0)	0	0
Chris Willmott	4(1)	0(0)	0	0
Alan White	13(14)	2(3)	1	0
L'Andy Zahana-Oni	2(3)	0(0)	0	0