

# Lennie must act now to revive toothless Town!

SHOT-SHY Luton Town are in urgent need of a new striker! The Hatters went down 2-0 at Brentford on Saturday, having only managed a paltry three shots on target at Griffin Park.

Lose Dwight Yorke and Andy Cole at Manchester United and Sir Alex Ferguson can replace them with Teddy Sheringham and Ole Gunnar Solskjaer.

When the same happens at Kenilworth Road, Lennie Lawrence struggles to find another striker in the building!

With first choice forwards Andrew Fotiadis and Phil Gray both injured, Lawrence chose to play 18-year-old rookie Tresor Kandol up front, alongside Stuart Douglas and Liam George.

It was alarming what effect the loss of Fotiadis and Gray had on the team and Luton have now failed to find the net in 135 minutes of football without the pair. A worrying statistic which is not helped by the serious diagnosis of their injuries. Fotiadis is unlikely to play again this millennium and Gray's absence is less clear but expected to be at least three weeks.

A new striker must be acquired in the meantime, otherwise the Hatters early season hard work could be undone and they may find themselves sliding down the Division Two table.

At Brentford, the Hatters' three-pronged attack carried little punch and sorely missed a Gray or Fotiadis to lead the line against the meanest defence in the division.

Brentford centre-back Hermann Hreidarsson has marked the likes of Zinedine Zidane and Andrei Shevchenko during Iceland's Euro 2000 qualifying bid.

Douglas' strike-rate of 14 goals in 68 starts was never going to send shivers down the spine of the ex-Crystal Palace favourite but the Hatters forward was unlucky not to be awarded a penalty when he fell over the challenge of Hreidarsson's defensive partner Darren Powell on 59 minutes.

Moments earlier, Powell had helped force the Bees in front, his

**LENNIE LAWRENCE** believes Brentford are strong enough to challenge for a play-off place this season. The Hatters manager said Ron Noades' side and Bristol Rovers are the most likely top-six contenders from the teams Luton have faced so far this season.

header across goal from Gavin Mahon's corner being sliced into his own net at the far post by the unfortunate Matthew Taylor.

Ron Noades' side, now unbeaten in 22 league games, made victory certain on 71 minutes when Scott Partridge's well-struck volley flew into the bottom corner from 15 yards after Hreidarsson headed down another Mahon centre.

That strike came seconds after Gary Doherty, who never missed a tackle in a faultless defensive

display, had been sent upfield to improve attacking fortunes.

There could have been more goals for Brentford in a one-sided second-half but Nathan Abbey denied Lloyd Owusu and Partridge with a pair of excellent stops.

The Hatters only real chance came before the break, full league debutant Adam Locke hitting a couple of off-target long range efforts and George having a shot turned off the line by the Bees' Andy Scott.

## match facts

### BRENTFORD 2 LUTON TOWN 0

● **BRENTFORD:** Andy Woodman, Ijah Anderson, Robert Quinn, Darren Powell, Hermann Hreidarsson, Paul Evans, Gavin Mahon (Tony Folan, 88), Lloyd Owusu (Derek Bryan, 85), Scott Partridge, Andy Scott, Martin Rowlands.

● **HATTERS:** Nathan Abbey, Gary Doherty, Julian Watts, Marvin Johnson, Stuart Fraser, Matthew Spring, Adam Locke, Matthew Taylor, Liam George, Stuart Douglas, Tresor Kandol (Efetobore Sodie, 71), Subs not used: Daniel Tate, Alan White, Emmerson Boyce, Andre Scarlett.

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

● **Off target:** Brentford 5, Luton 4.

● **Corners:** Brentford 1, Luton 6.

● **Referee:** Paul Taylor (Cheshunt).

● **Top Hatter:** Gary Doherty – defensive rock.

□ **ON SATURDAY,** Matthew Taylor will come face to face with the club who threw him on the football scrapheap at the age of 14! The Hatters 17-year-old wing back was released by Oxford United three years ago after being told he was "too plump" to make the grade.

## Lennie Lawrence's verdict

I don't think they were better than us but they were more likely to score. I would temper any criticism of the forwards in the knowledge that Hermann Hreidarsson is possibly Premiership class and Darren Powell is probably better than this division as well. But there is a need to strengthen the forward line.

