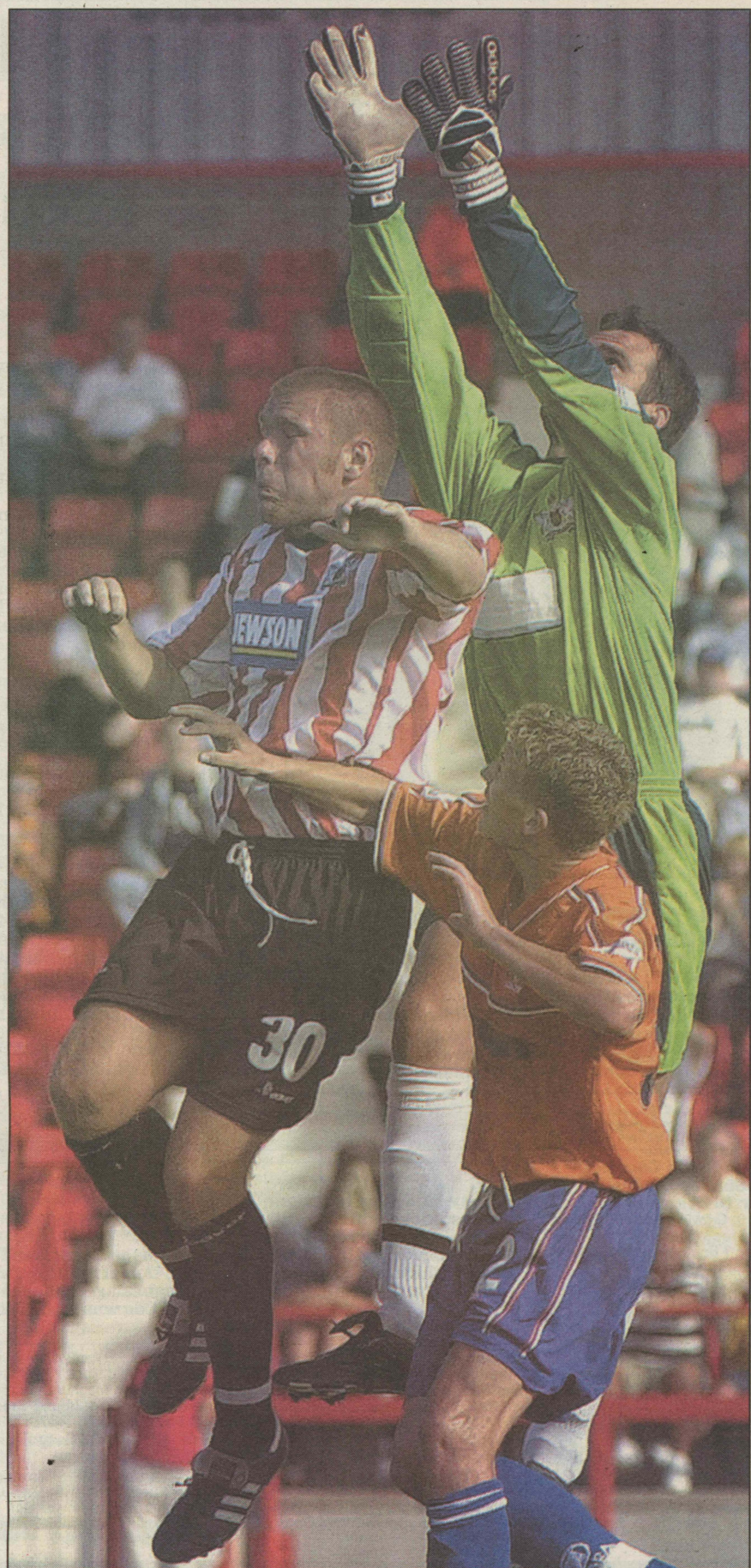




DEVON CRUNCH: Hatters player Lee Mansell competes with Exeter defender Lee Zabek and keeper Arjan van Heusden. *Picture: GARETH OWEN*

International aces jet in

JOE KINNEAR will run the rule over two former European under-21 internationals this week.

The Hatters boss has planned a behind-closed-doors friendly against a London club to have a look at a Dutch defender and a Danish striker.

Both men are unnamed because Kinnear does not want to alert other clubs of their availability.

Kinnear said: "I'm looking forward to seeing both players and, if they are as good as their records suggest, there's every chance we'll sign them. The Dutch defender is 6ft 2in and has nine international caps at

under-21 level, as well as being on the subs bench for the full team. He's turned down a new three-year deal at Antwerp.

"The Danish striker has eight under-21 caps. Both are young lads under 24."

Kinnear is also taking another look this week at four trialists who played in the reserves' 1-0 win against Millwall.

Wolves midfielder Simon Osborn is the most likely target after becoming surplus to requirements at Molineux.

Ghanaian international Eugene Ofori, Norwegian defender Tor Olve Iagnastol and Israeli Eyal Birk-

ovic are the other players hoping to impress.

Transfer-listed Dean Brennan scored a penalty against Millwall and the watching Kinnear had special words of praise for 17-year-old youth team player Rob Gillman, saying: "We played Gillman at centre-back and he did exceptionally well. He's tall and both his distribution and positional sense were very good."

"He was arguably the best player on the pitch and never gave Giovanni Savarese a kick. He scored a hat-trick for Swansea against us last season, so it was a good test for the lad."

Fotty feels wrath of Joe

ANDREW FOTIADIS felt the fury of Hatters boss Joe Kinnear on Saturday when he was substituted just 14 minutes after replacing Stuart Douglas.

Kinnear was left fuming by the ease in which Fotiadis was brushed aside in the build-up to Exeter's equaliser in the 2-2 draw. And the former England Schoolboy striker was hauled off shortly afterwards.

The Hatters boss later said: "I took him off because he did not show enough enthusiasm and cost us for the second goal. Their player went straight past him."

"He could have done much better. In fact, I could have gone round him with that defending and I told him so. He got beaten far too easily."

The last time Kinnear substituted a substitute was at Notts County in just his second match in charge.

Tresor Kandol lasted 19 second-half minutes on that occasion and never pulled on a Hatters' first team shirt again.

Ironically, Fotiadis replaced Kandol that evening and went on to score the Hatters' third goal in a 3-1 win at Meadow Lane.

Kandol, 20, made his debut for new club Cambridge United on Saturday.

Another ex-Hatter Tommy Carter is hoping to get another chance in English football.

The Bermudan international is currently on trial at Colchester.



FOTIADIS: Pulled off.

Hot-shot Taylor earns 10-man Hatters a point

MATTHEW TAYLOR enhanced his reputation as one of the lower divisions' hottest properties by bagging a point-saving brace at Exeter.

Joe Kinnear last season described Taylor as one of the best full-backs he has worked with and this campaign he is proving an equally useful left-sided midfielder.

The Hatters boss has been so far thwarted in his attempts to sign a natural left-winger but Taylor, who is currently playing in front of the experienced Marvin Johnson, could prove more than an emergency stop-gap. His two goals earned the visitors a 2-2 draw at bottom club Exeter despite Paul Hughes' harsh sending off on 46 minutes.

Hughes was given his marching order for two minor bookable offences, leaving the Hatters with just 10 men for almost the entire second-half.

Lee Mansell was also no more than a passenger for the last 15 minutes after tearing a calf muscle but being forced to continue because Kinnear had made all three of his substitutions. Those replacements included Andrew Fotiadis, who an angry Kinnear

withdrew after just 14 minutes as a substitute because of his lack of a challenge in the build-up to Exeter's second-half equaliser.

The Hatters started the game quite slowly but could have gone ahead on 18 minutes when home keeper Arjan van Heusden kept out a close range header from former Exeter defender Richard Dryden after Taylor's left-wing free-kick.

Exeter took the lead 11 minutes later when lone target man Steve Flack capitalised on a misjudgment by fit-again Russell Perrett.

The Hatters centre-back failed to make contact with an attempted header and Flack collected the ball before bearing down on goal and rifling into the bottom corner.

Luton levelled the scores on 35 minutes when Taylor drilled a low left-footed effort from 15 yards inside van Heusden's near post after Matthew Spring and Carl Griffiths both had shots blocked.

Hughes picked up his first yellow

MATTHEW TAYLOR'S display left Joe Kinnear purring. The Hatters boss said: "He did exceptionally well. I've been finding it difficult to find somebody with pace on the left but he's got it and uses it to beat people. He's also getting more confidence to get into the box and on the end of things."

low card moments later for an innocuous foul. The ex-Chelsea and Southampton midfielder was then sent off by referee Brian Curson seconds after the restart despite appearing to win the ball fairly with a strong challenge on Flack.

But Luton's 10 men rose to the challenge and took the lead on 53 minutes. Stuart Douglas, who was preferred to Steve Howard in Kinnear's starting line-up, hit a perfect right-wing cross to the far post where the charging Taylor sent an excellent diving header past the helpless van Heusden.

Numerical advantage then

matchfacts

EXETER CITY 2 LUTON TOWN 2

● **EXETER CITY:** Arjan van Heusden, Graeme Power, Martin Barlow, Geoff Breslan (Gary Birch, 74), Steve Flack, Barry McConnell, Alex Watson, Jamie Campbell, Glenn Cronin (Andy Roscoe, 60), Christian Roberts (Reinier Moor, 89), Lee Zabek. Subs not used: Andy Walker, Chris Curran.

● **HATTERS:** Carl Emberson, Emmerson Boyce, Russell Perrett, Richard Dryden, Marvin Johnson, Paul Hughes, Lee Mansell, Matthew Spring, Matthew Taylor, Stuart Douglas (Andrew Fotiadis, 56, Peter Holmes 70), Carl Griffiths (Liam George, 57). Subs not used: Mark Ovendale, Steve Howard.

● **Shots on target:** Exeter 6, Luton 5.

● **Off target:** Exeter 7, Luton 1.

● **Corners:** Exeter 7, Luton 1.

● **Referee:** Brian Curson.

● **Top Hatter:** Matthew Taylor – always a danger.

began to tell with Martin Barlow firing over a glorious chance and Flack hitting the bar before Exeter equalised in bizarre fashion. A right-wing cross was met by Emmerson Boyce but his clearance cannoned off Mansell and into Emberson's bottom corner.

It was the second needlessly conceded goal of the afternoon and Fotiadis was withdrawn moments later with Kinnear feeling he should have made a better attempt to cut out the cross. Mansell then tore a calf muscle and was pushed upfield to play as a striker.

Luton almost went back in front despite their problems when Taylor's raid down the left on 79 minutes ended in a firm cross that met the head of substitute Liam George and crashed against the crossbar.

But Exeter should have won the match in the last 10 minutes, only for a lack of penalty box composure to deny them during a series of farcical goalmouth scrambles.



Joe Kinnear's verdict

“It was a decent point considering we finished the game with nine men when Lee Mansell got injured, but I was not happy again with the manner in which we gave the goals away. There was another

own goal and the first one was an error by Russell Perrett when he tried to head back to the keeper. He could have dealt with that better but he did really well in the second-half.”