

Seasiders earn rave review on opening night

DIVISION TWO

Tuesday 14/08/02 Attendance: 6,377 Half time 2-1

BLACKPOOL ▶ **5**
LUTON TOWN ▶ **2**



mins 1st HALF

5 **GOAL!** Spring corner, Howard heads in
18 **GOAL!** Clarke scores from corner
23 **GOAL!** Clarke again at the back post
28 Bullock beats three men but shoots just wide
35 Crowe great shot, one-handed Barnes save
45 Dalglish chip hits bar

mins 2nd HALF

64 **GOAL!** Taylor shoots home with first touch
70 **GOAL!** Thorpe scores with back post header
76 Taylor through but shoots wide
78 **GOAL!** Dalglish finishes the 'piece de resistance'
82 Dalglish left-foot from 30-yards just wide
90 **GOAL!** Taylor rounds off glorious evening

7 Barnes - Solid but not too much to do really

7 Grayson - Got forward and looked good

7 Jaszczun - Especially effective in the second half

8 P Clarke - Not a bad night for the newcomer

7 C Clarke - Looked comfortable, and very classy on the ball

9 Bullock - Back to his best, gave the Luton defence a torrid time

8 Southern - Excellent lung-bursting performance

8 Wellens - Fourth goal summed up his game - class

7 Hills - A threat throughout the second half

8 Dalglish - Very impressive, just a pity the chip didn't go in

7 Walker - Frustrated but played his part
SUBBED 63 BOOKED 43

8 Taylor - Not much more a sub can do
SUB 63

O'Kane - sub not used

Hughes - sub not used

Theoklitos - sub not used

Collins - sub not used

LUTON

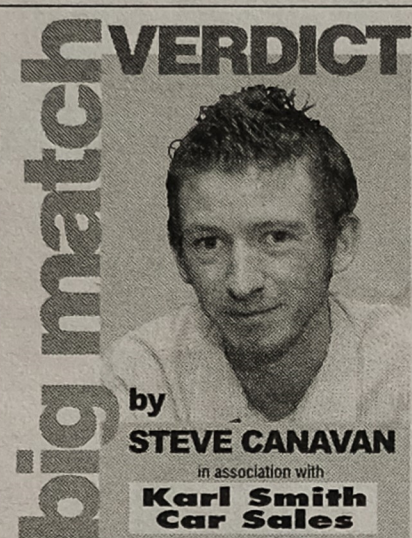
Emberson, Neilson (Boyce 28), Spring (Fotiadis 85), Nicholls (cap), Thorpe, Coyne, Brkovic, Howard, Holmes (Crowe 28), Bayliss, Kimble. **Subs not used:** Perrett, Robinson.

Referee: Mark Clattenburg
(Chester-le-Street)

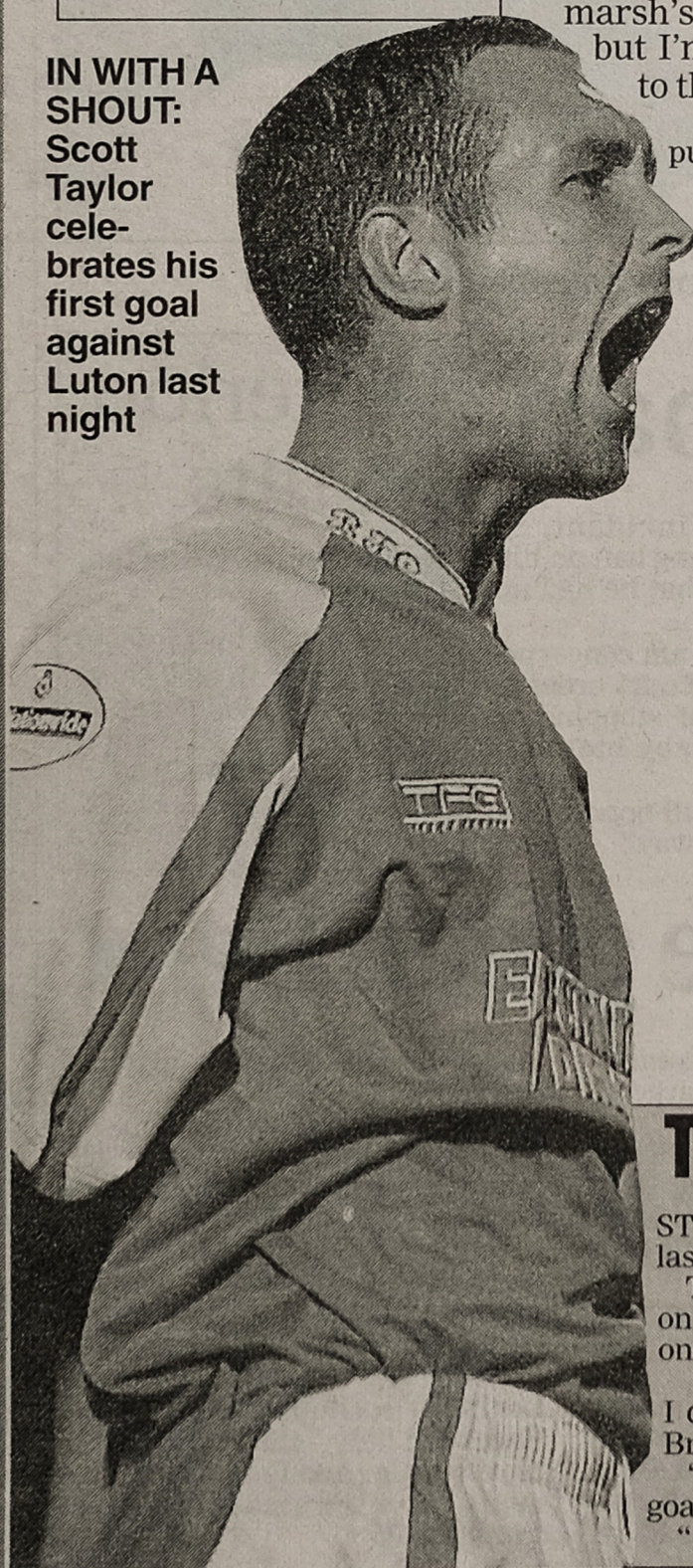
Next match: Blackpool v Swindon Town
(Nationwide Division Two), Saturday 17/08/02, 3pm



THE OLD ONE-TWO: Peter Clarke beats despairing keeper Carl Emberson to score his first goal at Bloomfield Road ...



IN WITH A SHOUT:
Scott Taylor celebrates his first goal against Luton last night



02/03

HATTERS

A MAN sitting in front of me turned to his mate at the final whistle, shook his head and muttered: "Superb".

Of course, there's a chance he could have been talking about Alan Titchmarsh's performance on Groundforce but I'm pretty sure he was referring to the match.

And there's really no better way to put it.

After a distinctly dodgy opening, (which showed Pool's defensive lapses are still alive and well, Steve McMahon's side were simply stunning, turning in a final 20 minutes so devastatingly good it had Luton wishing they'd missed out on promotion.

All five goals were good but let's skip straight to the fourth. What a corker.

As McMahon hinted afterwards, if Man United or Liverpool had scored it, the goal would have been fawned over by the likes of Alan Hansen and Mark Lawrenson for years to come.

The whole move - which involved about 20 passes - is too long to describe, so let's cut to Martin Bullock, on the right, spreading the ball across field to John Hills.

He linked up with Scott Taylor before delivering a perfect pass to the feet of Richie Wellens, bursting into the box.

Wellens did his trademark foot over the ball trick to take out the defender, drew the keeper and



MAKING UP FOR LOST TIME: Scott Taylor finds the net within a minute of joining the action

pulled it back to Paul Dalglish who rammed the ball in from six yards to score on his home debut.

It all happened in seconds, it was football at its best and it sent the crowd wild.

Wellens ran one way to be engulfed by the fans; a delighted Dalglish went the other to an equally rapturous reception.

A great moment ...but there were plenty of others as well.

Peter Clarke, who last scored 18 months ago in an England under-18 international, netted twice, a feat matched by substitute Scott Taylor, who responded in the best possible manner to being left out.

Taylor deserves special praise. He was probably Pool's best player in pre-season, and although he didn't have a great game at Bristol he changed the shape of last night's match.

He arrived on the pitch on 63 minutes, scored in the 64th

The perfect response in just 58 seconds

STRIKER Scott Taylor was dropped to the bench last night but he fired the ideal riposte.

The Pool striker scored two goals after coming on as a second half substitute, his first just 58 seconds after he walked onto the pitch.

"I was obviously disappointed to be left out but I didn't think I played too well on Saturday at Bristol, so perhaps that's why," he said.

"But to come on up front last night and get two goals was great.

"I could have had a hat-trick but the keeper

came out, and although I managed to dink it over him the ball unfortunately ran away.

"The support from the crowd was brilliant. Even on the bench in the first half there was no moaning and groaning when we went a goal down. They kept cheering and supporting, and that helped us turn it round.

"I'm looking forward to Swindon on Saturday and hopefully, if I'm selected, I can grab another goal."

and fans would love an encore



... and then adds his second from another corner by Richie Wellens

Pictures: ROB LOCK

IN TATTERS



NO FIRST NIGHT NERVES: Paul Dalglish scores the fantastic fourth on his home debut

and was booked in the 65th – not bad going by anyone's standard.

He linked up superbly with the impressive Dalglish, took both his goals well and, with a bit more luck, could have had a hat-trick.

"I enjoyed it," the striker said, "and luckily I got a couple of goals." There was no luck about it and Taylor is now on his way to his season's target of 15.

It was a cracking night all round. The crowd was only 6,300 but the supporters were so noisy it sounded full.

Early on, though, it did threaten to go a bit pear-shaped.

Hatters striker Steve Howard – top scorer in Division Three last season with 24 goals – was given an acre of space to head in Matthew Spring's corner with barely five minutes on the clock.

Pool were playing poorly at this stage and, with four new summer signings in the team, they were taking time to gel.

On 18 minutes, though, it started to come right.

A short corner (someone in front of me groaned as it was taken – he wanted it knocked in first time) was eventually whipped in by Wellens and Peter Clarke, standing six yards out, lashed it into the net. The same supporter jumped to his feet cheering.

Five minutes later, the Seasiders were in front. Wellens' corner was flicked on by Richard Walker and there was Clarke again to nod it home at the back post.

"I didn't really know what to do. It's been so long since I scored," he said.

The only worry is that on this form the on-loan Clarke, along with fellow Scouser Keith Southern, will be called back to Everton – a fear heightened by the fact that David Moyes was watching his two players have blinders from the Bloomfield Road directors box.

Moyes must have been impressed and so were the crowd. The North Stand drummer put

in a performance that even Keith Moon would have admired and the fans erupted into a chorus of "Stand up if you hate Bristol" – and even though my Aunt Patsy lives there, after Saturday it's fair comment.

Pool piled on the pressure. Bullock was superb all night on the right, while Wellens was dictating things in the middle, helped by the energetic and extremely impressive Southern, reminiscent at times of Steven Gerrard.

Luton were so rattled Joe Kinneir threw on two substitutes just 28 minutes in.

It didn't make any difference, though, and the only surprise was that the first half ended without more goals, though Dalglish did his best, hitting the bar with a glorious 30-yard chip.

The second period was scrappy for a while but Taylor sorted things out when he produced a sublime left-shot finish with his first touch after coming on, hav-

Nationwide Football League, Division Two

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Swindon	2	2	0	0	7	3	6
Cardiff	2	2	0	0	5	2	6
Wigan	2	2	0	0	5	2	6
Brentford	2	2	0	0	3	0	6
Tranmere	2	1	1	0	5	2	4
Notts County	2	1	1	0	4	1	4
QPR	2	1	1	0	4	2	4
Colchester	2	1	1	0	2	1	4
Blackpool	2	1	0	1	5	4	3
Bristol City	2	1	0	1	2	1	3
Mansfield	2	1	0	1	6	6	3
Plymouth	2	1	0	1	5	5	3
Peterborough	2	1	0	1	3	3	3
Oldham	2	1	0	1	2	2	3
Northampton	2	0	2	0	2	2	2
Wycombe	2	0	2	0	2	2	2
Stockport	2	0	1	1	1	2	1
Barnsley	2	0	1	1	2	4	1
Cheltenham	2	0	1	1	1	3	1
Crewe	2	0	1	1	1	4	1
Huddersfield	2	0	0	2	1	4	0
Luton	2	0	0	2	4	8	0
Chesterfield	2	0	0	2	3	7	0
Port Vale	2	0	0	2	2	7	0

ing been played in by a fine pass from Dalglish.

Luton fought back briefly, Tony Thorpe (who else?) heading in a deep cross from the man with the weirdest surname in soccer – the vowel-defying Ahmet Brkovic.

But that just angered the Seasiders, who stepped up a gear and scored that wonderful fourth before Taylor grabbed his second in injury time, lashing in Dalglish's cross to make it five.

"That's entertainment that was," smiled McMahon, possibly revealing he's a fan of The Jam. "We gave away a couple of sloppy goals. I am absolutely delighted to score five at home and you won't see a better goal than our fourth all season."

"I didn't count the passes but there were plenty and it was a very special."

"Even I love watching us when we play like that."

He'll love it even more if Pool do the same on Saturday – against his old club Swindon.



They give me a Dickie fit at times

I THOUGHT at times we defended poorly. The first goal was bad defending by Chris Clarke.

You know the way they play – it's the Wimbledon way. They put it in the box and put us under pressure but we coped.

It was disappointing that we didn't make it more comfortable, especially at 3-1.

Luton's second goal is back post and Simon Grayson should be old and wise and experienced enough to expect it. It gave them a little bit of hope.

But we got the fourth and you won't see a better goal all season. If Man United had scored that, it would have been goal of the season. It was special.

I told the lads that it's brilliant to watch going forward but they give me a bit of a Dickie fit at times defending.

But in general I was delighted with the football we played and I always think it is a pleasure to watch us when we're on form. I'd rather play that way than any other way.

Superb

We worked for everything. It was scrappy at times but you are going to get that because Luton like to mix it up at times.

But to score five at home and create as well is great.

It was superb, especially after being rocked back on our heels by going a goal down.

We did marvellous to keep going and I thought a number of players were excellent tonight.

I brought Scott on because I thought his pace would worry them. You get credit when it goes right; you get criticised when it goes wrong.

I thought Richard Walker didn't hold the ball up as well as he can. They were strong down the centre of defence but down the flanks they couldn't live with us and that is why I wanted Taylor on. It was a dream goal for him.

I just love the way we play when we play properly. We work on defending but when individuals switch off we pay dearly.

If we can cut that out we are a quality team.