

# CREWE ALEXANDRA

2002/2003



Fair Play Award winners – 2001/2002



**v Luton Town**  
29th October 2002  
Alexandra Stadium  
KICK-OFF 7.45pm

## DAVID WRIGHT 'MR ADAPTABLE'

KIT SUPPLIERS



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## v LUTON TOWN

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\* reflections on the week

## Coming Back Down With A Bump

**OUR LAST HOME GAME AGAINST PLYMOUTH BOUGHT US ALL BACK DOWN TO EARTH WITH A BUMP. THANKFULLY A HOST OF OUR NEAREST RIVALS AT THE TOP OF THE TABLE ALSO DROPPED POINTS - BUT THAT SURPRISING HOME DEFEAT TO PAUL STURROCK'S SIDE PROVES THAT EVERY GAME IN THE SECOND DIVISION IS GOING TO BE TOUGH. THE PILGRIMS WERE A WELL-ORGANISED OUTFIT AND SOMEHOW MANAGED TO HOLD ON TO WHAT THEY HAD THANKS TO A FINE INDIVIDUAL GOAL FROM DAVID NORRIS.**

Despite having the majority of possession in the second-half we just couldn't find that equaliser that surely would have altered the whole complexion of the game.

It seemed we saved all our goals for poor old Mansfield Town instead. After putting five past them in August, we thought that it be noticeably different in our LDV Vans Trophy clash at a rainy Field Mill. We were wrong with Rob

Hulse netting a hat-trick in a fine 4-0 win. Rodney Jack scored the other in another excellent team performance.

Here is some reaction from Dario Gradi concerning those rather contrasting games.

### PLYMOUTH ARGYLE

"I didn't think we played that badly and we certainly had the lions share of possession in the second half. They were dangerous in the first-half but never really had the same threat in the second half.

"I told the players at half-time to move the ball more and to their credit they did that and created some decent chances. In the end it came down to them hitting the post and seeing it go in and us hitting the post and seeing it come out.

"I think this proves that it isn't going to be easy in this division but I think the players knew that. Maybe it shows that we aren't as good as we thought we were. There is not a lot fundamentally wrong with the team, but

we just need to iron out a few things on the training ground.

"Plymouth defended very well and maybe we had a few players, who were below-par.

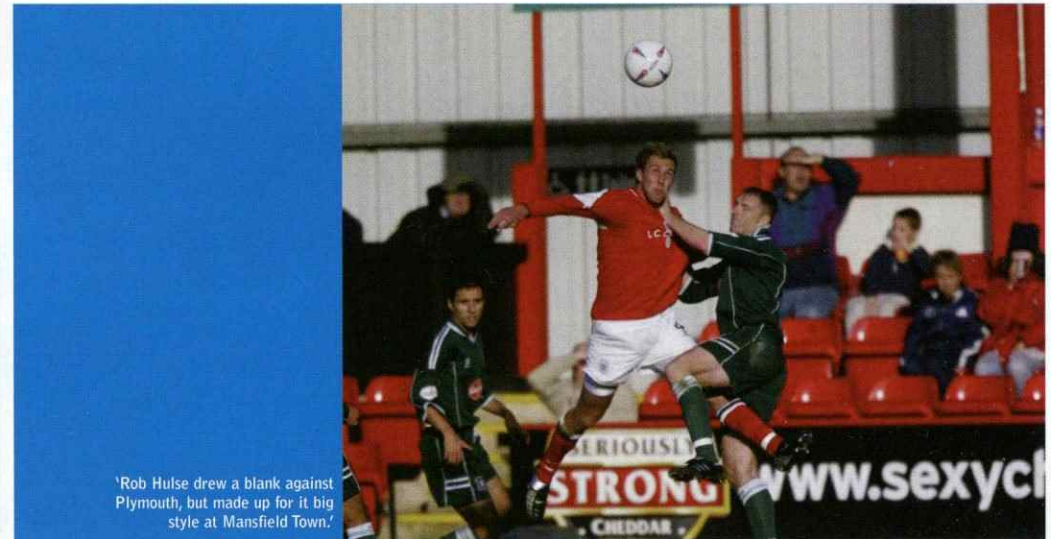
### MANSFIELD TOWN

"We were much more clinical in front of goal and we could have done with one of those finishes against Plymouth!

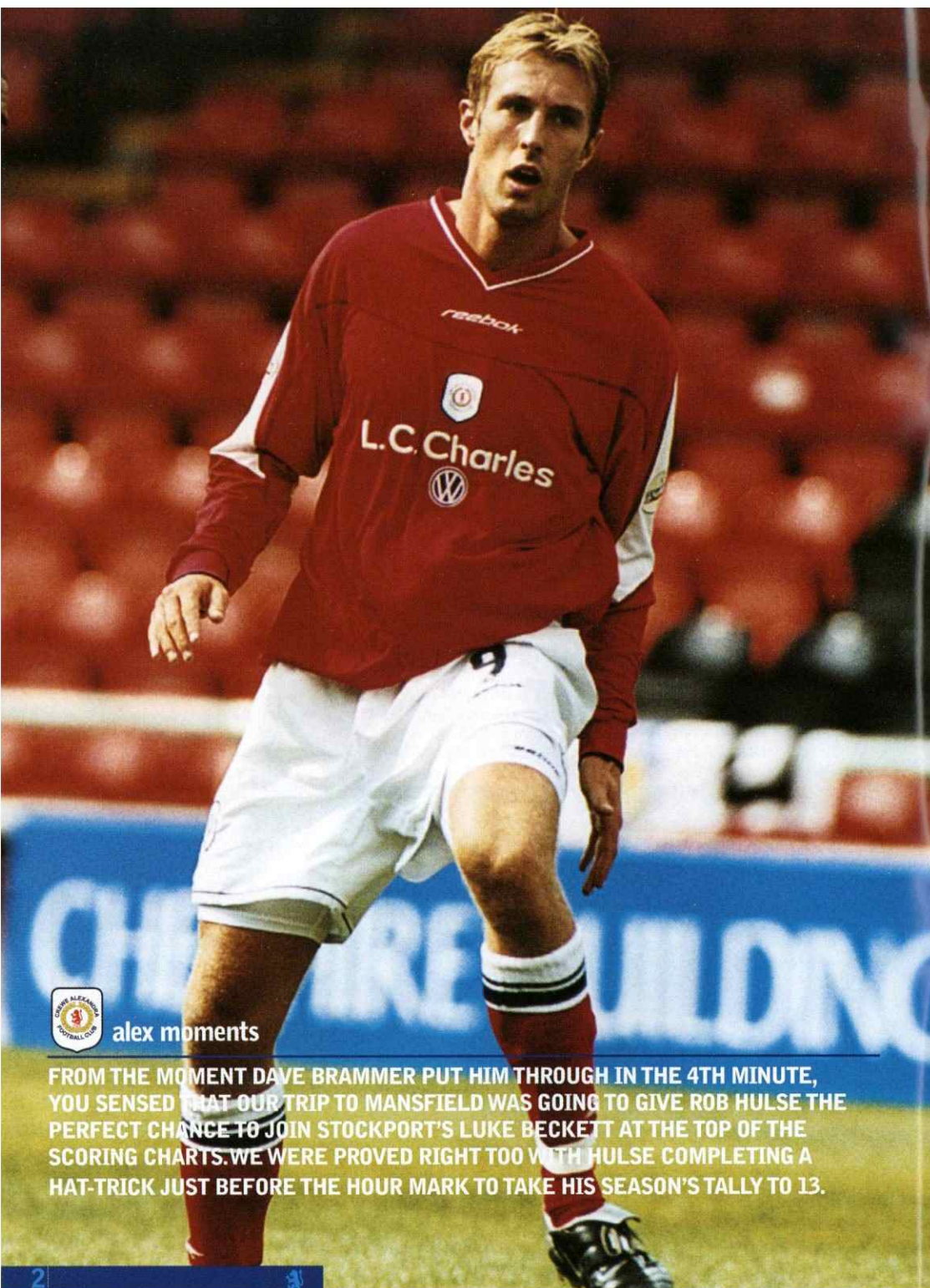
"I thought the attitude and work-rate of the players was superb and we scored some excellent goals.

"I've told the players that it was a job well done here because it was a difficult game because we were expected to win the game after the last time we came here. We had a terrific start and finished our chances well.

"Rob Hulse always works hard for us and he deserved his hat-trick. He listens to the criticism better and is always trying to improve as a player. Good luck to him because he has a super attitude."



'Rob Hulse drew a blank against Plymouth, but made up for it big style at Mansfield Town.'



### alex moments

**FROM THE MOMENT DAVE BRAMMER PUT HIM THROUGH IN THE 4TH MINUTE, YOU SENSED THAT OUR TRIP TO MANSFIELD WAS GOING TO GIVE ROB HULSE THE PERFECT CHANCE TO JOIN STOCKPORT'S LUKE BECKETT AT THE TOP OF THE SCORING CHARTS. WE WERE PROVED RIGHT TOO WITH HULSE COMPLETING A HAT-TRICK JUST BEFORE THE HOUR MARK TO TAKE HIS SEASON'S TALLY TO 13.**



## \* meet the opposition



### Luton Town

**THE DELIGHT OF WINNING PROMOTION FROM DIVISION THREE LAST SEASON WAS JUST ONE MORE CHAPTER IN A SERIES OF UPS AND DOWNS THAT LUTON TOWN HAVE EXPERIENCED IN THEIR HISTORY.**

The Hatters have enjoyed life at the very top, and suffered the indignity of twice tumbling all the way from the highest division to the lowest.

They became the first club to sink from top division to bottom, and back all the way up again, in 1974, and no doubt the clubs supporters are hoping that they can repeat that act again after hauling themselves from football's basement last season.

Luton spent ten years in the top flight of English football in the 80's and early 90's and won the Littlewoods Cup (now the Worthington Cup) in 1988 by beating Arsenal at Wembley Stadium, but they then just missed the formation of the Premier League in August 1992, after suffering relegation three months earlier.

From there the club suffered a decline, which culminated in being placed into the hands of the receivers in the summer of 1999.

Like so many clubs though, Luton emerged stronger from their dice with extinction as the return of former director Mike Watson-Challis, guided the club out of trouble and had the vision to appoint former Wimbledon manager Joe Kinnear as manager in February 2001.

Kinnear had spent many successful seasons in charge of the Dons, until his reign was ended by a bout of bad health, which forced him to take a short break from the game.

He couldn't save the Hatters from relegation that year though, but on the day demotion was confirmed he promised the Luton fans "We'll be promoted in 12 months time."

Those were brave words from a man only in charge for a few months, but Kinnear delivered on his promise last season as he guided his team into second place behind Plymouth Argyle.

Club records tumbled on the way, 30 league victories, 12 wins on the trot, 15 away from home and 97 points accrued.

It was a wonderful season for the former top-flight club and many tipped the Hatters as promotion candidates this time around, but in the early weeks of the season Luton struggled at the higher level.

Four straight defeats in August suggested a tough time ahead for Kinnear and his players.

An opening day reversal against Peterborough United (2-3) and then away defeats at Blackpool (2-5) and Plymouth (1-2) were followed by a second home reversal at the hands of Barnsley (2-3) left the Hatters level bottom with winless Port Vale.

Since then though things have improved dramatically, as the Hatters have embarked on a run of 10 league games with just one defeat, going into Saturday's clash at home to league leaders Wigan Athletic.

A hard earned point from a 0-0 draw at Ninian Park against Cardiff City kicked things off and the first victory followed at home to Chesterfield thanks to goals from Russell Perrett, Dean Crowe and Steve Howard.

Next came draws away at Brentford and at home to Notts County and, although things looked to have taken a turn for the worse once more when Mansfield won 3-2 at Kenilworth Road, 5 wins in a row up to Saturday have sent Kinnear's boys charging up the table.

An injury time winner from Howard gave the Hatters an excellent 1-0 win against Huddersfield at the McAlpine Stadium and a week later he was on target again along with Andrew Fotiadis and Steve Robinson as Swindon were easily dismissed 3-0 at the Kenilworth Stadium.

Next came a 3-2 away win at Stockport County with Mathew Spring bagging a brace in a 3-2 triumph, before Cheltenham (h) and Oldham Athletic (a) were beaten 2-1.



In the cups Luton fans will no doubt have enjoyed their giant killing of local neighbours and rivals Watford in the first round of the Worthington Cup.

Nearly 15,000 people were at Vicarage Road that night, and most left unhappy as Spring and Howard wrote their names into Luton folklore by striking in a 2-1 triumph.

There involvement in the competition was ended in front of nearly 21,000 spectators at Villa Park as Dion Dublin (2) and Ulises De La Cruz struck in a 3-0 win for Graham Taylor's side.

Last week meanwhile, in the LDV Vans Trophy, Luton progressed to the next round in the southern section of the draw, as a young side defeated Conference side Woking 2-0.

So the formbook is looking good for Luton coming into this game. 6 wins out of 7 in all competitions ahead of the weekend, means that Luton are one of the form teams in the Division and therefore sure to pose a real threat this afternoon.

Having said that though Plymouth arrived for our last home game bottom of the form table without a win in 8, and yet still left South Cheshire with all three points! Who knows what that means, probably that the formbook should be thrown away!!!

## Luton Town

### CEDRIC BERTHELIN – KEEPER

With injuries to fellow goalkeepers Carl Emberson (neck) and Mark Overdale (hip), Frenchman Berthelin has been called into the first team after organically impressing boss Joe Kinnear whilst on trial. The tall and confident keeper arrived in this country via Lens and French Second Division side Valence. Cedric never made a first-team start for Lens, but he has made a steady start to his career in England.

### CHRIS COYNE – DEFENDER

The centre-half was playing for Perth Soccer Club when he was selected for the Australian under-17 squad for the 1994 youth World Cup, and came to the notice of Harry Redknapp, then manager of West Ham. Coyne signed for the Hammers as a teenager, but Premiership chances were few and far between, and after loan spells at Brentford and Southend, Coyne went to Dundee. A £50,000 cheque persuaded the Scottish Premier League club to let the defender move to Kenilworth Road in September 2001.



Russell Perrett

### RUSSELL PERRETT – DEFENDER

Having helped Cardiff City win promotion to the Second Division in May 2001, the big central defender was the victim of a huge recruitment drive at Ninian Park and Perrett knew his first team future at Cardiff might be limited and the Bluebirds allowed Perrett to join Luton a few days before last season began. It proved to be a shrewd acquisition with Perrett an automatic choice in the promotion-winning team. His career had begun with non-league Lymington before he went to neighbouring Portsmouth in 1995 and then to Cardiff four years later.

### AARON SKELTON – DEFENDER

It was a case of going "back home" when the defender, born a few miles from Luton, signed for the Hatters for the second time in July 2000. He had joined the club as a schoolboy, and worked his way up through the ranks to be on the fringe of the league team when he was 19. But a succession of injuries sidelined him for long periods and a change of club, on a free transfer to Colchester in the summer of 1997, brought a much-needed change of luck. His contract there expired in the summer of 2001, and although Colchester wanted him to sign a new deal, the invitation to move back to his first club, on a Bosman, was too good to turn down.

### SOL DAVIS – DEFENDER

It was a huge disappointment to Swindon Town, and a coup for Luton, when the highly-rated defender decided to leave the County Ground after his contract expired at the end of last season. Swindon boss Andy King failed in attempts to persuade him to sign a new deal, and Luton manager Joe Kinnear nipped in to add the tough-tackling left back to his squad. Davis had joined Swindon as a trainee in the summer of 1998, and made rapid progress through the youth and reserve teams to become a regular in the Nationwide League.

### AHMET BRKOVIC – MIDFIELDER

Believing a move would be good for his career, the midfield playmaker refused new terms at Leyton Orient in the summer of 2001, to join Luton on a Bosman free transfer. Orient had signed him on a free from HNK Dubrovnik in the autumn of 1999, and he became a regular in their league squad. He played a valuable role, mainly on the right flank, to help Luton return to the Second Division at the first attempt.

### MATTHEW SPRING – MIDFIELDER

There was relief all round when the competitive midfielder accepted a new contract at Kenilworth Road at the end of last season. Spring has been at Luton since he was a schoolboy, and was a driving force in the side which reached the FA Youth Cup semi-finals in 1997. After a league debut when still only 17, he soon became a regular in Luton's Second Division team, and his first 100 appearances were clocked up while he was only 20. He was influential in the Luton team that won promotion last season.



Aaron Skelton

## Star Man



### STEVE HOWARD - FORWARD

Joe Kinnear swooped on deadline day in March 2001 to prise the tall striker away from Northampton for £50,000, and the deal looks a bigger bargain with every game. Howard had cost the Cobblers a then record club fee of £120,000 when they recruited him from Hartlepool two years previously. He helped Northampton win promotion to Division Two, and they grudgingly accepted a third of their

asking price for a player who would have left for nothing soon afterwards under the Bosman ruling. Howard exploded into action in his first full season with Luton, and his 24 goals made him the Third Division's top league marksman, and played a major part in Luton's drive to promotion. Not surprisingly, the fans voted him their player of the year.

### ANDREW FOTIADIS – FORWARD

A local discovery, Fotiadis chose to stay at school to gain GCSE A-levels before being a full-time soccer professional. He won England Schools caps at under-15 and under-18 level, and developed into an old-fashioned centre-forward, with good physique and power. But injuries and fierce competition for places restricted him to only one first team start last season, in the LDV Vans Trophy at Dagenham.

### DEAN CROWE – FORWARD

The striker was signed on loan from

Stoke City in September 2001 when an injury crisis decimated the Hatters squad. He made an immediate impact, scoring on his debut, at Plymouth, and was soon signed on a permanent deal. His goals helped Luton win promotion last season. Crowe began his career as a YTS boy at Stoke, but found it difficult to hold down a regular place in their league side after a change of management and an influx of Scandinavian players. He was made available by Stoke after loan spells at Northampton and Bury.

## LUTON TOWN statistics

**Ground:**  
Kenilworth Road

**Manager:**  
Joe Kinnear

**Honours:**  
Football League Second Division  
Winners: 1981-82  
Football League Fourth Division  
Champions: 1967-68  
FA Cup: Runners up 1959  
League Cup: Winners 1988.

**Youngest Player:**  
Mike O'Hara, 16 years 32 days  
Vs Stoke City, October 1960.

**Oldest Player:**  
Trevor Peake 39 years 17 days

**Most League Appearances:**  
Bob Morton, 495 between 1948-1964

**Most Capped Players:**  
Mal Donaghy, 58 (91) Northern Ireland

**Record Goalscorer:**  
243 league – Gordon Turner

**Record Win:**  
12-0 Division 4 v Bristol Rovers  
13th April 1936.

**Record Defeat:**  
0-9 v Small Heath, Division Two.  
12th November 1898

**Last Season:**  
2nd in Division Three





'Julian Watts.'

**CREWE ALEXANDRA WERE HELD TO A 0-0 SECOND DIVISION DRAW ON LUTON TOWN'S LAST LEAGUE VISIT TO GRESTY ROAD ON 15TH MARCH 1997. CREWE HAD CRASHED TO A 6-0 DEFEAT AT LUTON THREE MONTHS EARLIER BUT BEAT THE HATTERS 4-3 ON AGGREGATE IN THAT SEASON'S PLAY-OFF SEMI-FINALS EN ROUTE TO PROMOTION. CREWE'S LAST LEAGUE VICTORY AT HOME TO LUTON WAS 2-0 IN JANUARY 1969 WITH GOALS FROM KEITH STOTT AND ALAN TARBUCK. NEITHER SIDE HAS MANAGED TO SECURE A LEAGUE WIN AT THE OTHER'S GROUND.**

**NIGERIAN ACE**

Crewe Alexandra's Nigerian international central defender Efe Sodje previously played for Luton Town. Moving to Kenilworth Road from Macclesfield Town in August 1999, he briefly partnered former Crewe loanee Julian Watts in Luton's defence and made nine Second Division appearances prior to joining Colchester United in March 2000. He joined Crewe four months later and was an influential figure as Dario Gradi's side took Everton to an FA Cup fifth round replay last season, also featuring for his country in this summer's World Cup finals.

**LOAN SPELL**

Former Crewe Alexandra midfielder Kevin Street had a loan spell at Luton Town during last season. Signing professional at Gresty Road in July 1996, he scored on his League debut to clinch Crewe's 2-1 victory at home to Tranmere Rovers in September 1997 and helped to consolidate First Division status. He joined Luton on loan in November 2001 but was injured in his first full appearance for the Hatters in their 4-1 defeat at Macclesfield and returned to the Alex before moving to Northwich Victoria this summer.

**LEADING MARKSMAN**

One-time Crewe Alexandra striker Ron Futcher was Luton Town's leading

marksman in two consecutive seasons. Moving to Kenilworth Road from Chester in a joint deal with his twin brother Paul in June 1974, he gained top-flight experience with Luton and netted 40 goals in 120 League games before following Paul to Manchester City in August 1978. He joined Crewe from Burnley in July 1991 and helped the Alex to qualify for the Fourth Division play-offs in 1991-92, scoring four times in 21 League outings prior to joining Boston United in July 1992.

**EVER-PRESENT**

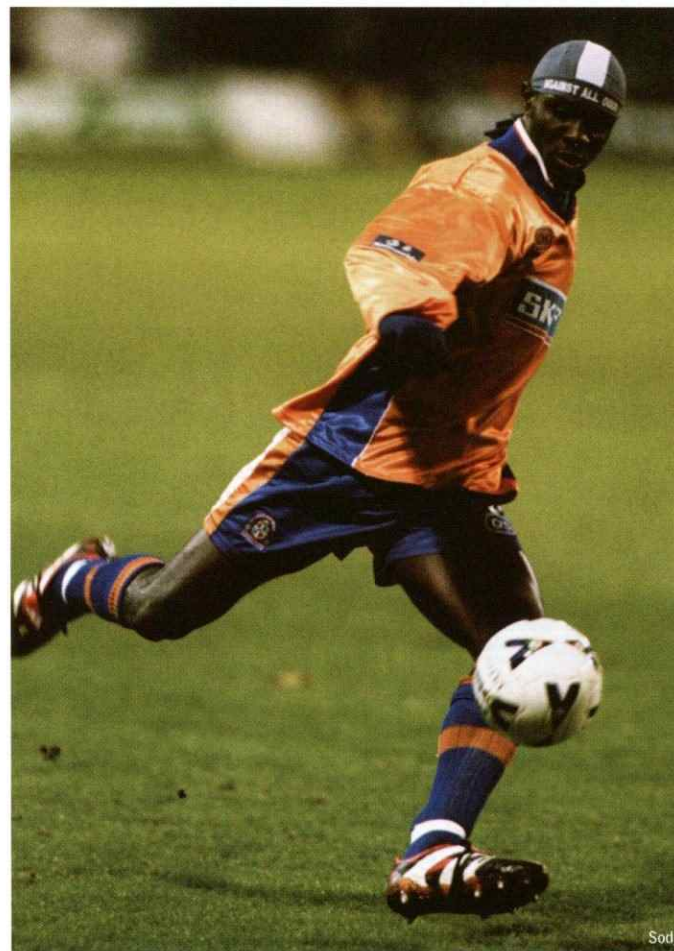
Former Crewe Alexandra striker Mike Newell was ever-present and top scorer for Luton Town in 1986-87. Moving to Gresty Road from Liverpool in September 1983, he made three consecutive Fourth Division appearances for Crewe prior to joining Wigan Athletic a month later. The England U-21 international joined Luton for £100,000 in January 1986 and helped them to beat Liverpool in the 1986-87 FA Cup third round, netting 18 goals in 63 First Division games before moving to Leicester City for a record £350,000 in September 1987. He briefly rejoined Crewe from Aberdeen in March 1999.

**MUCH-TRAVELLED**

Much-travelled midfielder Barry Silkman played for both Luton Town and Crewe Alexandra during his career. Moving to Luton on loan from Plymouth Argyle in February 1979, he helped them to clinch a 2-1 win at home to Blackburn Rovers on his debut and made two further Second Division appearances while at Kenilworth Road. He joined Crewe on a non-contract basis from Southend United in September 1986 and helped to secure that month's 1-1 draw against Swansea City, then featured as substitute in the 1-1 draw at Cardiff City a week later.

**CUP HERO**

One-time Luton Town inside-forward Billy Stark scored as Crewe Alexandra triumphed 2-1 at Chelsea in the 1960-61 FA Cup third round. Moving to Gresty Road from Glasgow Rangers in



Sodje

**LEAGUE RECORD AGAINST LUTON TOWN**

	P	W	D	L	F	A
HOME	6	5	1	0	10	2
AWAY	6	0	1	5	4	21
TOTAL	12	5	2	5	14	23

August 1960, he netted 13 goals in 39 Fourth Division games for Crewe prior to joining Carlisle United for £3,000 in December 1961. He joined Luton from Colchester United in exchange for Ted

Phillips in September 1965 and briefly partnered John O'Rourke in their attack, scoring four times in ten League outings for this evening's opponents before moving to Chesterfield in July 1966.

**TOP HATTERS**

Former Crewe Alexandra winger Tony Pounder played top-flight football with Luton Town. Moving to Kenilworth Road from Atlas Sports in December 1955, he made his First Division debut in Luton's 1-0 win at home to Portsmouth four months later and played two further League games the following season prior to joining Coventry City in June 1957. He joined Crewe in December 1957 and created numerous goalscoring chances for Bert Llewellyn, netting six goals in 29 Fourth Division outings while at Gresty Road before moving to Yeovil Town in July 1959.

**WING WIZARD**

Winger Jim Mackey played for both Luton Town and Crewe Alexandra during the inter-war era. Moving to Kenilworth Road from Lincoln City in July 1924, he contested a first-team slot with Syd Hoar and Billy Thirlaway and his solitary goal in ten Third Division (South) games came in Luton's 2-1 defeat at Brighton six months later. He joined Crewe on a free transfer in July 1925 and scored four times in 35 Third Division (North) outings while at Gresty Road before moving to Football League new-boys Torquay United in June 1927.

**RELEGATION BATTLE**

Crewe Alexandra's former loanee central defender Julian Watts featured in Luton Town's 2000-01 relegation battle. Moving to Crewe on loan from Leicester City in August 1997, he made five consecutive First Division appearances while at Gresty Road. He joined Luton on a free transfer from Bristol City in August 1999 and netted eight goals in 73 League outings for this evening's visitors before moving to Australian side Northern Spirit in July 2001. The likes of Gerry Jones and Ian Rutherford have also played for both clubs.

Crewe Alexandra v Luton Town

Location <http://www.soccer-stats.com/headtohead>

SP For/Against Goalscoring Home/Away Top Scorer Form Guide Discipline Attendances Swings/Margins Miscellaneous SP



### Clubs Comparison

Goals Scored	13
Shots	13
Headers	7
Volleys	3
Penalties	2
Free Kicks	0
Own Goals	0

### Where Goals Scored

5	8
10	14
6	9

### Where Goals Conceded

2	6
8	10
0	6



### 2002-2003 Figures

20	Players Used	23
7	Clean Sheets	5
4	Failed to Score	2
4	Goals scored from...	
1	Corners	4
4	Free Kicks	2
0	Goals conceded from...	
0	Corners	1
2	Free Kicks	1

### Form Guide - Last 6

4	Won	5
0	Drawn	1
2	Lost	0
11	For	13
5	Against	7
12	Points	15
6	Goal Difference	6

WWWLWL Sequence LWWWWW

### Yellow & Red Cards

8	Yellow	29
0	Red	1

### 2002-2003 Attendances

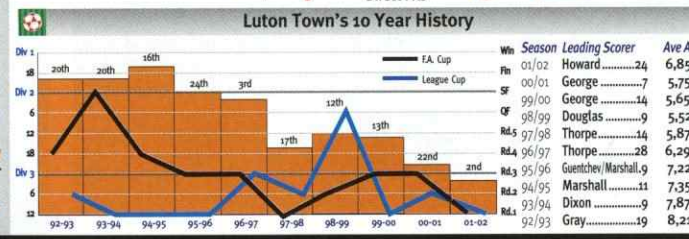
43,895	Railwaymen	45,450	Hatters
7,683	Aggregate	7,860	Highest
5,138	Lowest	6,004	Average
6,271	Average	6,493	% of Capacity
62		65	

### 10 Year Record

45.5	among 92 clubs	53.5
3,833	Avg Att 1993	7,878
6,271	Avg Att 2002	6,493
64	+ / - %	-18

### Top League Scorers

9	League Goals	7
13	Games Played	13
0.69	Lge Goals/Game	0.54
4	Points Gained	3
3	Scoring Run	4
0	Hat-Tricks	0
3	Close Range	3
4	Inside Area	3
2	Long Range	1
6	Shots	2
1	Headers	4
2	Volleys	1
0	Penalties	0
0	Direct FKs	0



### Swings

CA	Games Won from:	LT
0	3 Goals Down	0
0	2 Goals Down	0
1	1 Goal Down	3
0	3 Goals Up	0
0	2 Goals Up	0
1	1 Goal Up	1

### Drawn from:

0	3 Goals Down	0
0	2 Goals Down	1
0	1 Goal Down	0
0	3 Goals Up	0
0	2 Goals Up	0
2	1 Goal Up	0

### Margins

2	Won by 1 Gl	4
3	Won by 2 Gl	0
1	Won by 3 Gl	2
0	Won by 4 Gl	0
1	Won by 5+ Gl	0
2	Lost by 1 Gl	4
0	Lost by 2 Gl	0
1	Lost by 3 Gl	1
0	Lost by 4 Gl	0
0	Lost by 5+ Gl	0

### Misc stats

4	Highest Pos.	10
20	Lowest Pos.	24
2	Winning Run	5
8	Unbeaten Run	5
0	Losing Run	4
2	No Win Run	5

# SP DIVISION 2 STATS SP

due to print deadlines stats don't include weekend's games

### WINNING MARGINS

Games won by:	1 gl	2 gls	3 gls	4+
Bristol City	2	3	3	1
Wigan	2	6	1	0
Cardiff	6	2	0	0
Oldham	4	2	0	2
QPR	1	5	1	1
Blackpool	4	1	2	0
Chesterfield	5	1	0	1
Crewe	2	3	1	1
Brentford	4	2	0	0
Luton	4	0	2	0
Tranmere	4	1	1	0
Plymouth	4	1	0	0
Port Vale	5	0	0	0
Stockport	3	1	1	0
Wycombe	3	1	1	0
Barnsley	4	0	0	0
Colchester	3	1	0	0
Huddersfield	2	1	1	0
Northampton	2	1	1	0
Mansfield	2	0	0	1
Notts County	1	0	2	0
Peterborough	1	1	0	1
Swindon	0	3	0	0
Cheltenham	0	2	0	0

### FULL GROUNDS - ATTENDANCES

Club	Aggregate	% Capacity
Cheltenham	36,849	71
Blackpool	49,965	70
Northampton	35,929	67
Luton	45,450	65
Cardiff	90,097	64
QPR	84,984	63
Crewe	43,895	62
Wycombe	42,404	61
Chesterfield	27,183	55
Bristol City	77,974	52
Mansfield	34,113	49
Plymouth	69,277	49
Brentford	42,673	48
Oldham	45,561	48

### CLEAN SHEETS

Gms without conceding	Lge Pos
Oldham	8
Chesterfield	8
Crewe	7
Wigan	6
Bristol City	6
Blackpool	6
Brentford	6
Huddersfield	6
Cardiff	5
QPR	5
Luton	5
Stockport	4
Northampton	4
Colchester	4
Plymouth	3
Tranmere	3
Notts County	3
Peterborough	3
Wycombe	2
Barnsley	2
Swindon	2
Cheltenham	2
Mansfield	1

### FAILED TO SCORE

Gms without scoring	Lge Pos
Mansfield	8
Swindon	8
Peterborough	7
Colchester	6
Huddersfield	6
Northampton	6
Tranmere	6
Notts County	5
Chesterfield	5
Blackpool	5
Luton	4
Stockport	4
Wycombe	4
Crewe	4
Bristol City	4
Cheltenham	3
Plymouth	3
Brentford	3
Oldham	3
Wigan	3
Luton	2
QPR	2
Cardiff	2
Port Vale	1

### SEQUENCES:

#### CONSECUTIVE WINS:

Oldham	6
Luton	5
Port Vale	5
QPR	5
Bristol City	4
Plymouth	4
Wigan	4
Cardiff	3
Chesterfield	3
Stockport	3

#### UNDEFEATED RUN:

Cardiff	10
Crewe	8
Wigan	8
Blackpool	7
Brentford	7
Oldham	7
Plymouth	6
QPR	6

#### LOSING STREAK:

Swindon	6
Colchester	5
Mansfield	5
Peterborough	5
Luton	4
Port Vale	4
Wycombe	4
Cheltenham	3
Huddersfield	3

#### NO WINS:

Cheltenham	8
Notts County	8
Plymouth	8
Colchester	7
Mansfield	7
Swindon	7
Peterborough	6

### HEADERS CONCEDED

Mansfield	11
Brentford	7
Blackpool	7
Barnsley	5
Blackpool	5
Chesterfield	5
Huddersfield	5
Oldham	5
Port Vale	5
Tranmere	5
Cheltenham	4
Colchester	4
Luton	4

### PENALTIES SCORED

Brentford	4
Wycombe	4
Blackpool	2
Chesterfield	2
Luton	2
Oldham	2
Port Vale	2
Swindon	2
Wigan	2

### GOALS FROM INSIDE 6 YARD BOX

SCORED	Gl	Total	%	CONCEDED	Gl	Total	%
Wigan	11	26	42	Mansfield	15	37	41
Stockport	8	16	50	Barnsley	11	23	48
Wycombe	8	19	42	Port Vale	8	23	35
Blackpool	8	20	40	Notts County	7	21	33
Luton	8	25	32	Tranmere	7	22	32
Peterborough	7	17	41	Brentford	6	17	35
Barnsley	6	14	43	Peterborough	6	18	33
Tranmere	6	14	43	Cheltenham	6	22	27
Notts County	6	19	32	Luton	6	22	27
Port Vale	6	19	32				
QPR	6	26	23				

### GOALS PER GAME - THE MOST CONSISTENT STRIKERS

Player	Rob Hulst	Clyde Wijnhard	Robert Earnshaw	Luke Beckett	Nathan Ellington	Scott Murray	Steven Howard	Kevin Gallen	Andy Liddell	Sam Parkin
minimum of 4 goals scored	1	8	9	11	8	9	7	7	7	5
Lge Gl:	1	2	3	1	3	0	1	1	0	0
WC Gl:	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
LDV:	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Gl/Game:	0.87	0.83	0.75	0.75	0.69	0.60	0.53	0.53	0.50	0.46

## Alex Claim Scottish Life Performance Award

**CREWE ALEXANDRA CLAIMED THEIR SECOND PERFORMANCE OF THE WEEK AWARD FOR THE SEASON WITH A CONVINCING 4-1 WIN AT STOCKPORT COUNTY. THE SPECIALLY ENGRAVED CRYSTAL FOOTBALL NOW HAS PRIDE OF PLACE IN THE CLUB'S TROPHY CABINET ALONGSIDE THE SIMILAR AWARD WE CLAIMED FOR OUR 5-0 WIN AT MANSFIELD EARLIER IN THE SEASON.**

Two goals from Rob Hulse and one each from Kenny Lunt and Steve Jones secured another three points for the Cheshire side and in the process earned Crewe their fourth Scottish Life Performance of the week award in recent seasons. The club also claimed the award twice as a First Division club following emphatic away wins at Bolton and West Brom.

Crewe's 4-1 victory was selected by the LMA's Performance of the week panel consisting of Sir Alex Ferguson, Dave Bassett, Barry Fry, George Burley and Howard Wilkinson – as the outstanding effort from the league programme.

Captain Dave Brammer received the award from chairman John Bowler before the Plymouth Argyle game. Lightning did strike twice though with the Alex unable to follow their awarding winning display with a victory at home. This time Plymouth held firm to record a 1-0 victory to prevent the Alex from going second in the table.



Captain Dave Brammer receives the Performance of the week award from chairman John Bowler following our 4-1 demolition job at Stockport.

### 'They Said It'



"You look at players like Rodney Jack, who has cost a lot of money in the past, and Rob Hulse, who is attracting a lot of attention, and they are better players than us."

"In the first half we looked like schoolboys against them, because we were poor and didn't make challenges and gave them so much respect."

- An honest Mansfield boss Stuart Watkiss after watching his side lose 4-0



"Hulse deserved his hat-trick because he has a superb attitude on the training pitch and during the game. You know whatever happens that Rob Hulse will always work hard for the team. I'm delighted for him."

- Dario on new match ball collector Rob Hulse



"All our hard work on the training pitch has paid off. All the speculation about Ipswich has not effected me or the players and we did well to contain Crewe this afternoon, especially in the second half when they threw everything at us."

- Plymouth boss Paul Sturrock delighted with his team efforts last week.

## Dario Swoops For Stag White

**CREWE ALEXANDRA MANAGER DARIO GRADI LAST WEEK MADE A SURPRISE LOAN SWOOP FOR MANSFIELD TOWN STRIKER ANDY WHITE, WHICH ALSO SAW CREWE FAVOURITE COLIN LITTLE MOVE IN THE OPPOSITE DIRECTION TO FIELD MILL.**

White, 20, impressed Dario in our recent LDV Vans Trophy match, with an encouraging display having come off the bench at half time to replace the injured Colin Larkin, and he joins the club on a one month loan.

The 6ft 4in youngster almost immediately changed the pattern of the game at Field Mill and the fact that the Stags caused problems for the Alex for the first 15 minutes of the second period was almost solely down to him.

Straight after coming on to the pitch, the tall and skilful striker hit one effort into the side netting after good work inside the box, and he also forced Ademole Bankole into save a few minutes later, with a decent shot from the edge of the area.

So far this season White has started seven league games for Mansfield and scored twice, and is seen as a hot prospect for the future.

He began his career in non-league football with Hucknall Town, before switching to the pro game, and starred for Mansfield's reserves last year, signing a two-year extension to his original one-year contract after completing his A-levels.

Meanwhile, moving in the opposite direction, is 29-year-old Colin Little, who has been made available for loan over the past couple of weeks.

Little, Crewe's longest serving player and the only surviving member of the promotion winning squad of 1997, has expressed his desire to play first team football, having failed to break into Dario Gradi's first eleven over the past

few weeks.

With Rob Hulse and Rodney Jack in devastating form up front and the likes of Steve Jones and Dean Ashton also ahead of him in the pecking order, Little, with just one-year left on his contract, is looking to play games in order to impress.

Dario agreed to let the Manchester based player go on the list, knowing that youngsters such as James Robinson, former Liverpool man John Miles and new boy White may now be able to get their chance in the side.

Little also moves on a one month loan deal.



## Question and Answer – ANDY WHITE



It must have come as bit of surprised to learn that Crewe were interested in taking you on loan?

Most definitely. It

happened really quickly and came as a bit of a shock because you would never think that a manager would be interested in taking a player from a side that has just been beaten 4-0 at home. The gaffer called me into the office and the next thing I knew I was coming to Crewe on loan.

You have made seven appearances for the Stags this season, but we were surprised to see you on the bench last week?

I picked up a slight injury against QPR and the manager has stuck with Larkin and Christie since then. I thought I did okay when I came on against Crewe for the first 15 minutes or so, but the third goal killed us off. We lost our way after that, but that has been the story of our season really. We failed to build on our pressure.

It has been a tough time at Mansfield this season?

After winning promotion last season we have had a bit of a shock coming up against the likes of Crewe, Oldham and QPR. We have had the odd result but the squad is stretched at the moment both in terms of numbers and finances.

You must be delighted to be joining a club chasing promotion for a month then?

I knew that I'm not going to be playing many games for Crewe but I've come here to get some specialist coaching from the staff at Crewe. The facilities are fantastic and I've come here to try and improve myself as a player. It is a great opportunity for me.

### BULLET POINTS:

• Crewe sign 20-year-old Andy White on loan from Mansfield Town. The former A' level student joins the club on a month's loan. Crewe's only survivor from our previous promotion, Colin Little moves the other way and will spend the next month at Field Mill.

• Crewe win their second performance of the week award for the 4-1 win at Stockport. They go and slip up at home to Plymouth. David Vaughan is running and twisting again but is still some 3 weeks away from kicking a ball again.

## Hulse Joins The Hat-Trick Club

ROB HULSE CELEBRATED HIS 23RD BIRTHDAY IN STYLE LAST WEEK BY BECOMING THE FIRST CREWE PLAYER TO SCORE A HAT-TRICK FOR NEARLY FOUR YEARS AT MANSFIELD TOWN. HIS WELL-TAKEN GOALS IN THE LDV VANS TROPHY TIE AT FIELD MILL EASED CREWE INTO THE SECOND ROUND OF THE COMPETITION AND PLACED HULSE TO THE TOP OF THE SECOND DIVISION SCORING CHARTS. AT THE TIME OF WRITING, HULSE HAS FOUND THE NET ON 13 OCCASIONS THIS SEASON, EXACTLY THE SAME AMOUNT HE SCORED IN THE WHOLE OF THE LAST CAMPAIGN.

But it was his hat-trick last Tuesday evening that has propelled his name into the clubs record books. It was the first treble completed by a Crewe player since Colin Little in April 1998. Super Col, who was loaned out to Mansfield Town last week netted our last hat-trick against Bradford City in Crewe's debut season in Division One.

Hulse joins the likes of Ashley Ward, David Platt, Tony Naylor and Craig Hignett as players who have scored hat-trick's for Crewe over the past ten years or so.

Naylor, now of Cheltenham Town holds the club record for the most goals scored in a single match. He scored a whopping five against Colchester United back in April 1993. Hignett went close once though, scoring four in an FA Cup tie against Wrexham back in November 1992. The club legend Terry Harkin currently holds the record for the most League goals in a season. The Derry-born striker scored 35 goals during the 1964-65 season as Crewe finished 10th in the Old Fourth Division.

Our congratulations go to local lad Rob Hulse.



'Hulse completed his hat-trick with a goal-of-the-season contender. Right foot volley. No messing!'

## Hot-Shots – Last 10 Trebles For Crewe

Colin Little Vs Bradford City. (League) April 1998. Won 5-0.

Rob Edwards Vs Wrexham. (League) March 1996. Won 3-2

Ashley Ward Vs Chester City (Auto Windscreens) November 1994. Won 6-0

Ashley Ward Vs Gresley Rovers (FA Cup) November 1994. Won 7-1

Tony Naylor Vs Hereford United (League) October 1993. Won 6-0

Tony Naylor Vs Walsall (League) May 1993. Won 4-2

Craig Hignett Vs Wrexham (FA Cup) November 1992. Won 6-1

Rob Edwards Vs Barnet (League) August 1991. Won 7-4.

Darren Foreman Vs Walsall (League) April 1990. Won 3-1

David Platt Vs Rochdale (League). March 1987. Won 5-1



'Platty is absolutely delighted to hear that he makes our top ten...just!'

### BULLET POINTS:

- Rob Hulse becomes the first Crewe player to net a hat-trick since Super Col in April 1998 when he finishes off a treble at Mansfield in the LDV Vans Trophy. Barnsley dump Crewe out of the Youth Cup at the first hurdle with Tom Baker's only goal proving the difference.

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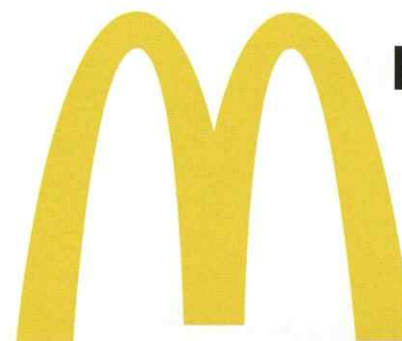
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\* numbers game



### Dean Ashton

- 18 THE NAME OF GOALS DEAN ASHTON HAS SCORED FOR CREWE ALEXANDRA.
- 83 THE YEAR DEAN ASHTON WAS BORN IN SWINDON. HE CELEBRATES HIS NEXT BIRTHDAY ON THE 24TH OF NEXT MONTH.
- 60 NUMBER OF LEAGUE APPEARANCES, DEANO HAS MADE FOR CREWE.
- 3 THE NUMBER OF GOALS, THE YOUNG GOAL-GETTER SCORED FOR ENGLAND UNDER -19S DURING THE EUROPEAN CHAMPIONSHIP IN THE SUMMER. ASHTON SCORED IN EACH OF THE GROUP GAMES AGAINST GERMANY, IRELAND AND BELGIUM.
- 10 THE NUMBER OF GAMES, CREWE HAVE WON WHEN ASHTON HAS BEEN ON THE SCORE SHEET.
- 36 ASHTON'S ORIGINAL SQUAD NUMBER. HE NOW WEARS NUMBER 10.
- 1,874 THE OFFICIAL ATTENDANCE AT MANSFIELD TOWN'S FIELD MILL STADIUM.
- 125 THE NUMBER OF CREWE SUPPORTERS, WHO BRAVED THE WEATHER TO WATCH US WIN 4-0
- 16 DEAN'S AGE WHEN HE MADE HIS FIRST-TEAM DEBUT AGAINST GILLINGHAM. HE IS THE THIRD YOUNGEST IN THE CLUB'S HISTORY BEHIND STEVE WALTERS AND DANNY MURPHY.



A WARM WELCOME TO THE ALEXANDRA STADIUM EVERYONE. I HOPE YOU ENJOY THE GAME AND HAVE A SAFE JOURNEY HOME. THERE ARE NUMEROUS EVENTS GOING ON AT THE ALEXANDRA SOCCER CENTRE, SO IF YOU WANT TO GET YOURSELF FIT PLAYING THE GAME YOU LOVE PLEASE CONTACT THE STAFF ON 01270 216682. REGARDLESS OF YOUR ABILITY, YOU CAN HAVE HOURS OF FUN USING OUR EXCELLENT FACILITIES.

I hope that the disappointing 1-0 defeat to Plymouth Argyle didn't spoil the day for members of the Alex Junior Squad who attended the last home match. They were packed in behind the Railway End goal wearing their exclusive red hats for the occasion. If you are interested in joining the Alex Junior Squad please contact us at the Centre.



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In the need to activate any of the contingency and evacuation plans, which are held at the Stadium, the club stewards and police are trained in the operation of these plans. Would all spectators listen carefully and follow the instructions they are given.

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The Club stewards are on duty at the Stadium to oversee the safety of all spectators, and are initial contact should you need any help or advice. Crewe Alexandra hope you enjoy your visit to the Alexandra Stadium and enjoy the occasion in a safe environment.

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## Who Would Be The First Name On Your Team Sheet?

**BEST PLAYER WAS A TOSS-UP BETWEEN CLAYTON OR ROB. WE'VE LEAKED SO FEW GOALS THIS TERM, WHICH IS GREAT - THERE IS IN MY VIEW NO DOUBT THAT A LOT (I RECOGNISE NOT ALL) OF THE CREDIT MUST GO TO OUR BIG STOPPER.**

However, (and away at Wycombe proved this), in Hulsey we have a striker in form who is always likely to give you that edge should the opposition manage to sneak one.

**MIKE R. BROWN**

On the basis of this season's performances it would have to be Rob Hulsey. Obviously, it's a cliché that "one man doesn't make a team", but in all the games I have seen this time around there has been an occasional lapse, or lack of consistency in most of the players, which has been responsible for the reaction of some of the 'fair weather' fans.

It is not simply the fact that he has reached double figures already in the goal-scoring stakes. It is mainly that for 90 minutes he works like a Trojan, is always available as an option for his colleagues and, perhaps most importantly, shows maturity under pressure that means that he doesn't react inappropriately when he gets stick from opposition defenders.

**PETER SMITH**

I think impressive Rob Hulsey would be first on my team sheet if I was the top man at THE ALEX. I know Dave Brammer is the Captain and gives his all for the team and is essential to the Alex but Rob Hulsey's goals are desperately needed if we are to gain promotion... but for me its the way he works 'tirelessly' for 90 minutes.

**CHRISTOPHER DOWNIE**

It has to be club captain Dave Brammer. Just look what happened last season to results and performances after

he got injured during the Everton game. If he had stayed fit, we would still be in Division 1.

**SIMON LAIRD**

At the moment Dario and his staff are in a 'predicament'. The team is playing well and all of the lads have stood up to be counted over the last few weeks. Despite the great performances last week of Kenny, Rodney, Robbie and Wright, I believe that the first name written on that team sheet will be our captain courageous Dave Brammer. Although he hasn't stood out as much as Kenny and Robbie over the last few fixtures, he has been the engine for us in the middle of the park, often doing that dirty work no-one likes to do, winning the hard balls and getting us going.

**PETER MAVROMMATIS**

Purely on performance choice, captain Dave Brammer would be my personal favourite. One of the reasons he is team skipper is because of his leadership, inspirational and hard-working qualities. Because of the very fact that he is captain would probably influence the management to make him their first choice. Based on last week's superb win, Kenny Lunt then becomes automatically first name on the team-sheet.

**RICHARD KIRKHAM.**

Has to be Dave Brammer. People talk about inspirational skippers and he is that. Even when he may be having a quiet game as one report stated 'he demands nothing less than perfection from those around him'.

He is the sort of player that we have missed over the past few years and I feel sure that had he not been injured at the end of last season we would have stayed up.

**JIM HOPPING**



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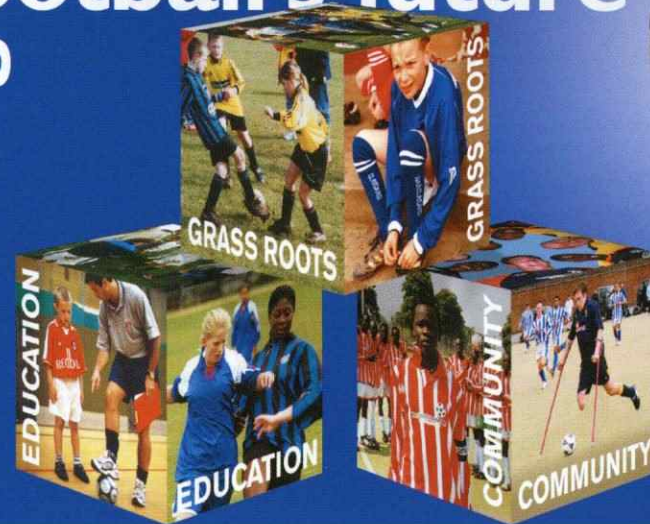
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**'IT IS ALSO BECOMING A FEATURE THAT PLAYERS HAVE BEEN ASKED TO TAKE WAGE CUTS'.**

**ONE PARTICULAR PHRASE HAS ALMOST BECOME COMMONPLACE DURING THE CURRENT SEASON, THAT OF A CLUB BEING 'PLACED IN ADMINISTRATION'. THIS HAS COME ABOUT DUE TO THE FINANCIAL SITUATION AT CLUBS IN VARIOUS LEVELS IN THE LEAGUE STRUCTURE. CUTBACKS BECOME AN AUTOMATIC TARGET AS SOON AS THAT TERM BECOMES OPERATIVE. NO-ONE IS SAFE, BE IT THE MANAGER, COACHING STAFF, OTHER BACKROOM STAFF AND INEVITABLY PLAYERS.**

It is also becoming a feature that players have been asked to take wage cuts. The effect of such moves cannot be seen on a level playing field as salary structures, based on their earnings will have shown an upward trend, and for some, the consequences can be such as to disrupt family life in one way or another.

Moving to the managerial front, once, which is always subject to change, then we have seen Jan Molby leaving Hull City and being succeeded by Peter Taylor. In the last year Taylor has done a fair amount of travelling, having been with Leicester City, Brighton and Hove Albion and now Hull City. He has now seen his new team win their first two games under his management.

Another casualty, possibly not so widely expected was the sacking of George Burley of Ipswich. He had done an excellent job at Portman Road, developing a successful side and within it various players who have gone on to further success at other clubs. Following their demotion from the Premier League at the end of last season, they have been finding life in Division One rather difficult. Although there has been some success in European fixtures, the same cannot be said about their league form. That defeat against bottom side Grimsby Town finally proved to be Burley's last game in charge. At the time of writing, Ipswich have still not named Burley's successor.

The fine imposed on Roy Keane of £150,000 may have been the most

severe punishment served by the Football Association, but when it is viewed in the light of the fact that it only amounts to two weeks salary, it makes one realise just how wealthy certain individual players are. There will be a great many players who will never earn £150,000 during the whole of their careers, let alone in two weeks!

Comparison between playing surfaces on which England played in their European Qualifying games against Slovakia and Macedonia cannot be accurately judged, but whatever the technical skills available for the Macedonia game because of injuries but possibly more worrying to clubs are the injuries to other players. Steve Gerrard with a hip injury meant that he had to miss the Premier League game against Leeds.

Terry Venable's Leeds side were unable to halt Liverpool, whose unbeaten run was extended to 10 games by virtue of that single goal win. Leeds on the other hand, remained on 13 points, having now lost three out of five home Premier League fixtures.

Our unbeaten run at home, since the initial game against Notts County came to an end with Plymouth Argyle winning by a single goal margin. Despite the pressure we put on the Pilgrims defence, especially in the second half, it managed to hold firm. Argyle have been very infrequent visitors to Crewe, and, prior to their last visit, the Alex had always managed to score at least one goal, either at home or away and never lost to them at Crewe. Both those records came to an untimely end. However, we could prevent them from gaining the double when we go to Home Park on Tuesday 18th March for the reverse fixture.



Jan Molby exits Hull City and is replaced by the much-travelled Peter Taylor.

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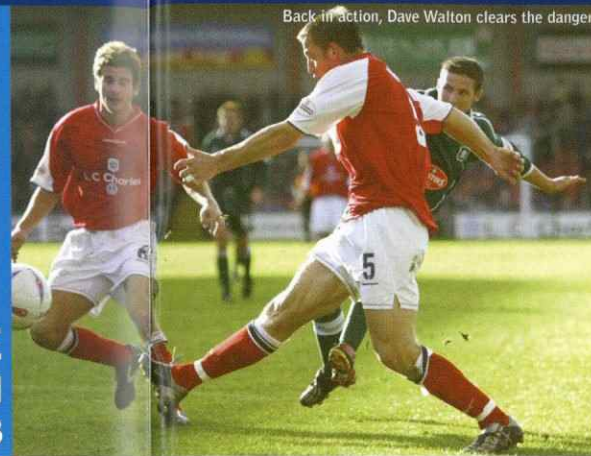
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Stephen Foster keeps Plymouth's Captain Paul Wotton at arms length.



Rodney Jack climbs highest to head towards the Plymouth Goal.



**NEIL SORVELL**



**THE BIZARRE JINX OF PICKING UP AWARDS STRUCK AGAIN. THE LAST TIME CREWE ALEXANDRA WON PERFORMANCE OF THE WEEK WE WERE HELD TO A GOALLESS HOME DRAW BY CHESTERFIELD. THIS TIME IT GOT EVEN WORSE WITH DAVID NORRIS, ON-LOAN FROM BOLTON, SCORING THE ONLY GOAL OF THE GAME TO GIVE PLYMOUTH A PRICELESS AWAY WIN. LET'S HOPE DARIO GRADI DOESN'T PICK UP THE MANAGER OF THE MONTH AWARD SOON!**

'Paul Sturrock boosted his chances of securing the Ipswich hot seat with a win at high flying Crewe'

'Loan signing David Norris hit the winner with a fierce 45th minute strike'

Sturrock played down the speculation though and said: 'It has been business as usual here. I don't think the rumours have unsettled anybody and the training was good this week.'

Crewe manager Dario Gradi said, 'We huffed and puffed, but didn't have the luck or skill to find a way through them.'

- THE SUN

'Plymouth manager Paul Sturrock breathed a sigh of relief after his side ended their nine game winless streak thanks to a goal from debutante David Norris'

Sturrock said 'That's much more like it. The performance showed what we are capable of when we all pull together.'

Dario said, 'We didn't play particularly badly and in the end we had enough chances to win.'

'You could bring it down to the fact that they had a shot which hit the post and went in, whereas we had a shot that hit the post and bounced out.'

- DAILY STAR

'Crewe boss Dario Gradi is beginning to think there is a curse on his side after David Norris scored the goal that gave Plymouth victory.'

'We have not had any luck. They had one shot and it went in, we had a lot of chances but couldn't score.'

- DAILY MIRROR

'Dario Gradi has ruled himself out of the running to replace Howard Wilkinson as the Football Association's technical director and why not? He is in the process of building yet another good young side at Gresty Road, one of numerous in his 19-plus years as boss. But Crewe slipped up against a Plymouth side, who had gone nine without a win. Crewe had won four of their five matches, but it was the away side who pounced decisively, when David Norris struck in off the post.'

- THE SUNDAY TIMES

'Just as we were beginning to get carried away. Performance of the week again after the comfortable demolition of Stockport seven days previously, it would surely take more than Plymouth to derail Dario Gradi and his side's accelerating bandwagon.'

Look more closely at the facts, though, and maybe you should have bettered on the generous odds for an away win on Saturday. Fact one Plymouth had not won in their eight previous outings before they headed on the long journey north.

Fact two: opposition boss Paul Sturrock has a reputation for producing well-organised, hard to beat teams and Crewe have already found the lesser forces of Cheltenham and Chesterfield hard to break down.'

- THE SENTINEL



'Shrewd Scot Sturrock inspired Pilgrims victory at Crewe.'

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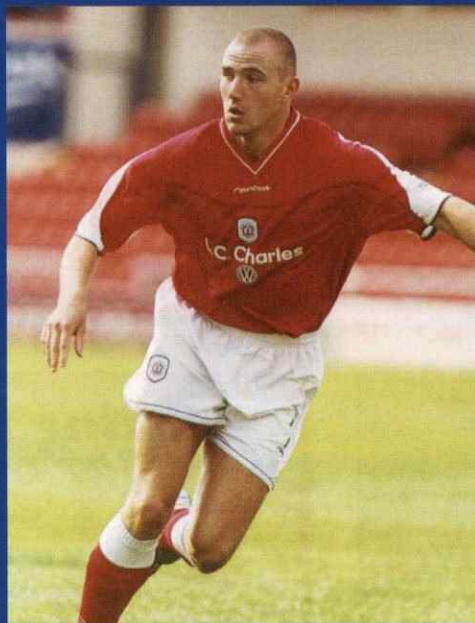
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# The Head Doorman



**ONE OF THE MOST PLEASING ASPECTS OF THIS SEASON HAS BEEN THE EMERGENCE OF DEFENDER RICHARD WALKER. AFTER WAITING PATIENTLY IN THE SHADOWS OF MORE SENIOR PROFESSIONALS FOR THE LAST COUPLE OF YEARS OR SO, WALKER HAS NOW GRABBED HIS OPPORTUNITY WITH BOTH HANDS AND HAS ESTABLISHED HIMSELF IN WHAT LOOKS LIKE BEING A SETTLED AND MORE IMPORTANTLY DEPENDABLE BACK FOUR.**

Despite this being his first full season at first-team level, the Staffordshire-born man mountain has been playing like an

old pro with 10 years experience under his belt. Former captain and mentor to many, Steve Macauley was such a player and was only allowed to leave the club for Rochdale due to the progression made by Walker and his fellow graduate Chris McCready. While McCready's chances to impose himself at this level have been halted by an untimely groin injury, Walker has seen off all-comers to remain at the centre of the Crewe defence.

Walker, who only turned 22 last month has done exceptionally well to establish himself alongside his close friend Stephen Foster, even more so when you consider that he was behind

the likes of Dave Walton, Efe Sodje, Foster and Sagi Burton at the start of the season.

Everyone at the club knew Walker had promise. He had come through the ranks alongside the likes of Lunt, Foster, Rob Hulse and David Wright, but had to wait longer for his chance to impress.

He was somewhat thrown in at the deep end too. If you remember, he made his full debut away to Preston North End in November 2000. To make matters even more unnerving was the fact that he was up against Dutch International Erik Meijer and the game was live on Sky Sports. Crewe may have lost the game 2-1 but Walker's assured display alongside Sodje raised his profile with the Crewe supporters and more importantly the management.

Walker had to wait (patiently again!) another five months to acquire another chance, but coming against the physical presence of Wimbledon's David Nielsen, Jason Euell and Mark Williams at Selhurst Park must have proved an invaluable experience.

After that outing he became somewhat the forgotten man at the club - but while the likes of Gareth Liddle failed to retain his fitness and push for a first-team place, the ambitious Walker continued to keep his head down and work hard for another opportunity. It duly arrived at the tail end of last season.

With Sodje away on International duty for Nigeria in March of this year, Walker's perseverance paid off with a place of the bench for a difficult trip to West Brom. With Crewe 4-1 down and struggling to contain the likes of Dobie and Dichio, Walker replaced the tiring Steve Macauley and from that moment on you knew that this would become a permanent arrangement. Dario was suitably impressed by Walker's contribution at the Hawthorns and knew that his towering centre-half had waited long enough for an opportunity.

Macauley's departure in the summer and Walton needing surgery on his troublesome knee, Walker made his first appearance of the season at home to

Colchester United in the third game of the new campaign. With Sagi Burton limping out of the contest prematurely because of an ankle injury, Walker hasn't really looked back and has now started every game expect the Plymouth one two weeks ago.

With Dave Walton now fit again; Walker knows that the challenge to keep his place has only just begun. With all his injuries problems, Walton is desperate to play but understandably Walker is rather reluctant to surrender his place in the side.

In all fairness, the Foster/ Walker partnership has been fairly solid all season and Walton will have to wrestle his way back in, but at the moment Dario seems pretty content to play his two Academy graduates at the back.

Walker's partnership with Foster first started developing in the club's Academy, where they first played together as 12 year-olds. He had been spotted playing against a Crewe Alexandra youth side in his beloved Stafford and was invited for a trial at the club by the watching Dario Gradi and Steve Holland.

After impressing in the trial, the youngster was invited to join the School of Excellence and has gone through the usual route of YTS schemes, youth teams and then the professional ranks. It is an experience that stays with the likeable Walker:

"Of course, you never really know if you are going to be awarded a professional contract and it is difficult to see players you have known for years being released. It was tough to see people you need totally destroyed by the news that they wouldn't be offered professional terms. - Says Richard.

"It is something that stays with me. It was a huge relief to be offered a professional contract but that is when the hard work really begins, because it is just the first step on a very demanding ladder."

Walker remains a very sensible and level-headed guy. He is an excellent communicator and possesses leadership qualities. Like many of the Academy

lads, who have been able to progress into the first-team there isn't anything flash about Richard Walker.

You always sense that he just wants to do his job and do it to the best of his ability. Of course it is still early to see if Walker will establish himself as a defender at this level or a level higher, but if a determination to succeed proves the difference then he will make it. No problem at all on that score.

"I'm settling in to playing at this level and it is an opportunity that I will not let go easily. I know a few of the players from the youth, the reserves and at training, so it hasn't been that much of a difficult transition, but I'm not getting too carried away."

Of course, one of those games has already produced a first senior goal for the youngster. Walker opened the floodgates at Mansfield back in sunny August, and he was absolutely delighted.

"I thought it would take another 20 games or so to score a goal because I've never been a prolific scorer, so to do it within my first five was very pleasing. Rodney did very well to head it back and I was in the right place to finish it off.

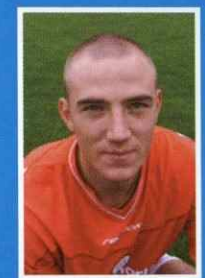
"I'm not really an eccentric person and didn't have a celebration sorted out or anything."

The Crewe fans affectionally knew Walker as the 'The Doorman' - that has now been enhanced to 'The Head Doorman' by the imaginative creators of nicknames. It tends to suit him perfectly. 'Thou Shall Not Pass' seems to be a good enough motto.

## Richard Walker

### VITAL STATISTICS

### THE LOW DOWN ON RICH WALKER



**BORN:**  
Stafford

**DATE OF BIRTH:**  
17 September 1980

**FORMER CLUBS:**  
Product of the Academy

**CREWE ALEXANDRA LEAGUE APPEARANCES:**  
15

**GOALS:**  
1

**DID YOU KNOW:**  
Richard Walker has had loan spells at Northwich and Halesowen



WIGAN ATHLETIC



They don't come much tougher in this league than Wigan Athletic away on November 2nd. With both sides jostling for positions at the top-of-the-table this really could be a six-pointer already! The Latics boss Paul Jewell has spent big and will be looking to gain promotion without the need for play-offs, especially after last year's disappointment. If you are planning to travel to the impressive JJB Stadium then it is pay on the gate. It will cost you £14 adults and £9 concessions to witness this top-of-the-table clash.

The club's supporters coach will be departing the Alex at 12.30pm and will cost you £7.50 if you are a season ticket holder or member or £8.50 if you are not.

VAUXHALL MOTORS



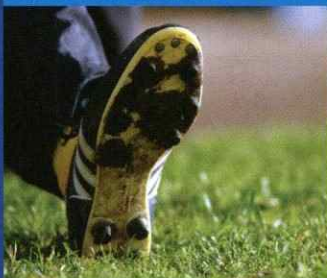
The current holders of the Cheshire Senior Cup (that's us) take on Vauxhall Motors of the Unibond Premier League in the quarter-final of this season's competition. The tie will take place at the Alexandra Stadium on Tuesday, 12th November and will cost you just £3 or £1 concessions to watch the action. It was a pretty good game in the last round too when Crewe had to fight back from two goals down against Altrincham.

FAMILY FUN DAYS



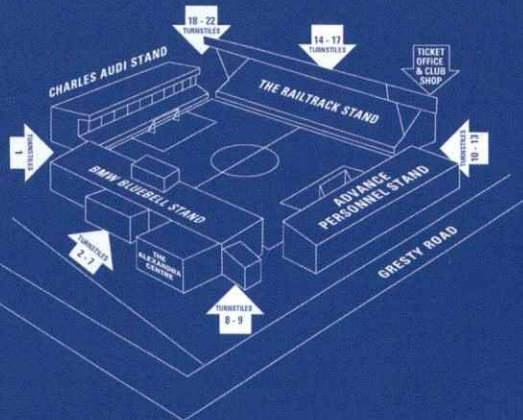
The club's family fun days have proved as popular as ever and the one for the visit of Plymouth was a sell-out. The good news is we will be planning more throughout the season and if you are interested in a further family fun day event please contact Elaine or Ed in the Ticket Office. The next family fun day will take place against Mansfield Town on News Years Day.

SPONSORING THE BOYS?



There is still an opportunity for you to sponsor the kit or boots of one of the Crewe squad this season. You can show your support for your favourite player by sponsoring his home (£150) or away kit (£100) or even his gleaming boots (£25) for the entire campaign. (Please check later on in the issue for those still available)

The offer also includes four tickets for a game of your choice and access to the Kinderton's Lounge. Please contact Bev Dyer in the Club Shop on 01270 213014 ext 101 or email [bdyer@crewealex.net](mailto:bdyer@crewealex.net) for more details



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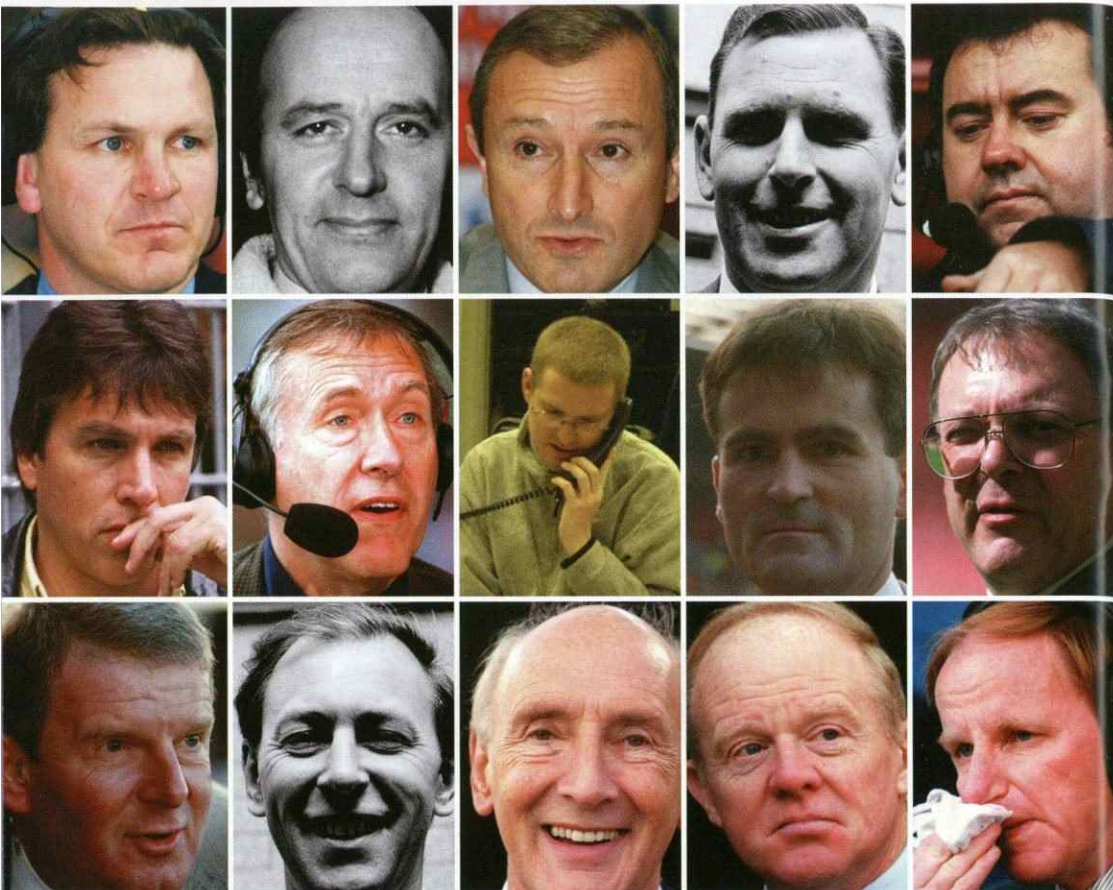
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**WITH THE RESULTS OF SATURDAY'S GAMES UNKNOWN AT THE TIME OF GOING TO PRESS, THE ONLY FIXTURES PLAYED SINCE THE LAST PROGRAMME ARE THE UNDER-19'S AND UNDER-17'S TRIPS TO BIRMINGHAM CITY IN THE FA PREMIER ACADEMY LEAGUE AND OF COURSE THE FA YOUTH CUP FIRST ROUND CLASH WITH BARNSELY AT THE ALEXANDRA STADIUM.**

In the league, both sides returned from the Midlands with decent results, the 19's drawing 0-0 and the 17's producing another superb display to win 3-1.

Again both sides were suffering with injuries, and both Neil Baker and Steve Holland had to play players from the lower age groups, but both can be happy with their sides results and more importantly performances. The goalscorers for the Under-17's were Andrew Bond, Nicky Maynard and Adam Warlow.

Last Wednesday night though came the big game, as the Under-18's, managed by Steve Holland, took on a

strong Barnsley side in the FA Youth Cup First Round.

Before the game Steve admitted that, with Premier League and Division One sides exempt until Round 2, this was probably the toughest first round draw imaginable, and so it proved as the lads slipped to a very narrow 1-0 defeat. The lively Tom Baker scoring the only goal of the evening in the 18th minute. 603 of you braved the weather to watch, what will hope, will be a few more future first team players.

Crewe lined up as follows Stuart Tomlinson, Ritchie Sutton, Paul Bignot, Gary Roberts (Adam Howard), Ryan Austin, Billy Jones, Craig Ball, Robert Hawthorne, Kyle Wilson, Nicky Maynard, Alex Brown

**Subs Not Used:** Mark Carrington, Craig Scowen (Gk), Rob Lloyd, Chris White, Adam Howard

It wasn't a vintage performance and although the Alex did make several goalscoring opportunities, Steve was disappointed at the end of the 90 minutes when he spoke to Crewe Alex World.



'Stuart Tomlinson only defeated by deflected effort against Barnsley'

**Question and Answer – STEVE HOLLAND**



**What are your thoughts on the game?**

Well disappointment is the word that springs immediately to mind. We had three or four good chances and did enough to win the game even playing the way we did. But players who you expect to do well in those situations didn't do so well.

**What about Barnsley's goal?**

Well it was poor from our point of view. I suppose all goals you concede are poor, because all goals are defendable, but some are more acceptable than others and so I was disappointed with that.

**The players didn't perform at their best today did they?**

I have the privilege to work with these players every day and see them play every week, and I know that there are many of them that can do much better than they did. It's easier to stomach a defeat when all the lads play well but less easy when they haven't played quite as well as they're capable.

**It was good to see a decent crowd inside the Stadium?**

I thought the crowd were really excellent. Not only did they turn up in the numbers that they did, but they were also really helpful to the lads on the pitch. It was the first time in front of a crowd for a lot of them, and we did start nervously, but the crowd really did help.

**It was a young side because of injuries though so we could do well again in next year's competition?**

Well I said that last year! Yes, it wasn't the team I'd have picked if everyone was fit, but I'm not going to harp on about that. But the players that played were still good enough, and so my thoughts are to try and improve the players that did play.

**Crewe Alexandra Academy Fixtures 2002/2003**

	UNDER 19		UNDER 17	
Sat 24 Aug	Aston Villa H	2-5	Aston Villa H	0-1
Sat 31 Aug	Coventry A	3-0	Coventry A	4-2
Sat 7 Sept	Blackburn A	1-4	Wolves H	0-2
Sat 14 Sept	Derby H	3-1	Manchester City A	1-3
Sat 21 Sept	Leeds A	1-1	Sheffield Utd A	0-0
Sat 28 Sept	Newcastle H	1-2	Birmingham H	2-2
Sat 5 Oct	Notts Forest A	0-3	Notts Forest A	4-1
Sat 12 Oct	Stoke City H	5-1		
Sat 19 Oct	Birmingham A	0-0	Birmingham A	3-1
Sat 26 Oct	Sheffield U H		Sheffield U H	
Sat 2 Nov	Everton A		Everton A	
Sat 9 Nov	Manchester U H		Manchester U H	
Sat 16 Nov	Liverpool A		Liverpool A	
Sat 23 Nov	Manchester City H		Manchester City H	
Sat 30 Nov				
Sat 7 Dec	Wolves A		Wolves A	
Sat 14 Dec	Sheffield U A			
Sat 11 Jan	Everton H		Everton H	
Sat 18 Jan	Manchester U A		Manchester U A	
Sat 25 Jan	Liverpool H		Liverpool H	
Sat 8 Feb	Sunderland A		Notts Forest H	
Sat 15 Feb	Bolton H		Derby H	
Sat 22 Feb	Huddersfield A		Bolton A	
Sat 1 Mar	Middlesborough H		Leeds H	
Sat 8 Mar	Manchester City A		Middlesborough A	
Sat 15 Mar	Wolves H			
Sat 22 Mar	Notts Forest H			
Sat 29 Mar	Stoke City A			
Sat 5 Apr	Birmingham H			



from the archives

BY HAROLD FINCH Club Historian

## Who Won The Race To 10 Goals?

**ROB HULSE, BY VIRTUE OF SCORING TWICE IN THE LEAGUE ENCOUNTER AT STOCKPORT, TOOK HIS TOTAL OF GOALS FOR THE SEASON TO DOUBLE FIGURES. AT THE TIME OF WRITING, ROB HAS SCORED 9 GOALS IN THE LEAGUE AND ONE IN THE WORTHINGTON CUP. IT HAD TAKEN HIM 13 GAMES TO DO SO, AN EXCELLENT START, BUT IT THEN POSED THE QUESTION – WHICH PLAYER HOLDS THE CLUB RECORD OF DOUBLE FIGURE GOALS IN THE LOWEST NUMBER OF GAMES.**

As any long standing supporter will appreciate, when you realise that Crewe have played league football from 1892/93, 1921/22 to 1938/39 and from 1946/47 to date and additional seasons in minor leagues etc, then the number of players who could have qualified is a large one.

No doubt several names would readily spring to mind, but it is extremely doubtful that anyone would have come up with the correct answer. It was achieved in season 1931/32 when Ralph Williams, who had joined Crewe from Cardiff City, managed a double figure tally of goals in only 6 games.

It started on the 29th August 1931 when Ralph scored once in a 3-0 home win over Wrexham to be followed by both in a 2-1 win at Stockport. Carlisle away, and he scored our only goal in a 2-1 defeat. A home fixture with Accrington Stanley saw him score a hat-trick in a 3-1 win on the 7th September. On the 12th September he scored again, just one in a 4-3 home win but it didn't count as Wigan Borough withdrew from the league in January 1932 and in consequence all records concerning that club were expunged.

He did not play in the games against Doncaster and Accrington but was back in the line-up for the home game against Southport, he failed to score on that occasion but made up for it in the

following game. That was at York and he scored a hat-trick in a 3-3 draw. That is how he became our fastest player to double figures. Incidentally in his remaining games, he only scored five more goals.

Second place in the 'quickest to 10' search is by a locally born player, Jack Basford. In his case it took him 9 games to reach the double figure mark. He was not selected in the opening three games of the season against Chesterfield, Rochdale and Darlington, but on the 2nd September 1952, Jack scored his first goal against Chesterfield in a 2-1 win.

Harry Catterick took over the no 9 spot against Gateshead and Bradford City but then Jack was in the side again on 13th September against Hartlepool and he scored one our two goals. He retained his place and rewarded the club with a goal against Bradford City, two against Carlisle and then two more against Wrexham in a 3-3 draw. He drew a blank against Southport at Gresty Road but reached double figures in the following game against Carlisle in a 4-1 win.

It was quite a formidable forward line in that season, it read, McGuigan, Boyle or Mitcheson, Basford, King and Blunstone. Indeed, at the seasons end Basford had scored 22, King 17, McGuigan 10, Blunstone 8 and Mitcheson 4.

Back in third place is Jimmy Scullion, who came to Crewe from Stockport County in season 1928/29 but it was not until the following season 1929/30 that he was to score 10 goals in 10 games. He failed to score in the first two games of the season against Carlisle United and Wigan Borough but game three saw his scoring run start.

On the 7th September 1929 he scored two in a 4-0 home win over Nelson, two more the following weekend at Southport and then one against Doncaster. Two blank games against Port Vale and York City to be followed by a hat-trick against his old

club Stockport. One each in the games against New Brighton and Chesterfield brought the total to 10.



'Local born Jack Basford was one of the clubs great goalscorers but was he the quickest to 10 goals?'

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## Welcome To You All On This Tuesday Evening!

Today we welcome the officials, players and supporters of Luton Town Football Club to Gresty Road. It must be some journey to make for a lot of you on a Tuesday evening, so our thanks go to everyone who has braved the weather in order to cheer on their team. It should be another tough home game for the boys and let's hope they can put on a performance here tonight to match some of the away results we have had this season.

Joe Kinnear's side were runners-up to Plymouth Argyle in the race to the Third Division title last season. They are a club that have enjoyed both the highs

and lows of football and we hope that Joe and his staff can continue to get the club back on its feet. They have done a fabulous job already and credit must go to them after they were relegated to the Third Division a couple of seasons ago.

Of course, as we found out in our last home game the beauty of football is in its unpredictability and credit must go to Plymouth, who worked tirelessly to protect their lead. I thought they defended extremely well, although he will rather unlucky to see Dave Brammer's low drive hit a post and come back out. In contrast, Plymouth's

wining strike from Norris went in via a post. The line between success and failure is very thin and that is what makes football the greatest spectacle in the world and probably suggests why we are all here tonight.

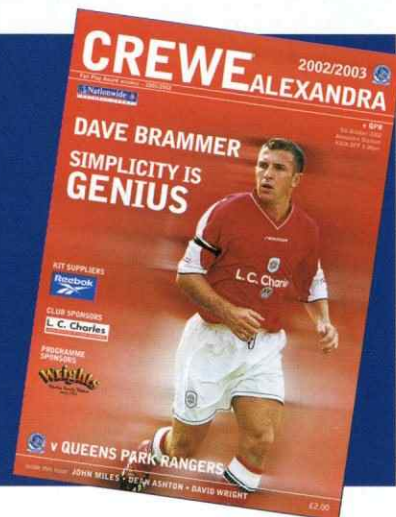
Let's hope the boys can get our home form going again this evening. A special mention to the hundred or so who travelled to Mansfield last Tuesday evening. You made plenty of noise behind those dug-outs and I'm sure you had an enjoyable evening in the East Midlands.

## Cheshire County FA Unibond Senior Cup

Please don't forget Crewe Alexandra will be taking on Vauxhall Motors in the quarter-finals of the Cheshire Senior Cup. The game will take place at the Alexandra Stadium on Tuesday 12th November. Kick-off is at 7.45pm. Should a replay be necessary the game will take place on 19th November. It will be £3 adults and £1 for Senior Citizens and Juniors.

## Programmes On Offer

There are still a few programmes left from previous games this season. If you have missed one for your collection or would just like to put an extra poster of Sodje on your wall please e-mail us at [programmes@crewealex.net](mailto:programmes@crewealex.net). Unfortunately, we have sold out of the QPR and Tranmere editions. There is also only a limited supply of Plymouth Argyle programmes left. If you haven't got access to e-mail, just call into the shop and we will see if we can help.



## Jones Claims Man-of-the-Match Award

Steve Jones may have missed out to the hard-working Rob Hulse in the man-of-the-match award following his brace against QPR - but the in-form winger finally received the award for his display against Plymouth Argyle. Despite Crewe's surprising 1-0 home defeat, Jones still caught the sponsor's eye with some dazzling wing play.

Jones collected the John Pass Man-of-the-Match award from Jason Smart after the game. Make sure you listen out later for today's John Pass Man-of-the-Match award.



## Match Ball Sponsor



We hope that despite our home defeat to Plymouth that our match ball sponsors for the game Cornwallis still had an enjoyable day with us at the Alexandra Stadium. I know it wasn't the result we expected but it goes to show that getting out of this Division is going to be as difficult as it was in 1997! Defender Dave Walton and Rob Hulse posed with guests of The Cornwallis Company before the game and presented them with their signed football to mark the occasion. If you would like to support the club by sponsoring a game, please contact me on 01270 213014 ext 113.

## Supporters' Evening

Crewe Alexandra Football Club would like to announce that a 'Fans Forum' will take place on Wednesday 13th November.

In the past these events have been a huge success and extremely popular with the clubs supporters, and it offers fans a unique opportunity to quiz club official and team management on topics of their choice.

Chairman John Bowler, First Team Manager Dario Gradi, Assistant Manager Neil Baker and Academy Director Steve Holland will be amongst the high profile officials present and available to ask questions to.

The event will be held in the Signals Lounge at the Alexandra Stadium with the bar opening at 7:00pm before the floor is opened at 7:30pm.

Prices for this event are just £2.50 all of which will be ploughed back into the Youth Development fund.



**\* gresty's page**  
BY GRESTY THE LION

**WELCOME TO ANOTHER NIGHT GAME AT THE ALEXANDRA STADIUM. LET'S HOPE THAT WE CAN KEEP THE PRESSURE ON AT THE TOP OF THE SECOND DIVISION TABLE WITH ANOTHER HOME WIN AGAINST AN IMPROVING LUTON TOWN SIDE. OF COURSE, IT IS NEVER GOING TO BE EASY IN THIS LEAGUE JUST BECAUSE WE HAVE BEEN RELEGATED FROM THE FIRST DIVISION AND OUR HOME DEFEAT TO PLYMOUTH SHOWED THIS.**

The boys played well against the Pilgrims but just couldn't find that opening goal. He huffed and puffed in the second half but just couldn't find a way through their defence. It was a different story last Tuesday night though. We ran out convincing 4-0 winners at Mansfield and that follows on from our 5-0 win there back in August. Congratulations to Rob Hulse who scored a hat-trick last week to take his tally to 13 for the season.

Enjoy tonight's game and remember to get the Bovril in at half-time!

## Crewe and Nantwich Girls FC

Crewe and Nantwich girls FC are delighted to announce the sponsorship of their Under 12s team by Complimentary Care Services. The highly successful Under-12s squad is unbeaten this season and have already scored 25 goals whilst only conceding 3 goals in 8 matches.

Ladies and girls' football is now officially the most popular sport in England and this rapid rise in popularity has been reflected locally by the unrivalled success of this local club. From initially having just one team, Crewe and Nantwich Girls FC have expanded to having teams at 4 age groups – under10s, under12s, under14s and under16s with over 60 girls now registered. Twenty of these girls are in rapidly expanding Under12s age group.

"We see the Under12s age group as vitally important to the future of the club, says Under12s coach Russ Edwards. "Skills and knowledge gained at this age group will enable the girls to play at the highest possible level."

"The club is entirely run by volunteers and is self-financing therefore the support given by Chris Shepherd at Complimentary Care Services is absolutely invaluable and I must say that the girls look great in their new kit."

Looking to the future, the club is not content to just sit back. We are always looking for girls who have the desire to play football and most importantly want to improve." Says enthusiastic head coach Ian Kemp. "With the kids, it's not about winning trophies, it's about encouraging and helping the girls be the best they can be." As a measure of their local success, 14 girls from Crewe and Nantwich Girls FC are currently attending FA Centres of excellent.

The Crewe and Nantwich girls under-12s lined up as follows: Sophie Surrige, Melissa Allen, Sian Broadhurst, Emily Cadwallader (captain), Carol-Anne Blunstone, Lucy Hughes, Rhianna Williams, Sally David, Jade Ducker, Danielle and Tess.

Contact head coach Ian Kemp – 01270 625088



## Mascot Opportunity

Ever wanted to run out with the Crewe Alexandra player's home or away? That's right that dream chance is only available if you become an official club mascot for the day. If you want to have a behind the scenes look at the Alexandra Stadium and have your photo taken with your favourite players then you can by becoming Crewe's mascot for the day. It will cost you just £80 or £70 if you are a member of the Junior Alex squad. It will make the perfect birthday or Christmas treat. Please contact the Alexandra Soccer Centre on 01270 216682 for further details.



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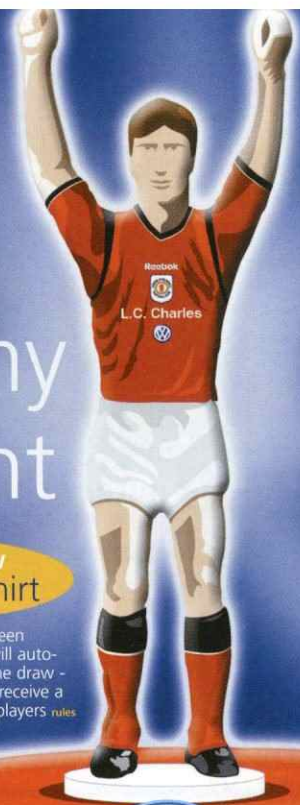
all new accounts opened between **2nd April and 30th April** will automatically be entered into the draw - the winner of which will receive a shirt signed by all the players rules and conditions apply

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\*AER stands for Annual Equivalent Rate and illustrates what the interest rate would be if interest was paid and added each year. All rates shown are correct as at 2nd April 2002, rates are subject to change without notice.

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**Sandbach:** 14 Penda Way CW11 0GQ. 01270 761128  
**Nantwich:** 25 High Street CW5 5AH. 01270 623263  
**Alsager:** 10 Crewe Road ST7 2ES. 01270 877329  
**Head Office:** Castle Street, Macclesfield SK11 6AF

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8AM - 8PM WEEKDAYS, 9AM - 4PM SATURDAYS  
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question & answer

## EFE SODJE

**THIS SEASON, EFE SODJE HAS CONTINUED WHERE HE LEFT OFF IN THE WORLD CUP. HE HAS HELPED THE CLUB TO ONE OF THE MOST IMPRESSIVE DEFENCE RECORDS IN THE SECOND DIVISION AND IS SHOWING HIS VERSATILITY BY SWITCHING FROM CENTRE-BACK TO RIGHT-BACK.**

Dario already revealed that his Nigerian defender is 'now playing the best football of his career' and is continuing to improve his game. Today, the supporters' player-of-the-year will be trying to put one over on a few old friends. He spent a year with the Hatters and even had a trial for Wimbledon when Joe Kinnear was manager there.

**YOU WERE A POPULAR FIGURE AT MACCLESFIELD BUT LEFT THEM FOR LUTON TOWN IN 1999?**

I really enjoyed my time at Macclesfield and it was difficult to leave, but I wanted to play at a higher level and they offered me the chance to do that at Luton Town. They were in Second Division and I did it to better my career. I joined them on a free transfer and was there for a year before I went to Colchester.

**IT CERTAINLY WORKED TOO, BECAUSE IT WAS AT LUTON THAT YOU WERE FIRST CALLED UP TO REPRESENT NIGERIA?**

That's right. I went to the African nations in the year 2000. They were held in Ghana and Nigeria had a strong squad. The likes of Kanu, West, Oliseh, Babayaro and Babangida all played. I made my International debut against Eritrea and we managed to reach the final against Cameroon. Unfortunately, we lost the match 4-3 on penalties after the game finished 2-2 after extra-time but it was a tremendous experience.

**DESPITE YOUR SHORT SPELL AT LUTON YOU REALLY ENJOYED YOUR TIME THERE?**

I worked under Lennie Lawrence and I did really enjoy my time at Luton. I was playing at a higher level and their crowd were always tremendous to me. They have always had a fantastic following and I'm sure that they will bring a few fans here despite it



being a Tuesday night.  
**WHAT PLAYERS ARE THERE NOW THAT WERE THERE DURING YOUR SPELL AT KENILWORTH ROAD?**

I don't really too much about their team to be honest because I have never played against them since I've come to Crewe. I think Joe Kinnear has brought some of the kids through - but I still know Marvin Johnson and Tony Thorpe, who are still there.

**AND YOU HAVE HAD A TRIAL FOR JOE KINNEAR IN THE PAST?**

Yeah. When I visited arrived in the country I had a trial at Wimbledon when Joe was manager. He is a great manager and his assistant Mick Hartford is a top bloke too. It will be good to catch up with a few of them today.

**YOU SEEM TO BE ENJOYING IT AT RIGHT-BACK?**

I'm enjoying it because it gives me the opportunity to get forward. I did that against Plymouth and I think we were unlucky not to get something from that game. Any footballer will tell you that they just want to be playing games and Dario must think I'm doing a good job at right-back or I wouldn't be in the team. Maybe he saw me in the World Cup and thought that I would be okay in that position. I think the defence has played consistently well this season.

**THAT PLYMOUTH RESULT WAS A BIT OF SET-BACK THOUGH?**

I didn't think we played that poorly but we just couldn't find an equaliser. If we had I think we would have gone on to win the game. It was a set-back because we had the

chance to go second in the table. The boys are all together and working hard to break into that top two. The team spirit is high and we know that we can't afford too many home defeats if we want to win promotion.  
**WE BOUNCED BACK WITH THAT CONVINCING WIN AT MANSFIELD TOWN IN THE LDV VANS TROPHY?**

It was a good performance and we were just glad to make it through to the next round. I want to win something with Crewe and it would be a great day at Cardiff for us and the fans. A double of the LDV Vans Trophy and promotion would be nice.  
**IT WAS SO NEARLY A WASTED TRIP THOUGH?**

When we arrived they said that if it continued to rain there was a chance the game could be called off. We had to warm up on the astro-turf on the club car park to avoid cutting up the pitch but that was no problem. Rain and England come hand-in-hand.

**WHEN THE GAME GOT THE GO-AHEAD, ROB HULSE FINISHED THEM OFF SOON ENOUGH?**

Well we scored two quick goals and they couldn't live with our football. Rob's third goal was world class. It was unbelievable and Rodney did well to get the cross in because they had tried to stop him by kicking him. He refused to go down and Rob's volley was fantastic. It showed that he is at the top of his game.

Rob always works hard for the team and he deserves to be scoring the goals. He always battles for us and he would be in my team any day.

## A Great Weight Placed Upon Young Shoulders.

**WAYNE ROONEY'S STUNNING LAST-MINUTE STRIKE AGAINST ARSENAL HAS PROPELLED HIS NAME TO THE PINNACLE OF THE GAME. AT JUST 16 YEARS-OF-AGE (HE TURNED 17 LAST WEEK) ROONEY BECAME THE YOUNGEST EVER PLAYER TO SCORE IN THE PREMIER LEAGUE – A RECORD PREVIOUSLY HELD BY PRESENT DARLING OF THE PRESS MICHAEL OWEN. HE ALSO SURPASSED TOMMY LAWTON'S 65-YEAR CLUB RECORD BY A NUMBER OF DAYS.**

Rooney's dipping shot gave Everton a 2-1 win at Goodison Park and also abruptly ended the Londoners hopes of matching Nottingham Forest's 42-match unbeaten run. The current champions had proudly gone 30 matches and some seven months without defeat. No wonder Brian Clough confessed that he wanted to kiss him!

Before Rooney's unstoppable 30-yarder, Arsene Wenger's side virtually ran itself and looked invincible. They followed up their first Premiership defeat since last December with a surprising home defeat to Auxerre in the Champions League – but that is another story and I'm sure with the array of talent Wenger has at his disposal they will bounce back soon enough.

One thing is for sure, it certainly makes a change on Merseyside to see Everton unveil a promising talent ahead of their city rivals. While the talent spotters at Goodison Park were caught stalling, Liverpool have seen the likes of Steve McManaman, Robbie Fowler, Steven Gerrard, Jamie Carragher and Michael Owen progress through the Anfield ranks to become first-team regulars in recent seasons. It must have rocked the corridors of power at Everton to know that four of the above reputedly grew up supporting the blue half of the city, before they were seduced by the reputation and facilities of Liverpool's Academy.

In contrast Evertonians tried to compare the likes of Michael Branch, Michael Ball, Danny Camadamarteri

and Francis Jeffers to the 'Kop-crop' but unfortunately that just enhanced disbelief when they either failed to realise their true potential or were eventually sold on for vast amounts of money as in the example of Ball and Jeffers. Both of whom are now struggling to make an impact at Glasgow Rangers and Arsenal respectively.

With Rooney some of them haven't learned their lesson. At just 16, his name and number on his blue shirt out sales his senior colleagues in the club shop and even deputy chairman and owner Bill Kenwright described him as 'the greatest thing in football' during a recent radio interview. The pressure is mounting all the time. Luckily, it appears Rooney has broad shoulders. He is certainly a big lad for someone so young and his family are intent on keeping his feet firmly on the ground. Born into a boxing family, the £80-a-week teenager played for Everton's Under-19 side at just 14 and England Under-17s at just 15. It will take some doing, especially when he is set to become a millionaire before he turns twenty.

The plaudits from top managers such as Wenger, or the-disappointed-to-have-missed-this-one Houllier have only increased the expectation surrounding the new 'teenage sensation' but it only confirms the fact that Everton have a very special talent on their hands if he can resist the off-the-field temptations that have caught out the likes of Merson, Gascoigne and even the greatest of all Maradona.

"He's the biggest English talent I've seen since I arrived in England", said Wenger.

"There has certainly not seen an under-20 player as good as him since I became a manager here. He has such a low sense of gravity, and, with that build, he reminds me a bit of Gascoigne."

Tend to disagree with you on that one Arsene - What about Owen? This brings us nicely to the point that the

media enjoy or rather love to build our heroes up and then knock them off their lofty perch. At the start of the season Owen was struggling to complete ninety minutes, let alone find the back-of-the-net. Before long, the knives were out. The press were encouraging Sven Goran Eriksson to drop him for England games and unsubstantial rumours suggesting Liverpool were prepared to sell him began to circulate. An unmoved Houllier laughed it off, kept faith with his 22-year-old forward and watched him go on to score nine goals in nine games, including two hat-tricks for his club and a brace for his country.

All strikers have barren spells where a goal never looks likes arriving. At that point it's just a question of how a player responds to the criticism heading in his direction. Owen is mentally strong and always seems to produce it when

everyone is against him. He is what is known in the business as a 'big game player'. It will be interesting to see how young Rooney reacts to such media attacks because the whole country is now watching him intensely. Any slips off the pitch and they will have him. A drop in form on the pitch and the doubters will emerge from under their rocks.

David Moyes, who has handled the progression into the Premier League impressively, continues to keep his prodigy under wraps. Thankfully, Moyes has wrapped him up in cotton wool and there has been no 'Wayne Rooney Exclusives' appearing in the tabloids. He will only speak to the media when he is ready and may even have to settle for a place on the bench for some time to come, although Moyes admits he is finding it difficult to leave him out

of the side.

"He's still only 16 years old so we don't know if he's going to be that good yet, but what we can see and what we're working with just now there's no question he's got as much ability as anybody I've ever seen", says Moyes.

"He is strong for his age, has great awareness and is quick. A footballing brain like he possesses doesn't normally come until later on in years.

"Wayne has that at present, so from that point of view it is going to be difficult not to play him."

The fear that grips Everton is that Rooney, who only left school two months ago, will refuse to sign a new professional contract and move on for less than £2 million or will be sold for financial considerations. Moyes has already stated that if that occurs he would resign on the spot and who

would blame him. Despite his age, Rooney's emergence has given the blue side of Liverpool renewed hope.

It would be a disaster if he is talked out of agreeing a new deal at Goodison Park or is sold on to a bigger club and finds it difficult to adjust like his predecessor Jeffers has at Highbury. For the benefit and progress of Everton Football Club they need Rooney to remain there for many years and develop his huge promise. He already has enough on his plate trying to live with the comparisons alongside the likes of Shearer, Owen, Rush, Sheringham or even club legend Dixie Dean. Such incredible expectation placed upon him may prove detrimental in the long term. It has certainly happened before. Anyone remember Jason Dozzell?



'Everton boss David Moyes has wisely advised his prodigious teenager Wayne Rooney'





**NATIONWIDE LEAGUE DIVISION 2**  
Correct as at 25.10.02

	P	W	D	L	GD	PTS
1 Wigan Athletic	14	9	3	2	15	30
2 Cardiff City	14	8	4	2	8	28
3 Bristol City	14	9	0	5	13	27
4 Oldham Athletic	14	8	3	3	13	27
5 QPR	14	8	3	3	12	27
6 Crewe Alexandra	14	7	4	3	11	25
7 Blackpool	14	7	3	4	7	24
8 Chesterfield	14	7	2	5	-2	23
9 Brentford	14	6	4	4	-1	22
10 Luton Town	14	6	3	5	3	21
11 Plymouth Argyle	14	5	4	5	-1	19
12 Tranmere Rovers	14	6	1	7	-8	19
13 Wycombe Wanderers	14	5	3	6	-2	18
14 Port Vale	14	5	3	6	-4	18
15 Stockport	14	5	2	7	-1	17
16 Northampton Town	14	4	4	6	-5	16
17 Huddersfield Town	14	4	4	6	-5	16
18 Notts County	14	3	6	5	-2	15
19 Colchester United	14	4	3	7	-6	15
20 Barnsley	14	4	3	7	-9	15
21 Peterborough United	14	3	4	7	-1	13
22 Swindon Town	14	3	2	9	-9	11
23 Mansfield Town	14	3	2	9	-18	11
24 Cheltenham Town	14	2	4	8	-8	10

**APPEARANCES & GOALS**

	League		FA Cup		Wrth. Cup	
	APPS	GOALS	APPS	GOALS	APPS	GOALS
1 Ademola Bankole	-	-	-	-	1	-
2 David Wright	14	-	-	-	-	-
3 Richard Walker	10+1	1	-	-	2	-
4 Kenny Lunt	14	2	-	-	2	-
5 Dave Walton	1	-	-	-	+1	-
6 Stephen Foster	14	1	-	-	1	-
7 Colin Little	3+2	-	-	-	1	-
8 Dave Brammer	14	-	-	-	2	-
9 Rob Hulse	13	9	-	-	1	1
10 Dean Ashton	7+5	-	-	-	1	-
11 Rodney Jack	9+1	2	-	-	2	3
12 Neil Sorvel	10+1	1	-	-	2	-
13 Clayton Ince (GK)	14	-	-	-	2	-
14 David Vaughan	6+1	-	-	-	1	-
15 Wayne Collins	-	-	-	-	-	-
16 Efe Sodje	11	-	-	-	2	-
17 Steve Jones	3+6	3	-	-	+1	-
18 Chris McCready	-	-	-	-	1	-
19 Ben Rix	9	-	-	-	-	-
20 Lee Bell	+7	1	-	-	-	-
21 Paul Edwards	-	-	-	-	-	-
22 Stuart Tomlinson (GK)	-	-	-	-	-	-
23 Sagi Burton	1	-	-	-	-	-
24 James Robinson	-	-	-	-	-	-
25 John Miles	+3	-	-	-	1	-
26 Alex Morris	-	-	-	-	-	-
27 Michael Higdon	-	-	-	-	-	-
Opponents	-	1	-	-	-	-

WC = Worthington Cup  
FA = FA Cup  
■ = appearance  
■ = substitute  
! = scorer

DATE	OPPONENTS	VENUE	F-A	COMP	ATT.	POS.
Sat Aug 10	Northampton Town	Away	1-1	D2	5,694	-
Tue Aug 13	Notts County	Home	0-3	D2	6,141	20
Sat Aug 17	Colchester United	Home	2-0	D2	5,138	14
Sat Aug 24	Huddersfield	Away	1-1	D2	8,467	16
Tue Aug 27	Cheltenham Town	Home	1-0	D2	5,488	11
Sat Aug 31	Mansfield Town	Away	5-0	D2	4,183	4
Sat Sept 7	Chesterfield	Home	0-0	D2	5,837	5
Tue Sept 10	Port Vale	Away	2-0	WC	3,765	-
Sat Sept 14	Peterborough United	Away	0-0	D2	4,345	9
Tue Sept 17	Wycombe Wanderers	Away	2-1	D2	4,909	5
Sat Sept 21	Tranmere Rovers	Home	2-0	D2	6,875	5
Sat Sept 28	Cardiff City	Away	1-2	D2	13,208	6
Sat Oct 1	Manchester City	Away	2-3	WC	21,820	-
Sat Oct 5	Queens Park Rangers	Home	2-0	D2	7,682	5
Sat Oct 12	Stockport County	Away	4-1	D2	6,468	4
Sat Oct 19	Plymouth Argyle	Home	0-1	D2	6,733	6
Tue Oct 22	Mansfield	Away	4-0	LDV VT	1,874	6
Sat Oct 26	Port Vale	Away	-	D2	-	-
Tue Oct 29	Luton Town	Home	-	D2	-	-
Sat Nov 2	Wigan Athletic	Away	-	D2	-	-
Sat Nov 9	Brentford	Home	-	D2	-	-
Sat Nov 23	Blackpool	Home	-	D2	-	-
Sat Nov 30	Bristol City	Away	-	D2	-	-
Sat Dec 14	Barnsley	Home	-	D2	-	-
Sat Dec 21	Swindon Town	Away	-	D2	-	-
Thu Dec 26	Cheltenham Town	Away	-	D2	-	-
Sun Dec 29	Oldham Athletic	Home	-	D2	-	-
Wed Jan 1	Mansfield Town	Home	-	D2	-	-
Sat Jan 4	Notts County	Away	-	D2	-	-
Sat Jan 11	Colchester United	Away	-	D2	-	-
Sat Jan 18	Huddersfield Town	Home	-	D2	-	-
Sat Jan 25	Oldham Athletic	Away	-	D2	-	-
Sat Feb 1	Northampton Town	Home	-	D2	-	-
Sat Feb 8	Brentford	Away	-	D2	-	-
Sat Feb 15	Wigan Athletic	Home	-	D2	-	-
Sat Feb 22	Chesterfield	Away	-	D2	-	-
Sat Mar 1	Peterborough United	Home	-	D2	-	-
Tue Mar 4	Wycombe Wanderers	Home	-	D2	-	-
Sat Mar 8	Tranmere Rovers	Away	-	D2	-	-
Sat Mar 15	Port Vale	Home	-	D2	-	-
Tue Mar 18	Plymouth Argyle	Away	-	D2	-	-
Sat Mar 22	Luton Town	Away	-	D2	-	-
Sat Mar 29	Stockport County	Home	-	D2	-	-
Sat Apr 5	Bristol City	Home	-	D2	-	-
Sat Apr 12	Blackpool	Away	-	D2	-	-
Sat Apr 19	Swindon Town	Home	-	D2	-	-
Mon Apr 21	Barnsley	Away	-	D2	-	-
Sat Apr 26	Queens Park Rangers	Away	-	D2	-	-
Sat May 3	Cardiff City	Home	-	D2	-	-

Ademola Bankole	David Wright	Richard Walker	Kenny Lunt	Dave Walton	Stephen Foster	Colin Little	Dave Brammer	Rob Hulse	Dean Ashton	Rodney Jack	Neil Sorvel	Clayton Ince	David Vaughan	Wayne Collins	Efe Sodje	Steve Jones	Chris McCready	Ben Rix	Lee Bell	Paul Edwards	Stuart Tomlinson	Sagi Burton	James Robinson	John Miles	Michael Higdon	Adam Yates	Andy White
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<b>Dean Ashton</b> Home Kit	Sandbach Travelling Alex Cricket Team, Vic Club Holmes Chapel

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<b>Rob Hulse</b> Home Kit	'The Phoenix Nights Crew'
<b>Colin Little</b> Boots	Sponsored by MAD
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<b>Gloves</b>	Laura and Katie Kirkham
<b>Lee Bell</b> Boots	Phillips, Jackson, Bailey and Skafie
<b>Dario Gradi</b>	The Alex Exiles

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**MANAGER****Dario Gradi****MANAGER****Joe Kinnear**

- 1 ADEMOLA BANKOLE ■
- 2 DAVID WRIGHT ■
- 3 RICHARD WALKER ■
- 4 KENNY LUNT ■
- 5 DAVE WALTON ■
- 6 STEPHEN FOSTER ■
- 7 COLIN LITTLE ■
- 8 DAVE BRAMMER ■
- 9 ROB HULSE ■
- 10 DEAN ASHTON ■
- 11 RODNEY JACK ■
- 12 NEIL SORVEL ■
- 13 CLAYTON INCE (GK) ■
- 14 DAVID VAUGHAN ■
- 15 WAYNE COLLINS ■
- 16 EFE SODJE ■
- 17 STEVE JONES ■
- 18 CHRIS MCCREADY ■
- 19 BEN RIX ■
- 20 LEE BELL ■
- 21 PAUL EDWARDS ■
- 22 STUART TOMLINSON (GK) ■
- 23 ALEX MORRIS ■
- 24 JAMES ROBINSON ■
- 25 JOHN MILES ■
- 26 MICHAEL HIGDON ■
- 27 ADAM YATES ■
- 28 ANDY WHITE ■

- 1 MARK OVENDALE ■
- 2 AARON SKELTON ■
- 3 ALAN NEILSON ■
- 4 MATTHEW SPRING ■
- 5 RUSSELL PERRETT ■
- 6 MARVIN JOHNSON ■
- 7 ADRIAN FORBES ■
- 8 KEVIN NICHOLLS ■
- 9 TONY THORPE ■
- 10 CARL GRIFFITHS ■
- 11 STEVE ROBINSON ■
- 12 CHRIS COYNE ■
- 14 ANDREW FOTIADIS ■
- 15 DEAN CROWE ■
- 16 CARL EMBERSON ■
- 17 EMMERSON BOYCE ■
- 18 AHMET BRKOVIC ■
- 19 STEVE HOWARD ■
- 20 PETER HOLMES ■
- 21 PAUL HUGHES ■
- 22 DAVID BAYLISS ■
- 23 IAN HILLIER ■
- 24 SOL DAVIS ■
- 31 ALAN KIMBLE ■
- 35 CEDRIC BERTHELIN ■

**Match Officials**

Referee: A R Leake  
 Referee's Assistant: G A Ashton  
 Referee's Assistant: I L Faulkner  
 4th Official: I D Shaw

**Programme Sponsor:****Next match at Alexandra Stadium**

9/11/02 - Brentford

**Next away match**

2/11/02 Wigan Athletic

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