

Town sting Bees!

HATTERS 4 BRENTFORD 2

A DRAMATIC final seven minutes at Kenilworth Road saw Luton kill off bogey team Brentford with three late goals and spark wild scenes of celebration as Town officially received the League One trophy.

The Bees had look all set to make it three wins over Luton this season as Sam Sodje and Deon Burton goals put the visitors 2-1 up at half-time after Ahmet Brkovic's fifth minute opener.

But determined Hatters swarmed all over their opponents after the break and stung Martin Allen's men with three goals in an amazing finish.

Skipper Kevin Nicholls levelled from the spot in the 84th minute, substitute Enoch Showunmi made it 3-2 in the 90th minute and Steve Robinson ensured the home faithful were really buzzing with a fourth in stoppage time.

The action-packed end to the game perfectly set the scene for champions Luton to receive their Coca-Cola silverware and ensured fans were buoyant as they took to the pitch to hail their heroes in the director's box.

Hatters boss Mike Newell said: "That finish really set it up nicely for the fans and I know how much all this means to the supporters.

"We've had a great home record this

season and much of that is down to the fans we have here.

"There's a feeling of relief among the players that it's all been done and the title has been won.

"But it's nice to beat Brentford after they beat us twice earlier in the season and with one game left it would be great if we could get to 100 points."

On his own personal satisfaction at landing the title, Newell added: "It means everything to me, but I'm so proud of my players and I'm delighted to have been able to work with them.

"They've been fully professional the whole way through and have showed desire and togetherness and have a team spirit that I've never seen anywhere else.

"Everyone here from those who have played most of the games, to those in the background have played a part in the success this season."

Hatters showed three changes to the side that won 2-1 at Wrexham as they were roared on to the field to deafening applause at a packed Kenilworth Road.

Robinson replaced Peter Holmes, Paul Underwood came in for Show-

unmi and Warren Feeney made his full Luton debut in place of Rowan Vine.

An expectant crowd had to wait just five minutes for the opener as Underwood crossed for Steve Howard to nod on for Brkovic to fire home at the far post. But Brentford, with five across the middle, rallied and levelled in the 20th minute through Sodje after John Salako's cross was only half cleared.

Then Michael Turner strode forward

unchallenged to set up Burton for a second six minutes later.

But a super second-half show from Luton saw Nicholls and Howard strike the woodwork before Turner brought down Robinson in the box for Nicholls to hit his 13th of the season.

Showunmi nodded in after Curtis Davies flicked on Robinson's corner and Robinson added extra gloss by side-footing home Vine's pull back.



Picture: Joanna Cross

SOL DETERMINED: Players' Player of the Year Sol Davis on the run during the win over Brentford.

MIKE NEWELL'S VERDICT



"IT'S been a fantastic season and it was great to finish it off in style.

"The lads in the second-half were absolutely amazing and that just sums up our season.

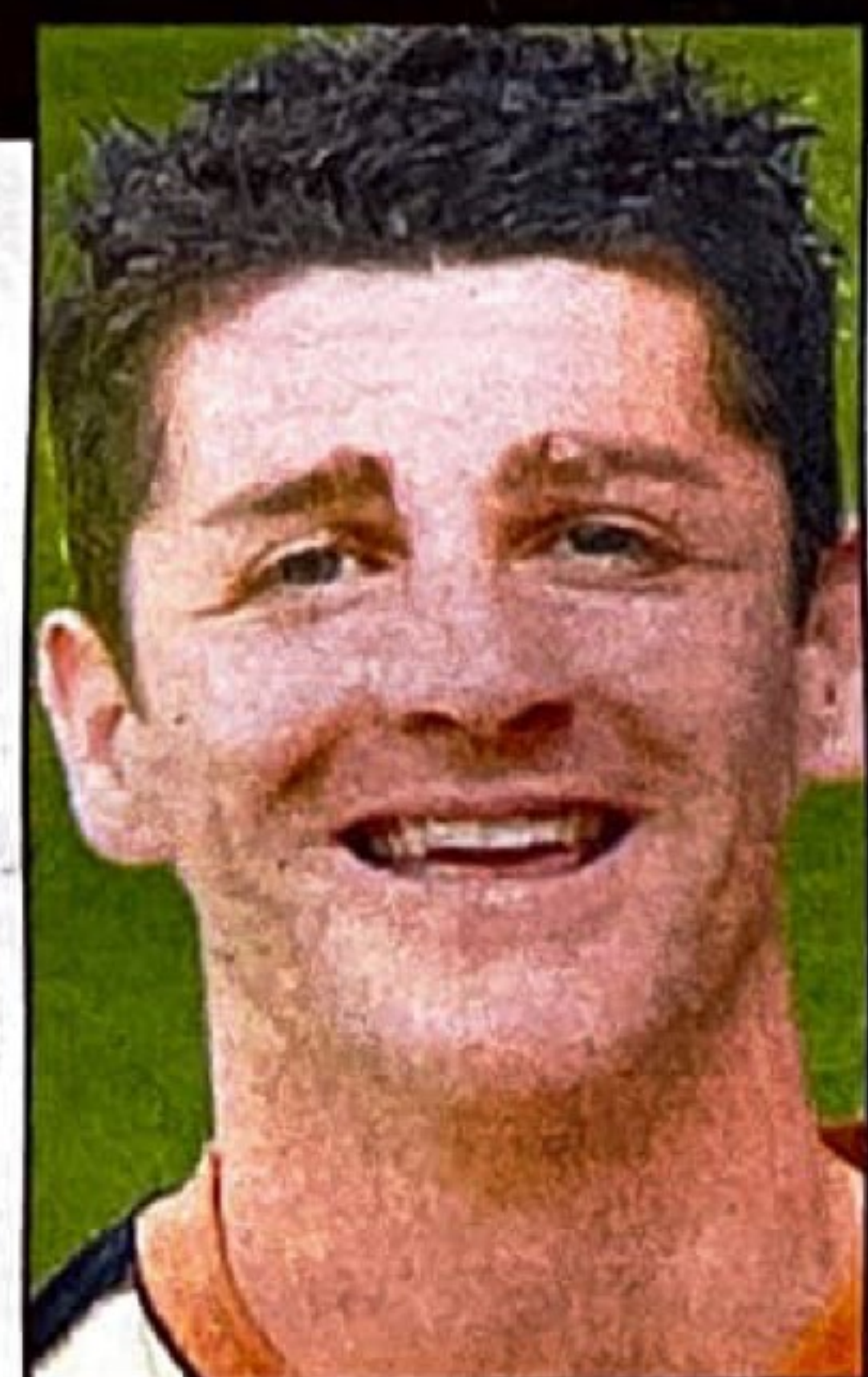
"Brentford are playing for a play-off place, but they've already beaten us twice this season and our lads just wouldn't give it up. When a team beats you three times in a season there's something wrong

and the lads didn't want to let that happen.

"If we can get the ball down and pass it around we're a threat against anybody, but we didn't do that in the first-half.

"Brentford came out to defend after half-time because they were quite happy with what they'd got. But we have players who can turn a game and we proved that in the second-half."

STAR HATTER



STEVE ROBINSON: A few fans had registered surprise at Peter Holmes dropping to the bench after his strong show at Wrexham.

But Steve Robinson proved his own importance with a super display in the centre of midfield.

Robbo and Kevin Nicholls faced three Bees midfield opponents, but ran the show after the break.

Robinson won the penalty that led to the leveller, set up the third and scored the fourth himself.

Coyne is Player of the Month

LUTON have ended the season with yet more glory after centre-half Chris Coyne was named as the League One Powerade Player of the Month for April.

Coyne played a pivotal role in the 1-0 win at Bournemouth when he came on as an early substitute following the send-

ing off of Russ Perrett, also starred against Milton Keynes Dons and then scored the goal that crowned Luton as League One champions in the 2-1 success away at Wrexham.

One of the judging panel, Sky's Chris Kamara, said: "Chris has played an integral part in Luton's success and has hardly missed a game in a fine season

- his award is long overdue."

● Town on Tour buses leave for Doncaster from Leighton Buzzard's Safeways at 9.30am on Saturday, then Maple Road, Luton at 10.30am and MK Coachway at 11am. Call 07960 567465 for full information.

Bobbers leave Cranfield at 9am and Kenilworth Road, Luton at 10am. Call 01234 750996.