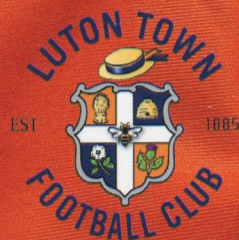


TALK OF THE TOWN



OFFICIAL AWARD-WINNING MATCHDAY
PROGRAMME OF LUTON TOWN
FOOTBALL CLUB

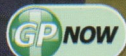
ISSUE 27 • £3.00



LUTON TOWN V TAMWORTH

TUESDAY 8th APRIL 2014
KICK OFF 7.45PM

TODAY'S
PROGRAMME SPONSOR



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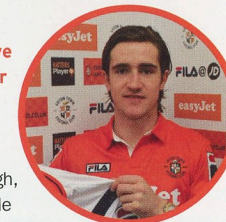
TO KENILWORTH ROAD

“Tense? Nervous? Excited? The Town have put us through the emotional rollercoaster in the last week with the late, late victories against Dartford and Aldershot putting promotion in sight.

As you'll read throughout these pages, though, nothing is won until it's mathematically possible and the Hatters have to negotiate another tough game tonight against a Tamworth side desperate for the points in their quest to avoid relegation.

Of course this game was due to take place exactly two months ago but the wet weather put pay to that. Not much has changed since then – both sides sit in very similar positions – but tonight's fixture takes on potentially huge significance for both clubs.

As ever, there is plenty for you to feast your eyes on in tonight's issue of Talk of the Town and they'll be more of the same on Saturday when we entertain Braintree. So happy reading and enjoy! #COYH ”



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John Still looks ahead to tonight's game

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With director David Blakeman



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Fixtures and results for 2013/14

LUTON TOWN FOOTBALL CLUB 2020 LTD

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OFFICIAL MATCHDAY PROGRAMME

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PRINT: Barham Group
DESIGN: Heather Ellis - Relish Design

The views in this programme are those of the contributors and not necessarily those of the editor and/or Luton Town.

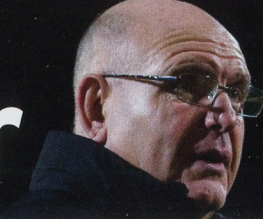


“ Let's be realistic. We are where we are for a reason: because of hard work. ”

John Still is sponsored by:

the manager

JOHN STILL



Good evening and welcome back yet again to Kenilworth Road for this Skrill Premier encounter against Tamworth.

I'd like to extend a warm welcome to everybody associated with Tamworth, including manager Dale Belford and his staff and players plus the directors and supporters of the Lambs to this part of Bedfordshire.

Today we face another massively important game – it seems to me that this is something I repeat every week. All the matches we have played this season have been tough and tonight will be no exception as we face a Tamworth side battling like hell to avoid relegation. This has been the case a lot in recent weeks following fixtures against Chester, Dartford and Aldershot and, at the other end of the scale, Halifax and Grimsby – two sides hopeful of extended their season in the Play-Offs. However, when it has mattered the team have found a way and we have been fortunate at this tough part of the season to put points on the board. To win four of the last five matches has been a tremendous effort by the players.

Frustrated

On Saturday against Aldershot we knew they would come and make it extremely difficult for us and so it proved. They came with a very good gameplan to shut us down. We were a little frustrated with a number of the decisions on the day, including a perfectly good goal scored by Paul Benson and I thought that could have been the point where we went on and won the match comfortably. It wasn't to be but that didn't dampen our enthusiasm and in the second half we would finally get our rewards. Our first half performance impressed me; we played some good football at a good tempo and we kept going and in the second half we continued to crank up the pressure and in the end that told. Cameron's brave header was enough to seal a vital three points.

I actually felt the longer the game went on the louder your support for the team became. You were well and truly behind us and I think you willed Cameron on to get up for that header. For your unbelievable support I thank you. I'd also like to thank the players for their never-say-die attitude. Everyone is part of this team and on Saturday together we found a way to register an important win.

Important

Looking beyond tonight we're back here again on Saturday with what is another important game... although I think I should shut up about important games now because they all seem to be right now! All we need to do is continue to work, battle and fight as hard as we can on and off the pitch to secure promotion for this football club.

Since my last notes I can report that both Alex Wall and Solomon Taiwo have returned to us following their loan spells at Dartford and Aldershot respectively. Alex has been terrific down at Dartford and it is a shame that a knock kept him out of the squad on Saturday. Solomon's return will boost our midfield options because we need to keep the squad as strong as possible.

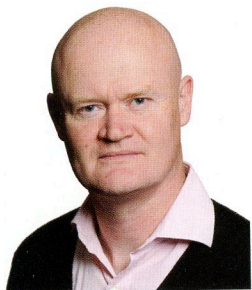
Focus

But back to today. Let's be realistic. We are where we are for a reason: because of hard work. We're almost at a point where we can celebrate but I need to make sure everyone's focus remains on working hard. So far "the stronger the team, the stronger team". Please continue to get behind us. I will be pushing the players as hard as I can. That team ethic has got us to this place and I am confident this will get us over the line.

Enjoy the game.

boardroom

WITH DIRECTOR DAVID BLAKEMAN



Welcome to tonight's game against Tamworth. Once again, we are in a position where victory will constitute a huge step towards automatic promotion.

It could, indeed, effectively be decisive, should Cambridge then fail to beat Woking, away, on Thursday night.

Promotion will not be mathematically certain should Cambridge draw that game but, in practical terms, given our positive goal difference, I think that draw, coupled with a win tonight, would effectively seal promotion.

Our opponents tonight are in an invidious position. They are eight points behind their nearest rival, and nine points are required to take them outside the relegation places. As they only have five games to play, tonight's result is absolutely crucial for them. Once more, therefore, I anticipate that we will be facing determined resistance and it will need another stoical performance if we are to secure victory.

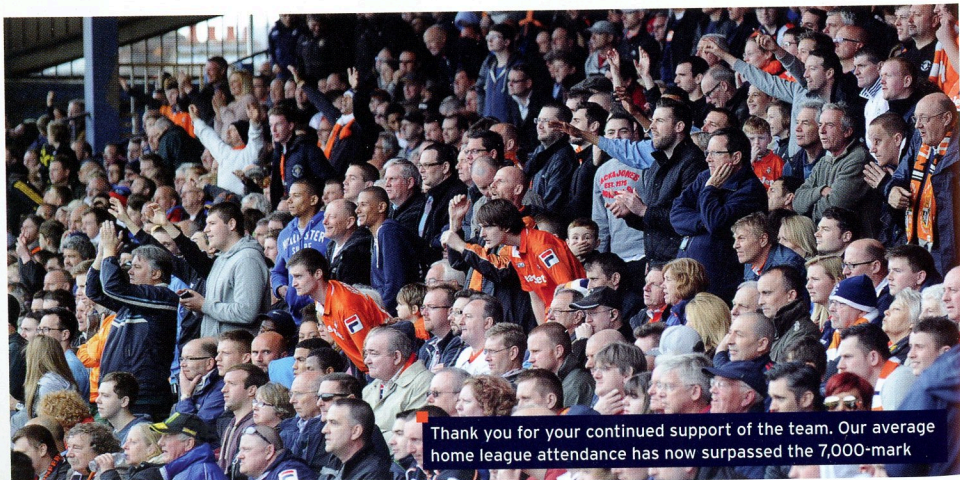
Tamworth's recent form has not been what the club would have wanted at all, having only taken one point from the last 21. Clearly, they will be keen to improve upon that – although we will be confident that we can play well enough to win the three points.

Tough

As most people will be aware, our recent matches have all been tough affairs. We came from behind to grab the three points against Dartford, last Tuesday, with two goals in the last 10 minutes.

That victory was a very hard fought affair and for much of the match we were struggling to find the rhythm necessary to unhinge a strong Dartford defence. It was only a typical piledriver from Pelly Ruddock that actually resulted in our equaliser – though from that point we piled on the pressure and ultimately secured victory. It was a not dissimilar story on Saturday – when the goal went in late.

You may also have seen season tickets for next season are now on sale. Given the marvellous season we have enjoyed this year, I am anticipating that they will go quickly. It is obviously worthwhile taking advantage of our early bird offers (which are on extremely favourable terms.



Thank you for your continued support of the team. Our average home league attendance has now surpassed the 7,000-mark

Should we get promoted, of course, the demand will be greater again – so it must be sensible to secure your ticket to watch the rip roaring Hatters as soon as possible! Full details of the various offers are to be found on the website.

You will also see that the Club has collaborated with the punk band UK Decay on a re-release of the 1974 released Barron Knights single "Hatters Hatters". The song appears on the band's new EP Wonderful Town. Profits from the record (available on CD, download and 7 inch vinyl) will be donated to both Solyd and the Luton Food Ban. This is a highly worthwhile cause which helps to boost our profile and, simultaneously, will help to fund youth development at the Club.

You may also have noticed that we got widespread coverage of our recent "Headscarves to Football Scarves" initiative. We had approximately one hundred young Asian women in the ground, who attended the home game against Chester. They really enjoyed the event – and I personally hope that this will lead to an upsurge in the number of Asian supporters coming to games. Football, these days, is strictly a money based sport. The more you have, the easier it is to succeed.

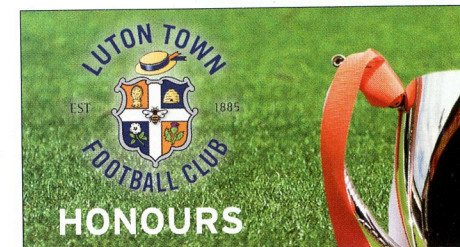
Encourage

If we can add more fans to the supporter base then that will help us to succeed. Obviously, should we move stadium then, on the assumption that the stadium is bigger, in terms of capacity, than Kenilworth Road, we will need to be filling that stadium and will need to encourage as many people as possible to come to games. I hope, in fact, to extend the initiative mentioned above to other communities within the town. At present, we have a relatively low proportion of our supporters coming from both the Afro-Caribbean and Eastern European populations of the town. It would be great if we can increase the number of supporters from those sections of the population, for precisely the same reasons as I have mentioned above.

Equally, I am open to other ideas which might help to extend our community reach. If any supporters have ideas in this respect, they are more than welcome to contact me at the Club.

As usual, please make as much noise as possible. The noise our supporters make can help to unnerve opposition teams – and that cannot hurt.

COYH!



Littlewoods Challenge Cup:
Winners 1988, Runners-up 1989

FA Cup:
Runners-up 1959
Semi-finalists 1959, 1985, 1988, 1994

Johnstone's Paint Trophy:
Winners 2009

Simod Cup:
Runners-up 1988

Football League Division Two:
Champions 1981/82
Runners-up 1954/55, 1973/74

Football League Division Three (South):
Winners 1936/37
Runners-up 1935/36

Football League Division Three:
Runners-up 1969/70

League One:
Champions 2004/05

Football League Division Four:
Champions 1967/68

Football League Division Three:
Runners-up 2001/02

Blue Square Premier:
Runners-up 2009/10

Southern League Division One:
Runners-up 1894/95, 1895/96

Southern League Division Two:
Runners-up 1913/14

United League:
Champions 1897/98
Runners-up 1896/97, 1900/01

Southern Alliance:
Runners-up 1913/14



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the captain

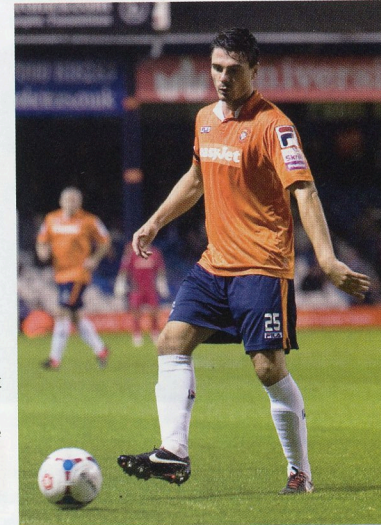
RONNIE HENRY

I must start my notes by saying how much of a magnificent achievement it was to record a victory over Aldershot on Saturday.

As we expected it was another really tough game against opposition right down at the bottom fighting and scrapping to avoid relegation. We showed the spirit and the desire to keep going and earn another vital win. Surprisingly it was the first time we've recorded a 1-0 victory all season.

Like so many of our games recently we have had to play teams with something to play for. I've heard a lot of people saying we haven't been at our best in recent weeks, yet our form at the moment reads four wins from five matches. Our two defeats, against Woking and Halifax, have been against two clubs at the top of the form table.

Aldershot are in a false position and they played well but we just kept going and going. It has been a true sign of a good team to come up trumps with so many late goals. A sign of a group of players who will not stop for anything less than victory.



Terrific

And what a goal it was too from Cameron. He's been fantastic since he joined us and, for a loan player, he has shown a terrific attitude. He's also got bags of quality, and the desire he showed to get up to head home the winner on Saturday underlines the commitment of the lad. It's not the first time he's come up with such an important contribution either. Remember his header across goal which set-up Mark Cullen's late equaliser at Cambridge?

We came close a number of times before Cameron scored on Saturday and we know that scoring an early goal will help us. But that is not always possible and, as I said, it's a mark of a winning team to score so many late goals when the crunch comes to the crunch.

Nobody said getting over the line was going to be easy, especially at this time of year when teams have everything to play for. Just like Dartford and Aldershot, tonight's game against Tamworth is going to be just as difficult. They have everything to play for because they will know that defeat coupled with other results could see them all but relegated. They will be desperate to avoid to that, especially here at Kenilworth Road.

Business

We all, as players, know that success this season is oh so close, but we're not there yet. It is business as usual tonight and we realise that Tamworth are not just going to roll over and let us win. We certainly won't be taking our foot of the pedal.

There are five games left to go and the hard work which has got us in this great position must continue – that is the most important thing and we need your support behind us to help us do

that. It was a nery atmosphere inside the ground on Saturday which is totally understandable.

The backing we have received was unbelievable once again with almost 9,000 inside the ground. It goes without saying how remarkable that feat is. The noise when the winner hit the back of the net was one of the loudest I've heard all season...and that's saying something because we have scored some really important goals throughout the campaign.

Please keep backing us. We all know we're almost there now. Let's not get complacent and let's not waste this wonderful opportunity. Tonight is not going to be easy so please stay with us to get us within touching distance.

Enjoy the game.

LACEY PENS NEW DEAL



The Hatters are pleased to announce that defender Alex Lacey has signed a new two-year contract with the club.

The 20-year-old has made 19 appearances this season, and scored his first senior goal in the 4-0 win at Woking back in September.

Lacey made his first Town appearance in a 0-0 draw against Welling United in the

FA Trophy back in December 2010 and has since enjoyed loan spells at Thurrock, Cambridge City and Eastleigh. In total the young centre-half has made 28 appearances in Luton colours.

Town manager John Still told lutontown.co.uk: "Alex had a fantastic first half of the season and it was unfortunate that an injury meant we had to make changes and bring in Fraser Franks. We're delighted to have Alex back fit again because I rate him very highly. He's got a big future and I'm looking forward to seeing him improve and progress - hopefully in a higher league."



AIMING FOR THE TOP! UK Decay and Luton Town - WHAT A GREAT TEAM!

As we revealed in the Aldershot programme, the Town are aiming to help Lutonian punk band UK Decay hit the top of the charts and raise money for Solyd following the release of the group's new EP.

The EP is titled Wonderful Town, and is available on 7" vinyl, CD and download. It contains four tracks which embrace the band's love for their home town, including their cover of the Baron Knight's track Hatters Hatters which has members of the Town squad singing the chorus.

The release can now be bought now on iTunes. The specially produced EP also contains the band's track Wonderful Town as well as a cover of Bring Me Sunshine - yet another song so synonymous with the Hatters.

The proceeds from the EP will be split 50:50 between Solyd and the Luton Food Bank - so what better reason to buy this unique release? Copies of the EP are available in CD and vinyl format in the club shop and online. The track is available to buy now on iTunes for £3.16. The vinyl copy costs £10 and the CD £5.

SEASON TICKETS FOR NEXT SEASON

We're delighted to announce that season tickets for next season are now on sale.

Prices and information can be found on page 12 and online at www.lutontown.co.uk.

BUSINESS EXHIBITION IS BACK

Luton Town's Business Exhibition is returning to Kenilworth Road. The exhibition is only offered once a year and gives you a unique insight into some excellent local companies so it is an opportunity you cannot miss.

Wednesday 23rd April will see the Eric Morecambe suite open its doors to 20 local businesses that will all be on hand to offer their knowledge advice and services to you for one day only.

Any business looking to be a part of the exhibition, there are still several stands available. To enquire about prices and availability please contact the commercial department on 01582 411622 or email commercial@lutontown.co.uk

This is the perfect place for business to business interaction and to make new connections.

The exhibition offers the public the perfect opportunity to spend a bit of time getting to know some of the most reliable businesses in the area. There will be the chance to make new connections, form partnerships and collect free samples of local services.

This event is completely free to the public and you do not require a ticket so can just turn up on the day.

Doors are open from 2pm until 7.30pm
Venue: Eric Morecambe Suite, Kenilworth Stadium, 1 Maple Road, Luton, LU4 8AW
Further Information: phone 01582 411622 or email commercial@lutontown.co.uk

E.CIGARETTES NOTICE

The Football League and the Football Conference ground regulations both support a no smoking policy forbidding spectators to smoke inside the stadium and these regulations are clearly posted at all points of entry to our stadium.

Our stewards are advised, through their training, to observe for contraventions to this specific regulation and to warn supporters who do, or attempt to, smoke of the consequences - possible ejection from the stadium - to such a contravention.

The emergence of E.Cigarettes, has led to questions from some of our supporters. E.Cigarettes mimic smoking by using a heating element to vaporise a liquid solution (usually containing nicotine or nicotine flavourings)

emitting a non-toxic vapour which does look like smoke, often causing confusion. There have been occasions when someone has lit up a real cigarette and then pointed to someone using an E.Cigarette to say that 'they are smoking'.

Therefore, until such time as legislation officially classifies E.Cigarettes, Luton Town will follow the lead of many other sports stadia and public buildings seek to forbid the use of E.Cigarettes and other such smoking simulators.

Please can we ask all our supporters to not smoke or use any other such smoking paraphernalia within our stadium and to assist us to maintain a smoke free environment for all Luton Town supporters.

PLEASE KEEP OFF THE PITCH

Luton Town Football Club would like to remind all supporters that it is against the law and hence an arrestable offence to enter the playing area at anytime.

Under the Football (Offences) Act 1991 it is an offence for a person at a designated football match to go onto the playing area, or any area adjacent to the playing area to which spectators are not generally admitted, without lawful authority or lawful excuse (which shall be for him to prove). Please keep off the pitch at both home and away games at all times of potentially face a ban from watching the Hatters play in the future.

REST IN PEACE

Everyone at Kenilworth Road was saddened to hear of the death of lifelong Town supporter Derek Potter.

Derek began supporting the Hatters from the age of 10 and introduced his sons David and Richard to matches at Kenilworth Road up and down the country. Our condolences go to Derek's friends and family.

Our condolences also go to the friends and family of ardent Town follower Dave Williams who passed away aged 67.

A supporter for many years, Dave played for the Town youth team in his teenage years and was well-known in local football circles. He will be greatly missed by his family and friends.

ON THE MONEY

2014/15 Season Ticket Prices

Matchday Ticket Prices

all areas

Adult	£20
Young Adult	£15
Senior	£15
Golden Senior	£12
Youth	£8
Junior	£5

5 match voucher

Adult	£90
Young Adult	£67.50
Senior	£67.50
Golden Senior	£54
Youth	£36
Junior	£22.50

Season Ticket Prices - All Areas

CATEGORY	Age	early bird 3rd April - 9th May			prime time 10th May - 30th June			anytime 1st July onwards		
		Price	£ per match	Diamond	Price	£ per match	Diamond	Price	£ per match	Diamond
Adult	22-64	330	14.35	480	370	16.08	520	400	17.39	550
Young Adult	17-21	220	9.56	350	250	10.86	380	280	12.17	410
Senior	65-74	220	9.56	350	250	10.86	380	280	12.17	410
Golden Senior	Over 75	150	6.52	280	175	7.60	305	200	8.69	330
Unaccompanied Youth	10-16	100	4.34	150	100	4.34	150	100	4.34	150
Accompanied Under 17	10-16	60	2.60	110	60	2.60	110	60	2.60	110
Accompanied Under 10	Under 10	30	1.30	80	30	1.30	80	30	1.30	80

A THANK YOU... YOUR £30 DISCOUNT

The £30 discount applies to all existing season ticket holders (all categories). If you feel this applies to you, please tick the appropriate box on the season ticket application form and deduct £30 from the price shown on the price guide for your chosen seat.

Pay the reduced price if you think it applies, but please complete your contact details so we can get in touch if our records don't match. We do reserve the right to hold your Season Ticket at the Ticket Office for collection until any discrepancies are resolved. **DISCOUNTED SEASON TICKETS WILL NOT BE ABLE TO BE BOOKED ONLINE.** The £30 discount applies to all existing season ticket holders who have held a season ticket for three of the last five seasons (all categories).

tickets

HOME & AWAY WITH THE HATTERS



LUTON TOWN v BRAINTREE TOWN

The **Skrill Premier**

SATURDAY 12th APRIL 2014, KICK-OFF 12.52PM

Tickets for this match are now on sale at normal matchday prices. Please note the change in kick-off time for this fixture. This game will be screened live by BT Sports.



WELLING UNITED v LUTON TOWN

The **Skrill Premier**

SATURDAY 19th APRIL 2014, KICK-OFF 12.30PM

This game is all-ticket for Luton Town supporters with none available on the day at Park View Road. Please note the change in kick-off time for this match. We have an allocation of 2,000 tickets, consisting of 1,500 terrace places and 500 seats. Sales plan: Tickets are on sale now to season tickets holders until close of business on Friday 11th April. Any remaining tickets will go on general sale on Saturday 12th April until Friday 18th April at 3pm. Prices: Terrace - £15 adults, £9 over-60s and under-16s; Seats £16 adults, £10 over-60s and under-16s. Wheelchair disabled tickets are available from Luton Town ticket office priced at normal prices plus a carer free of charge.



LUTON TOWN v FOREST GREEN ROVERS

The **Skrill Premier**

MONDAY 21st APRIL 2014, KICK-OFF 3PM

Tickets for this match have now sold out.



HYDE v LUTON TOWN

The **Skrill Premier**

SATURDAY 26th APRIL 2014, KICK-OFF 5.30PM

Please note the kick-off time of this match. This game will be an all-ticket match for Luton Town supporters. We have an allocation of 2,000 terrace places and 300 seats. Prices: Terrace: £14 adults, £8 over-65s, £5 under-16s. Seats: £16 adults, £10 over-65s, £7 under-16s. Sales plan - Tickets are only available on a one person basis: Tickets are now on sale to diamond season tickets until close of business on Tuesday 8th April. From 10am on Wednesday 9th, tickets will be available to season ticket holders up until close of business on Tuesday 15th April. Subject to availability, tickets will go on general sale on Wednesday 16th April until Friday 25th April.

easyJet commercial

WITH COMMERCIAL MANAGER DAVID HOSKINS

Welcome back to Kenilworth Road once more to all our corporate guests and sponsors for what promises to be another exciting evening.

We have completely sold-out of match and matchball sponsorships for our remaining home games which is fantastic news and hospitality has also been snapped up in double-quick time, including our additional off-site package for the Forest Green game on Easter Monday. Furthermore, our end-of-season dinner, which takes place in May, sold out within a day of going on sale. A big thank you to all those who have purchased tickets for this eagerly anticipated event.

As you will be aware we have released our season ticket prices for next season. We soon be sending out information regarding commercial, corporate and sponsorship prices for next season so please keep your eyes peeled for further information.

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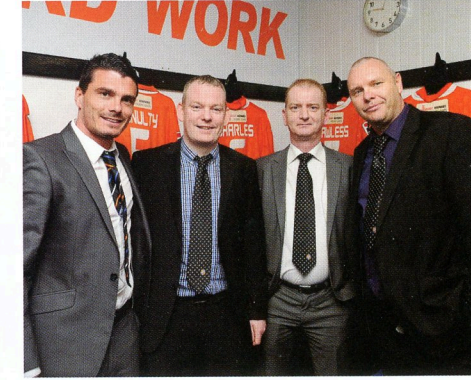


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TONIGHT'S MASCOT



Please welcome this evening's mascot Tyler Lucas. Seven-year-old Lucas loves everything to do with football and Luton Town and his favourite player is defender Ronnie Henry. We hope you have a wonderful evening with us Lucas.



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AWAY: Whosh
GLOVES: Kyle McPherson</p> | <p>2 FRASER FRANKS</p>  <p>HOME: Emma Banks
AWAY: Available</p> | <p>3 DANNY FITZSIMONS</p>  <p>HOME: Available
AWAY: Available</p> | <p>4 JONATHAN SMITH</p>  <p>HOME: Holly Kemp
AWAY: @W9hatter</p> |
| <p>5 STEVE McNULTY</p>  <p>HOME: Simon Cowlard
AWAY: Whosh</p> | <p>6 ANTHONY CHARLES</p>  <p>HOME: Matt Crossland
AWAY: Bobbers Travel Club</p> | <p>7 ALEX LAWLESS</p>  <p>HOME: David Goodge
AWAY: Gill, Julie and Yvonne</p> | <p>8 SOLOMON TAIWO</p>  <p>HOME: Jonathan Perry
AWAY: Available</p> |
| <p>9 JON SHAW</p>  <p>HOME: Jacqui Peacock
AWAY: Maddie Knight</p> | <p>10 ALEX WALL</p>  <p>HOME: Ben & Richard Banks
AWAY: Available</p> | <p>11 JAKE HOWELLS</p>  <p>HOME: Neil Ehrenzweig
AWAY: Sports 262 & lutontownfans.co.uk</p> | <p>12 SCOTT GRIFFITHS</p>  <p>HOME: CME Heating
AWAY: Ben Gray</p> |
| <p>13 MARK CULLEN</p>  <p>HOME: Peter & Linda Little
AWAY: Mad Hatter</p> | <p>14 ANDY PARRY</p>  <p>HOME: The Walsh Family from Marbella
AWAY: R S Robinson Heating</p> | <p>15 LUKE ROONEY</p>  <p>HOME: Whosh
AWAY: Richard & Zak Tilley</p> | <p>16 ELLIOT JUSTHAM</p>  <p>HOME: Available
AWAY: Tommy Lennon
GLOVES: Zak Harford Tilley</p> |
| <p>17 JJ O'DONNELL</p>  <p>HOME: Kelly Knight
AWAY: Available</p> | <p>18 DAVE MARTIN</p>  <p>HOME: Ronnie Coles
AWAY: Nigel, Ben & Sam Martin</p> | <p>19 CAMERON MCGEEHAN</p>  <p>HOME: Ben & Richard Banks
AWAY: Available</p> | <p>20 DAVID VIANA</p>  <p>HOME: Available
AWAY: Available</p> |
| <p>21 LUKE GUTTRIDGE</p>  <p>HOME: Luton Outlaws
AWAY: Luton Town Supporters club of Scandinavia</p> | <p>22 SHAUN WHALLEY</p>  <p>HOME: Re-Mark-It
AWAY: Keyholder Lettings & Management</p> | <p>23 MATT ROBINSON</p>  <p>HOME: Mad Hatter
AWAY: Whosh</p> | <p>24 JERNADE MEADE</p>  <p>HOME: Sweep MK Chimney Sweeps
AWAY: Richard Tilley</p> |
| <p>25 RONNIE HENRY</p>  <p>HOME: Mark Francome
AWAY: Tommy Lennon</p> | <p>26 PAUL BENSON</p>  <p>HOME: Ashby World Domination
AWAY: The Mad Hatter</p> | <p>27 ANDRE GRAY</p>  <p>HOME: Tom
AWAY: Jack Keenan</p> | <p>28 JIM STEVENSON</p>  <p>HOME: Luton Outlaws
AWAY: Available</p> |
| <p>29 KANE FERDINAND</p>  <p>HOME: Available
AWAY: Available</p> | <p>30 ALEX LACEY</p>  <p>HOME: Peter & Linda Little
AWAY: In memory of Bill Lacey</p> | <p>31 JAKE WOOLLEY</p>  <p>HOME: Total Motion Vehicle Management
AWAY: Available</p> | <p>32 BRETT LONGDEN</p>  <p>HOME: Available
AWAY: Available</p> |
| <p>33 JEROME JIBODU</p>  <p>HOME: Mad Hatter
AWAY: Available</p> | <p>34 ZANE BANTON</p>  <p>HOME: Loyal Luton
AWAY: COYH</p> | <p>39 IAN REES</p>  <p>HOME: Mike Tearle
AWAY: COYH</p> | <p>43 PELY RUDDOCK MPANZU</p>  <p>HOME: David Alexander
AWAY: Ben & Richard Banks</p> |
| <p>44 ANDY MANGAN</p>  <p>HOME: @Ironman_LTFC
AWAY: Available</p> | <p>JOHN STILL</p>  <p>HOME: Thompsons Accountants
AWAY: Country Properties</p> | <p>TERRY HARRIS</p>  <p>HOME: Doug Knight
AWAY: Clive and Graham</p> | <p>HAKAN HAYRETTIN</p>  <p>HOME: Available
AWAY: Available</p> |

welcome



It is with great pleasure that we welcome everyone associated with Tamworth to Kenilworth Road this evening.

Tonight's game takes on huge significance for both sides with the Town in the need for the points in their quest for the title. For the visitors, however, three points are a must if they are to avoid relegation from the Conference Premier. The Lambs are in the midst of their worse run of form of the campaign with just one win in their last 15 matches in the Skrill Premier. Their sole victory during this time was a 1-0 win over relegation rivals Aldershot back on 8th March. Since that three-point haul Dale Belford's side have lost six of their last seven matches with a sole goalless draw against Lincoln 10 days ago breaking up a dismal sequence of results.

Tamworth arrive in Bedfordshire on the back of a 5-0 defeat at promotion-chasing Gateshead on Saturday and Belford's side have now failed to score in their last three matches which also included a 2-0 defeat at fellow strugglers Chester. The Lambs are making their fifth visit to Bedfordshire, with both clubs occupying the same division for the fifth season in succession.

Manager Belford is hoping to achieve what many managers before him have done: keep Tamworth in the top-flight of non-league football. The Lambs entered this level again in 2009 – the year that the Town also entered the fifth tier following their relegation – after picking up the Conference North title. In the past four seasons the Staffordshire outfit have finished 16th, 19th, 18th and 19th in the table.

Goals have been hard to come by for Tamworth this term following the departure of last season's leading goalscorer Adam Cunnington, who joined the Hatters' promotion rivals Cambridge in the summer. The striker scored 21 goals at the Lamb last season, while this season Richard Peniket leads the scoring charts with seven goals.

The Lambs gave the Town a shock the last time the two clubs met back in October. Tamworth took the lead through one-time Hatters target Duane Courtney before the Hatters hit back to score four to lead 4-1. However a late rally saw the Lambs reduce the deficit and in the closing stages Belford's side came close to a dramatic late equaliser. Tamworth will draw confidence from their last visit to Kenilworth Road last year when both sides played out a goalless draw in blizzard-like conditions.

On the road the Lambs have found results hard to come by with just three wins and two draws from 13 matches away from their Lamb Ground home. Belford's side have scored just 15 goals on their travels – only Southport and Aldershot have scored less away from home so far this campaign. Their last victory away from the Lamb Ground came at Hyde – the only team in the division who have yet to win in front of their home faithful.

The Lambs will be desperate to take anything from tonight's game – especially considering they still have to play fellow relegation candidates Southport, Hereford and Dartford in their next three matches after this evening.

in opposition

MEET THE TAMWORTH SQUAD

MANAGER

DALE BELFORD. Appointed permanently as the Lambs boss this summer having twice been caretaker manager. A goalkeeper as a player, he started out at Aston Villa before moving to Tamworth and then Notts County.

GOALKEEPERS

CAMERON BELFORD. Former Coventry youngster who signed this summer having been released by Bury. Made 80 appearances for the Shakers and has also been on the books at Accrington and Southend.

JAMES WREN. Former Walsall youth team keeper and was signed up at the start of the 2012/13 season after his release by Burton Albion. Spent time on loan at Barwell and Eastwood Town.

DEFENERS

JACK EVANS. Right-back who joined the Lambs from Gillingham where he had been since the age of seven. Made his first team debut in October of the same year and then went out on loan to Welling, Corby and Dartford.

BEN RICHARDS-EVERTON. Centre-half who initially joined the Lambs at the end of the 2012/13 season from Hinckley United and has previously been on the books of Carlisle and Crawley Town.

DUANE COURTNEY. Highly-rated defender and club captain who started his career as a youngster with Derby and then Birmingham. After spells with Telford, Burnley and TNS he joined Kidderminster, and then York, but signed for the Lambs in February 2011.

JORDAN KEANE. Talented young centre-half currently on-loan from Premier League Stoke City. Joined the club in November before extending his loan spell from the Potters.

MICHAEL TOWNSEND. Summer arrival from Hereford where he had been a former player of the year. Began his career at Wolves before moving to Cheltenham – where he made 134 appearances – and then Barnet.

JACK CAPRICE. Former Crystal Palace youngster who joined the Lambs in March. After being released at Selhurst Park he spent time at Blackpool and St Mirren and has been on-loan at Dagenham & Redbridge.

MIDFIELDERS

CLAUDIO HOBAN. Young Romanian midfielder who joined the Lambs on loan from Corby in March. Has also featured for Kettering and Histon.

LLOYD KERRY. All-action central midfielder now in his second season at the Lamb. A former Sheffield United trainee he has also played for Chesterfield, Torquay, Alfreton and Kidderminster.

GAVIN MAHON. Hugely experienced defensive midfielder who joined Tamworth in January following his release from Portsmouth. Spent a large chunk of his career in successful spells at Brentford and Watford.

ANDY TODD. Summer arrival at the Lamb having been released from his player/coach roll at Mansfield at the end of the season. Featured for Rotherham and Accrington Stanley as well as Burton Albion and Eastwood Town before linking up with the Stags in 2011.

RICHIE BAKER. Midfielder who started his footballing life at the Manchester United Academy before joining Preston and then Bury in 2006 where he made over 100 appearances. Also played for Oxford and Barrow.

KEVIN THORNTON. Experienced Irish midfielder who has enjoyed spells at Coventry, Brighton and Northampton. Most recent with Wrexham, he signed for the Lambs in March.

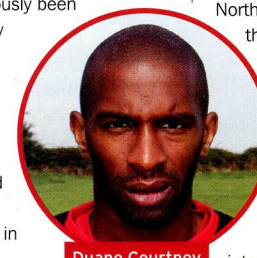
STRIKERS

JUSTIN RICHARDS. Burly striker who signed for the Lambs in pre-season. Started as a youngster at West Brom before moves to Cheltenham, Port Vale, Burton, Kidderminster and Woking.

RICHARD PENIKET. Welsh Under-19 and 21 international forward who signed from Fulham in the summer of 2013. He started his career at Walsall and signed for Fulham in 2011 enjoying loan spells at a number of Conference clubs.

DARREN BYFIELD. Jamaican international striker who signed for Tamworth at the end of January 2013. Flourished in the Premier League with Aston Villa before moves to Walsall, Gillingham, Rotherham and Millwall.

NICK CHADWICK. Another former Premier League striker on the Lambs' books, Chadwick started his career with Everton. Joined Plymouth in 2005 before spells with a host of clubs prior to his arrival at the Lamb in October 2013.



Duane Courtney

scout report

WITH MATT AQUINO

Tamworth will come to Kenilworth Road with a do-or-die attitude tonight knowing they could be relegated if they lose and other results go against them.

The Lambs are nine points off safety with only 15 points available to play for in the Skrill Premier season including today's match.

Many will say this has been coming for a while as the Staffordshire outfit have now been battling relegation in each and every season since their promotion to the Conference top-flight in the 2008/09 season.

In the 2009/10 season, Tamworth earned 49 points and finished three points above the drop zone. They finished with the exact same points total the very next season (2010/11) and survived once more.

In the 2011/12 season, the Lambs flirted with danger more so than ever. Tonight's visitors went without a win in the final 14 games of the season yet still, rather incredibly, managed to stay up.

Last term, Tamworth finished five points clear of relegation, but this season it looks as though they will need a miracle to escape the drop.

A closer look at Tamworth's season so far

The Lambs are 23rd in the table having played 41, won eight, drawn nine and lost 24 whilst scoring 37 goals and conceding 71 – which is the most amount concede by any team in the division besides bottom-side Hyde.

Away from home, Tamworth have won just three of their 20 games and drawn two meaning they have picked up 11 points from a possible 60. The relegation battlers have suffered 15 defeats on the road and have conceded an average of 2.2 goals per game. A horrendous away run of eight straight defeats, or 12 defeats in 13 games, is certainly what has left Tamworth in such danger.

Looking from the outside, you might argue that Tamworth have shown a lack of fight this year as they have gained just three points from losing positions in matches and have failed to score on 20 occasions – more than any other side in the league.



Richard Peniket



How will they play? Who are their danger men?

Cameron Belford, the son of manager Dale, will start in goal for the visitors after signing for Tamworth from Bury in the summer.

20-year-old Jack Evans, a Gillingham youth product, will start at right-back with Blackpool loanee Jake Caprice. In central defence instead, Jordan Keane will partner Ben Richards-Everton.

Youngster Lloyd Kerry will be joined in the centre of the park by former Watford captain Gavin Mahon. Mahon played over 180 games for the Hornets so can expect a frosty reception here at Kenilworth Road today.

Richard Peniket, Tamworth's top goalscorer this season with seven goals, will start on the left with David Morgan on the right and 33-year-old Kevin Thornton leading the line for the visitors.

club data

Established: 1933
 Nickname(s): The Lambs
 Stadium: The Lamb Ground
 Capacity: 4,195 (Avg. attendance '13/14 -1,047)
 Manager: Dale Belford (One year)
 Final league position 12/13: 19th BSBP

from the oak road

Wins and lots of them are a must now for Tamworth if they are to have any chance of staying in the Conference for another season. Supporter Christian Sharp gives us the lowdown on the Lambs.

TALK OF THE TOWN: After a few years of stability in the Conference Premier, Tamworth find themselves staring relegation in the face. Have the team performed below their best this campaign - or has the competition simply strengthened?

CHRISTIAN: The competition continues to strengthen year on year. There are many teams that could compete in the Football League and sides like Alfreton Town and Nuneaton Town have stunned everyone this season. We didn't perform as well as we usually do at the start of the season and are now paying the price.

TOTT: The match between the two sides in October was a topsy-turvy game - what were your impressions of it from a Tamworth perspective?

CHRISTIAN: It certainly was topsy-turvy! It felt great seeing around 1,200 Luton fans stunned as we took the lead early on but, unfortunately, Luton gained the upper hand with a combination of good play and well taken chances. However, with determination and fighting spirit we pulled back two goals, bringing the game to 4-3, but ran out of time to find an equaliser. It was an entertaining game nonetheless.

TOTT: Which of your current squad should Hatters' fans particularly be on the lookout for today?

CHRISTIAN: Nick Chadwick if he's back from injury. He's got vast Football League experience and has already proved his quality with 10 goals for us in all competitions. He's a skilful striker who will be a handful for any defence in the league. Cameron Belford and Gavin Mahon have also shown their Football League experience in their time here.

TOTT: Tell us about the Belford family connection at Tamworth. What do you make of the job manager Dale is doing in his second spell in charge of the club?

CHRISTIAN: The Belfords are a big part of the club. Kit manager Buster, goalkeeper Cameron and manager Dale are all well-liked and respected within the town by many supporters. I believe Dale has been and will continue to be the right man for the job, although opinions are divided because of our current league position.

TOTT: What has been your highlight of the season so far?

CHRISTIAN: I'd say beating Cheltenham

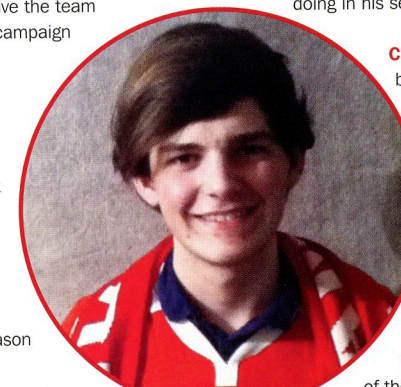
Town 1-0 in the FA Cup first round. It was a thoroughly pleasing performance all round, setting us up for a game against Bristol City on ITV1, which we lost 2-1.

TOTT: Do you feel Tamworth will stay up this season? If not, who do you see going down with you? Would you be confident of an immediate return through promotion next season?

CHRISTIAN: Unfortunately, it looks like we will be relegated along with Hyde, Dartford and Hereford. An immediate return would be nice but I can't see it happening because we'll have to start with a fresh squad.

TOTT: What's your prediction for tonight's game?

CHRISTIAN: If we play with the right attitude then we're capable of leaving with at least a point. It could be a hard fought 1-1 draw.



Christian Sharp

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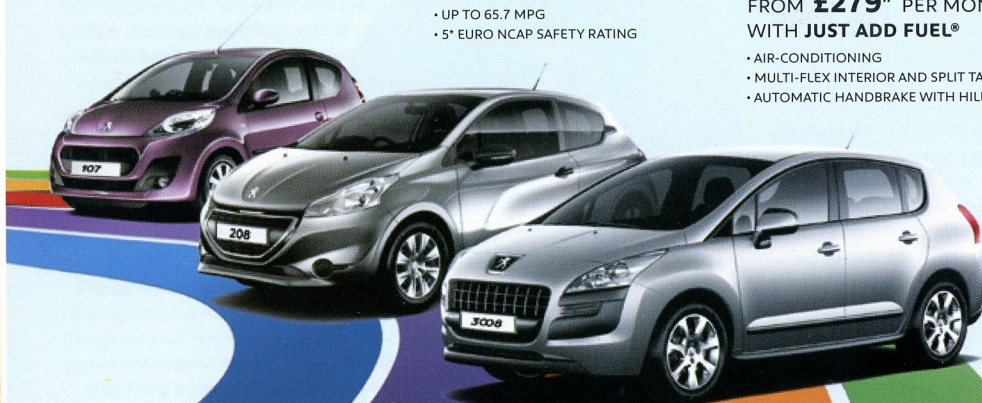
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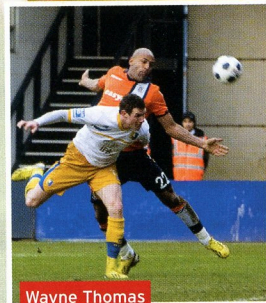
...A LAMB

WAYNE THOMAS AND ALAN NEILSON

Just two players have played for both the Town and Tamworth down the years and both have done so in recent years.

Wayne Thomas joined the Lambs this summer having ended the campaign on the Hatters' books. The experienced centre-half signed for the Hatters almost a year ago to the day but didn't make his debut for the club until a 3-2 home defeat by Mansfield on 23rd February. In his second game the defender received a red card in the first half in a 2-0 defeat at Braintree, which would be his last game in Luton colours. He was loaned out to Rochdale for the remainder of the season before signing for Tamworth.

Alan Neilson has been a familiar face at Kenilworth Road over the past decade. Neilson also arrived in February, in 2002, and went on to become a dependable and versatile member of the Town squad that enjoyed success over the seasons that followed. Capable of playing anywhere across the defence or in defensive midfield, Neilson scored once in Luton colours, in an away win at Stockport. After leaving Kenilworth Road he signed for Tamworth in 2006 and then Salisbury, but Neilson was back at Luton at the start of the 2008/09 campaign. Appointed as youth development coach he was quickly placed in temporary caretaker charge following Mick Harford's departure a year later. Neilson was then appointed assistant manager and first team coach and was also in caretaker charge another three times following the departures of Richard Money, Gary Brabin and Paul Buckle.



Wayne Thomas



Andre Gray in action against Tamworth last season

HAVEN'T WE MET BEFORE?

The Hatters will be hoping to continue their excellent record against Tamworth this evening whilst the Lambs are looking for just their second win against the Town.

This afternoon is the 10th meeting between the clubs. Both clubs have occupied the Conference Premier in the last five seasons with the Town coming out on top in six of the nine matches played so far.

Tamworth's sole victory over the Hatters came in August 2010 at the Lamb in a 3-1 win, with Tom Craddock scoring the Luton goal.

At Kenilworth Road the Town have won three of the four meetings. A 2-1 win came in October 2009 thanks to goals from Asa Hall and Ben Wright. Alex Rodman scored the visitors' goal. In March 2011 goals from Lloyd Owusu and Matthew Barnes-Homer secured the Hatters a 2-0 win over the Lambs.

The Town won for the first time at the Lamb in

December 2011 with two goals from Danny Crow and one from James Dance completing a 3-1 win over the nine-man Lambs and followed that victory up by completing the double over Tamworth in February 2012 with goals from Stuart Fleetwood, Janos Kovacs and a Francino Francis own goal helping the Hatters to a 3-0 win.

Last season the Town won 2-1 at the Lamb, coming from a goal down at half-time to triumph 2-1 thanks to goals from Yaser Kasim and Stuart Fleetwood.

The Lambs finally gained a point at Kenilworth Road last March as both teams battled valiantly in the blizzard-like conditions to a goalless draw.

But the Town returned to winning ways against Tamworth back in October with a 4-3 victory. Trailing 1-0 to a Duane Courtney goal the Hatters stormed back to lead 4-1 before two late goals ensured a frantic finish.

back to the future

FOOTBALL HISTORIAN LEIGH EDWARDS TRACES WHAT HAPPENED TO FOUR OF TAMWORTH'S GREATEST POST-WAR TEAMS

1989 FA VASE WINNERS

DALE BELFORD: Goalkeeper who later had spells at Sutton Coldfield, Tamworth again, Nuneaton Borough, Hinckley Town, Atherstone United and Gresley Rovers. He is back at Tamworth as manager.

CORRIGAN LOCKETT: Tough-tackling former Stafford Rangers right-back who had two spells at Tamworth before rejoining Rushall Olympic. He has since worked as a property acquisitions manager.

BOBBY ATKINS: Inspirational captain who scored Tamworth's sixth round winner at home to Wisbech. He emigrated to Canada before returning to play in local football, since working as a carpenter.

STEVE CARTWRIGHT: Defender who had two spells with hometown Tamworth, reuniting with Graham Smith at Atherstone United in August 1992. Later with Bolehall Swifts, he is a profile cutter.

MARTIN FINN: Former Sutton Coldfield defender who was Man of the Match in the FA Vase final against Sudbury Town. Later with Worcester City, he has since managed the family butcher's shop.

MARTIN MYERS: Midfielder who netted 45 goals in 277 games prior to joining Telford United in July 1990, then Solihull Borough, Stourbridge, Moor Green, Redditch, Willenhall and Halesowen Town.

MICKY GEORGE: Ex-Swansea City apprentice midfielder who was a valuable member of Graham Smith's squad and returned to his native Wales with Haverfordwest County. He is now an accountant.

MARTIN DEVANEY: Striker who scored Tamworth's equaliser in the Wembley final. He moved via Leek Town back to Gresley Rovers, then played for Burton Albion, since becoming an accountant.

IAN MOORES: Former England Under-23 striker who opened the scoring in the FA Vase final replay success. His career was ended by injury and he was a financial consultant until his death in January 1998.

RUSSELL GORDON: Much-travelled striker who was involved in the Mike Henry sending-off incident at Wembley. He hung up his boots to run a local pub but played occasional games for Polesworth.

MARK STANTON: Leading marksman who scored twice in the FA vase final replay triumph and returned from a spell at Redditch United. Later with Chasetown and Bilston, he is now an electrician.

2003 FA TROPHY FINALISTS

DARREN ACTON: Goalkeeper who joined Nuneaton and featured in their 2005/06 FA Cup run, Later with Brackley Town, Chasetown and Bolehall Swifts, he is now Solihull Moors goalkeeping coach.

ROB WARNER: Ex-Hereford United right-back who helped Tamworth to also win the Southern League title in 2002-03. He moved to Worcester City in May 2004, then ended his career with Halesowen Town.

RICHARD FOLLETT: Represented British Students in the World Student Games in South Korea in 2003. He joined Moor Green in June 2004, staying with Solihull Moors. Now a physiotherapist in Sheffield.

BRIAN MCGORRY: Experienced midfielder with over 150 Football League appearances. He joined Nuneaton Borough in July 2003, then coached Vauxhall Motors and is now a PE instructor/personal trainer.

DAVE ROBINSON: Solid central defender who had previously played under Gary Mills at King's Lynn. He rejoined Grantham in August 2004 and later appeared for Alfreton Town, settling in Nottingham.

STEVE WALSH: Veteran central defender with almost 500 Football League appearances. He was a former Wembley winner with Wigan Athletic and Leicester City, where now joint assistant-manager.

NICK COLLEY: Midfielder who was Player of the Year in 2000/01 and joined Stafford Rangers in October 2003. Later appearing for Worcester City, he revived his career after injury with Lichfield City.

MARK COOPER: Player-manager who became Kettering Town's boss in May 2007 and has since had spells as manager of Peterborough United, Darlington, AFC Telford United and now Swindon Town.

SCOTT RICKARDS: Has since had various spells with Kidderminster, Redditch, Tamworth again, Nuneaton, Alfreton, Bromsgrove, Brackley, Solihull Moors, Halesowen and now Rainsworth MW boss.

MARK SALE: Experienced striker with over 200 Football League appearances. He joined Alfreton in October 2003, then played for Northwich Victoria and became Burton Albion's youth team manager.

STEVE EVANS: Former Burton Albion midfielder who helped Tamworth to also win the Southern League title in 2002/03. He moved to Hednesford in June 2003, then Rugby Town, Grantham and Quorn.



2005/06 FA CUP GIANTKILLERS

SCOTT BEVAN: Goalkeeper who moved to Kidderminster Harriers in July 2006, then appeared in the Football League with Shrewsbury, Torquay United and Bristol Rovers. Now at Havant & Waverlooville.

GRAHAM WARD: Right-back who scored in Tamworth's 2005/06 FA Cup first round win at Bournemouth. He joined Worcester City in October 2006, then played for Nuneaton until injury ended his career.

JIMMY TURNER: Much-travelled left-back who joined AFC Telford United in February 2006 and has since had spells playing for Bromsgrove Rovers, Eastwood Town, Hednesford Town and Chasetown.

DAVE BAMPTON: Ex-Swindon Town midfielder who helped Tamworth take Stoke City to an FA Cup third round replay in 2005/06. He moved to Worcester City in July 2008, then Swindon Supermarine.

MATT REDMILE: Experienced central defender who scored Tamworth's winner in the FA Cup second round triumph at Hartlepool. He joined Hinckley United in August 2006, then Sutton Town and Goole.

ADIE SMITH: England Semi-Pro international central defender who had played for Kidderminster Harriers in the Football League. He moved to Chasetown in June 2008, then finished with Rushall Olympic.

STEVE MELTON: Ex-Brighton and Hull City midfielder who joined Alfreton Town in June 2006. He later played for King's Lynn, Boston United, Lincoln United, Grantham and Lincoln United again.

MICHAEL TUOHY: The son of former Southend United and Kidderminster Harriers striker Micky Tuohy. He moved to Solihull Moors in July 2008 and has since played for Leamington and briefly Margate.

NICK WRIGHT: Striker who helped Tamworth take Stoke City to an FA Cup third round replay in 2005/06. He joined Kidderminster Harriers in July 2010, since playing for Mansfield and Lincoln City.

JAKE EDWARDS: Former Yeovil Town striker who joined Chester in March 2006, then Crawley, Tamworth again, Burton Albion and Solihull Moors. Now vice president of USL Pro in the United States.

EDDIE ANACLET: Now known as Eddie Odhiambo after adopting his father's surname, he joined Oxford United in July 2006, since playing for Stevenage, Newport County, Gateshead and Brackley.

2008/09 CONFERENCE NORTH CHAMPIONS

DANNY ALCOCK: Ex-Barnsley goalkeeper who was a mid-season signing from Stafford Rangers. He moved to Nuneaton Town in August 2010 and is now the goalkeeping coach at Stoke city's Academy.

DES LYTTLE: Experienced right-back with over 350 Football League appearances. He became Tamworth's manager in October 2010, then managed Hucknall Town and was York City's first-team coach.

CRAIG MCAUGHTRIE: Former Carlisle United defender who moved to King's Lynn in June 2009. He later appeared for Eastwood Town, Stafford Rangers again, Hinckley United and Mickleover Sports.

CHRIS SMITH: Former York City central defender who joined Mansfield Town in May 2010, then returned to York in October 2010. He helped win the FA Trophy and Conference Play-Off final in 2011/12.

MICHAEL WYLDEN: Former Cheltenham Town central defender who moved to Cambridge United in May 2011. He briefly rejoined Tamworth in March 2013 and is currently playing for Alfreton Town.

MARTIN FOSTER: Midfielder who had helped Leeds United to win the FA Youth Cup. He joined Eastwood Town in July 2009, then Harrogate Town, Sheffield FC and Matlock Town where now a coach.

ALEX RODMAN: Much-travelled winger who moved to Aldershot Town in January 2011, then reunited with Gary Mills on loan at York City in November 2012 and is currently playing for Grimsby Town.

BRADLEY PRITCHARD: Zimbabwe midfielder who joined Hayes & Yeading United in July 2010. He moved to Charlton Athletic in May 2011 and featured in their 2011/12 League One title campaign.

NICK WRIGHT: Striker who helped Tamworth take Stoke City to an FA Cup third round replay in 2005-06. He joined Kidderminster Harriers in July 2010, since playing for Mansfield and Lincoln City.

GARETH SHELDON: Ex-Scunthorpe United and Exeter City striker. He moved to King's Lynn in June 2009, then played for Atherstone Town and has since had spells with Bolehall Swifts and Polesworth.

TOM SHAW: Winger who appeared in Rushden & Diamonds' last-ever Football League game. He moved to Kidderminster Harriers in June 2010, since playing for Cambridge United and Alfreton Town.



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DARTFORD 1-2 TOWN

A stirring comeback in the final seven minutes saw the Hatters record a crucial 2-1 win at Dartford.

Trailing to a first half header from home striker Mikel Suarez the Town looked out of ideas, but the dismissal of Darts midfielder Kenny Clark with eight minutes left turned the game in the Hatters' favour.

Substitute Pelly Ruddock rifled home a sublime equaliser within a minute of his introduction before leading goalscorer Andre Gray completed the turnaround with a bullet header with just three minutes left to seal a priceless win in the Town's pursuit of the title.

The Town came close to taking the lead as early as the eighth minute when Gray sped clear of the home defence only to see his low shot saved before Jake Howells headed the rebound over.

Dartford came close on 19 minutes when the Hatters failed to deal with a right-wing cross from Lee Noble, and after Max Cornhill missed his kick, Elliot Bradbrook volleyed inches wide of the target from 12 yards. Three minutes later the Darts weren't far away once more; this time Steve McNulty was in the right place at the right time to steer Cornhill's poke at goal away from danger.

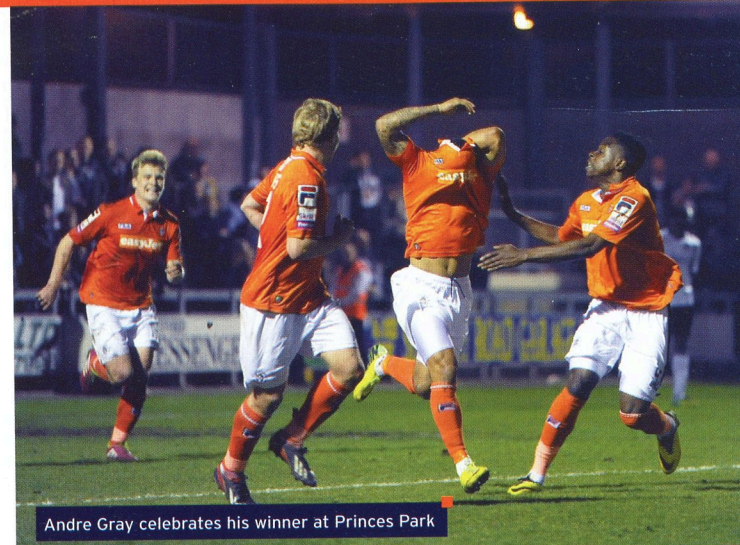
All of a sudden the Town rediscovered their threat in the final third and Paul Benson was mighty unlucky to see his deft header from a dangerous left-wing cross from Howells cleared off the line.

However, the Hatters were hit by a sucker punch on 34 minutes when the Darts took the lead. A left-wing corner from Noble was met by a powerful header from Suarez.

The home side came close to making it 2-0 on 39 minutes when Cornhill bundled an effort wide of the target following a right-wing corner and that spurred the Town on to up the ante before the break.

Cameron McGeehan failed to get a header on target on 41 minutes before the home defence's Tyrone Sterling cleared brilliantly inside his own six-yard box to prevent Howells' devilish cross from finding Benson.

Unhappy at the Town's failure to create any chances



Andre Gray celebrates his winner at Princes Park

in the opening 10 minutes of the second half, John Still introduced Mark Cullen and Ruddock from the bench and the Hatters came close to levelling the score on 58 minutes when Gray's low left-foot shot across goal rolled agonisingly wide of the post.

Back came Dartford; Mark Tyler stopped a low shot from centre-half Cornhill a minute later before the Town stopper sprawled himself to smother a shot from Sterling after the defender's mazy run forward.

With 12 minutes to go the Town were helped in their quest to find a late leveller when home midfielder Clark was shown a straight red card for a nasty foul on Lawless.

Sensational

Three minutes later the Town took advantage by equalising in sensational style through Ruddock who unleashed an unstoppable strike from the edge of the box that flew into the top corner.

Level, and with a man advantage, it was all the Town and the Hatters came within a whisker of making it 2-1 on 86 minutes when Rooney's shot on the turn was deflected on to the crossbar before the same player also saw a free-kick well-saved by Julian.

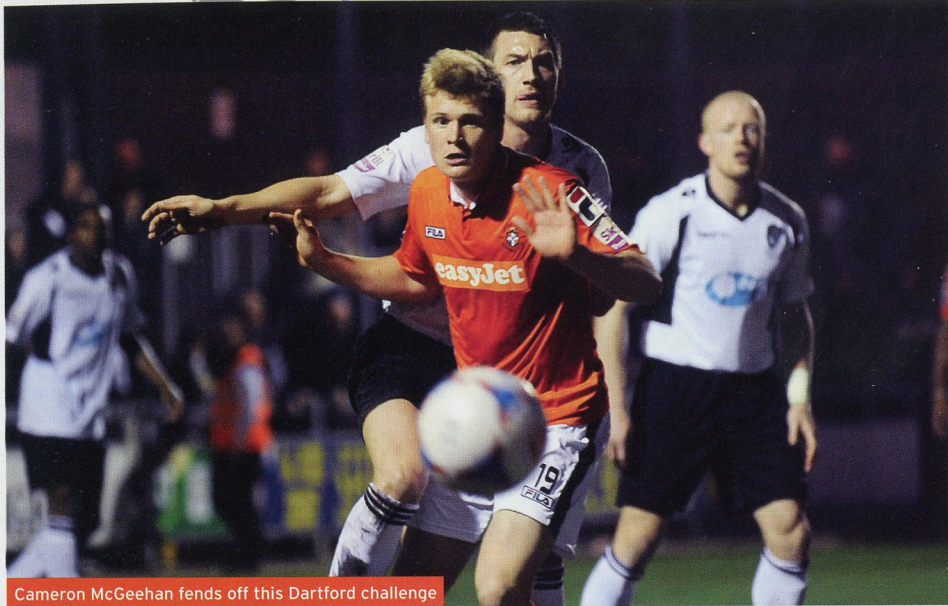
But the Hatters hordes didn't have long to wait to celebrate when a minute later they got the winner. Dartford failed to clear their lines and Ronnie Henry's right wing cross was met by the thumping head of Gray whose effort whizzed past Julian.

DARTFORD 1-2 TOWN

Suarez 34



LUTON TOWN
Ruddock 83, Gray 87



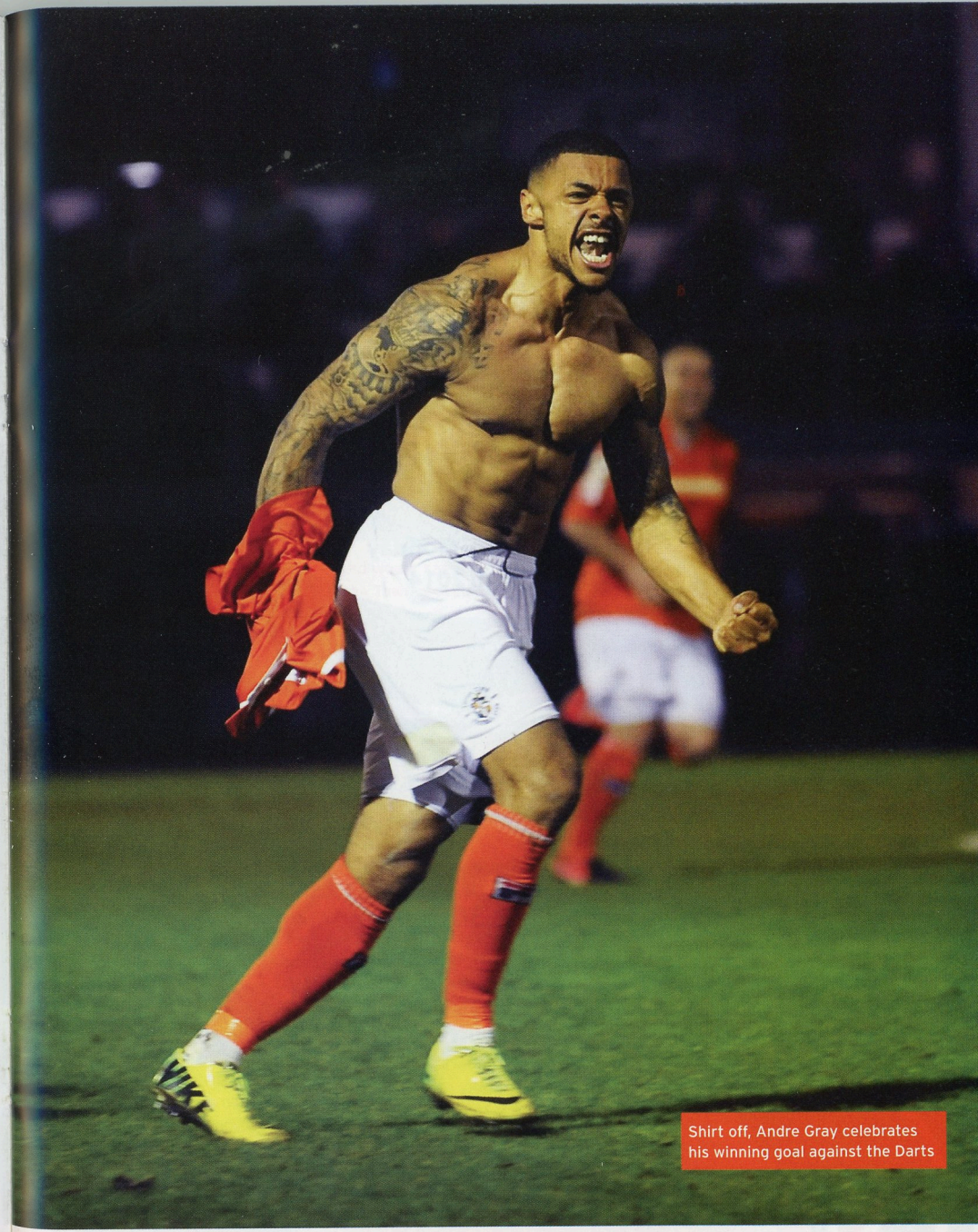
Cameron McGeehan fends off this Dartford challenge



Pelly Ruddock urges his team-mates to play on following his equaliser

DARTFORD: Julian, Clark, Sterling, Mitchell-King, McAuley, Bradbrook, Noble, Cornhill, Burns, Harris, Suarez (sub Collier 71). **SUBS NOT USED:** Holloway, Woodyard, Akinwande, Swallow.

TOWN: Tyler; Henry, Griffiths, McNulty, Franks; Lawless, Robinson (sub Ruddock 57), McGeehan, Howells (sub Rooney 68); Gray, Benson (sub Cullen 55). **SUBS NOT USED:** Charles, Justham.



Shirt off, Andre Gray celebrates his winning goal against the Darts

POSSESSION	47%	53%
CORNERS	6	10
SHOTS ON TARGET	2	6
SHOTS OFF TARGET	5	4

FOULS	13	11
YELLOW CARDS	1	2
RED CARDS	1	0

ATTENDANCE: 2,869 (1,828 LUTON)

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TOWN 1-0 ALDERSHOT



Paul Benson sees this effort saved

As John Still has said before - and would say again - "winners find a way" and the Town moved to within six points of a return to the Football League with a narrow win over Aldershot thanks to Cameron McGeehan's late winner.

The Hatters looked all set to share a point with the lowly Shots until the on-loan Norwich midfielder's brave, brave header found the back of the net with just five minutes left on the clock to spark delirious celebrations at a packed Kenilworth Road.

The Town, who began showing two changes to side that earned a late victory at Dartford on Tuesday, were frustrated in a first half that saw them go close on several occasions and have a goal chalked off for offside.

Aldershot, in desperate need for the points to prevent a second successive relegation, had the first effort of the game when Josh Scott's low effort rolled wide of the target with Mark Tyler at full stretch on nine minutes.

But the Town were playing some eye-catching, one-touch football and came close on 11 minutes when Luke Rooney - one of those two changes to the side - volleyed over the crossbar from the edge of the box.

The Hatters continued to probe looking for a way through the visitors defence and the majority inside Kenilworth Road thought the Town were ahead on 21 minutes but Paul Benson's lob nestled home - only for the effort to be ruled out for offside.

Ten minutes later the Hatters created their first good chance of the game when captain Ronnie Henry's cross was met by the foot of Andre Gray from six yards but the Town striker's firm, first-time shot was well-saved by Shots goalkeeper Glenn Morris. As half-time approached the Hatters came close again. Alex Lawless' clever pass sent Gray away, but after beating the Aldershot defence

for pace his low effort was blocked again by Morris.

Aldershot were by no means second best in an entertaining first half and Mark Tyler needed to be alert on 44 minutes to deny the lively Adam Mekki's low shot at the near post.

After the break both sides struggled to create much of a clear-cut chance. Gray had the beating of his man down the right flank for pace all game but failed to pick out a team-mate on 54 minutes having raced clear and got to the byline. The same happened on 66 minutes when Benson came within a whisker of connecting to Gray's right-wing cross as the visitors continued to keep the Town at bay with some dogged defending.

Still sent on Mark Cullen and Matt Robinson in an attempt to snatch the points but Aldershot came close to taking the lead themselves with two efforts in the space of a minute when firstly Mekki's low shot was saved by Tyler before Jordan Roberts scuffed his effort wide when well-placed at the back-post.

The boss made his third and final change with eight minutes left when introducing Jake Howells for Lawless and three minutes later the Town got the goal that won it. Howells was the architect - twisting and turn his man inside out to deliver a cross to the near post. McGeehan was first to it, stabbing an effort goalwards which was blocked. However, the teenager was quickest to the loose ball again and he dived bravely to head the ball over the line which was the cue for pandemonium inside Kenilworth Road.

Four added minutes followed but the Town needed a fabulous reflex save from Tyler to ensure the three points when he somehow stuck an arm up to prevent Fraser Franks' inadvertent deflection from six yards giving the Shots a late, late, late equaliser.

TOWN 1-0 ALDERSHOT

McGeehan 85

Mark Tyler tips over a late Aldershot effort



The moment the Town won it thanks to Cameron McGeehan's late header

TOWN: Tyler; Henry, Griffiths, McNulty, Franks; McGeehan, Ruddock (sub Robinson 67), Rooney (sub Cullen 75); Lawless (sub Howell 82), Gray, Benson.
SUBS NOT USED: Shaw, Justham.

ALDERSHOT: Morris, Butler, Oastler, Phillips, Gibbs, Mekki, Oyeleke, Stanley, Rowlands (sub Cornick 88), Moseley (sub Roberts 59), Scott (sub Bubb 57).
SUBS NOT USED: Williams, Gerrard.



Matt Robinson is first to congratulate Cameron McGeehan on his winner

POSSESSION	59%	41%
CORNERS	9	5
SHOTS ON TARGET	4	2
SHOTS OFF TARGET	6	5

FOULS	11	8
YELLOW CARDS	2	2
RED CARDS	0	0
ATTENDANCE:	8,558 (240 ALDERSHOT)	

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Address and Postcode:	Daytime telephone:
Email:	Evening telephone:
Date of birth: (compulsary)	Mobile telephone:

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SEASON TICKET DETAILS	Stand:	Block:
	Row:	Seat:
SEASON TICKET TYPE (Please tick)	<input type="checkbox"/> Accompanied under 10 <input type="checkbox"/> Unaccompanied Youth (11-16) <input type="checkbox"/> Adult (22-64) <input type="checkbox"/> Golden Senior (over 75)	<input type="checkbox"/> Accompanied under 17 <input type="checkbox"/> Young Adult (17-21) <input type="checkbox"/> Senior (65-74)
TYPE OF SEASON TICKET (Please tick)	<input type="checkbox"/> Regular	<input type="checkbox"/> Diamond

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Applicants Signature: _____ Date: _____

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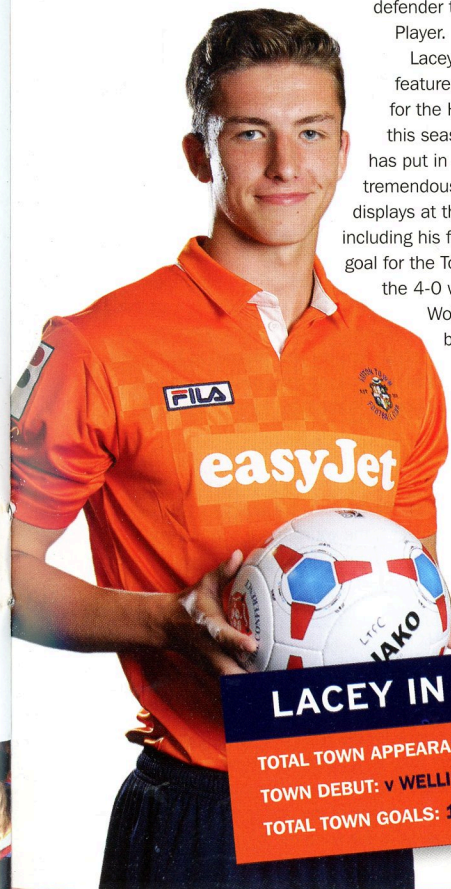
DEFENDER ON CONTRACT EXTENSION

Alex Lacey is eyeing promotion with the Town following a contract extension that will see the 20-year-old remain at Kenilworth Road for a further two years.

The centre-half signed on the dotted line last Thursday and is proud to have played a part in the Town's push for promotion, having not featured for the Hatters in over three months following an injury.

"I'm very happy to sign a new deal. I had a very enjoyable start to the season and the injury set me back a bit, but I loved my time in the first time and hopefully I can continue that," the defender told Hatters Player.

Lacey has featured 19 times for the Hatters this season and has put in some tremendous defensive displays at the back, including his first senior goal for the Town in the 4-0 win over Woking back in December.



LACEY IN NUMBERS

TOTAL TOWN APPEARANCES: 28
TOWN DEBUT: v WELLING 14/12/2010
TOTAL TOWN GOALS: 1 - v WOKING THIS SEASON

The 20-year-old reflected on his spell in the first team before the injury struck.

"If somebody told me before the season began that I was going to play close to 20 games in the first team I would have thought they were crazy," said Lacey. "I had a really good pre-season and played 20 games before Christmas which was great. It is frustrating that the injury happened when it did but that's the way football is sometimes."

The defender admitted that he does not expect to return to the starting 11 anytime soon, with McNulty and Franks playing so well at the back for the Town, but his main intention is to try and force his way back into the side come next season, hopefully as a Football League player.

Priority

"I don't expect to get in the team when they're playing so well at the minute," admitted the young centre-half. "The main priority is to gain promotion and hopefully when that's confirmed I can get a run out in the last few games of the season."

"When you pick up an injury you are worried whether or not you will get back into the team when you recover. It can be frustrating when you're watching from the sidelines and you aren't in the team. They have been doing superbly and they went on a run of 27 games unbeaten. You wouldn't expect the team to change when they are playing so well."

Happy

It has been a great season for the youngster so far, earning over 20 appearances for the Hatters this season, including scoring his first senior goal and captaining his side in a friendly game against Boreham Wood earlier in the season. The 20-year-old defender reflected on the highlights of his season thus far.

"I'm very happy with the way the season has gone. I would have liked to have gotten more appearances but there's nothing you can do about an injury. I'm delighted to have scored my first goal for Luton and cement my place in the first team for half of the season."

the big interview

AFTER DROPPING DOWN TO THE RYMAN LEAGUE AFTER YEARS PLAYING IN THE FOOTBALL LEAGUE, LUKE ROONEY FELT DISILLUSIONED WITH THE GAME HE LOVES SO MUCH. BUT NOW, AS HE TELLS TALK OF THE TOWN, THE MIDFIELDER IS AT KENILWORTH ROAD AND AIMING TO FALL IN LOVE WITH IT ALL OVER AGAIN

New arrival Luke Rooney has vowed to rediscover his love for the game with the Town after joining the Hatters until the end of the season.

Some of the midfielder's first words were that he had "fallen out of love for the game." The attacker has joined the Hatters until the end of the season on the back of a spell at Ryman League side Maidstone United, in what was a building block to getting his career back on track.

In a career which took a turn for the worst when he left Swindon, Rooney is ready for a fresh start at Kenilworth Road in a bid to re-establish his love of playing football.

It all started off at Gillingham when Rooney broke through the ranks at the Gills academy at the age of 16. Two years later, he forced his way into the first team side, scoring a goal on his league debut in a 3-0 win over Exeter.

The 23-year-old had his first taste of scoring a professional goal and described the feeling of what it was like to score on his Football League debut with the Gills.

"That's all you really dream about when you're growing up. To make an impact and score is just unbelievable, I couldn't believe it. I was waiting for the linesman to stick his flag up or something like that," said Rooney.

He would go on to score a total of six goals in 57 appearances with the Gills before receiving interest from a number of clubs in the 2012 January window, including Swindon, who he then went on to sign for.



His first appearance for the Robins came against Macclesfield Town in League 2. He would eventually line-up in this game with current Town players Paul Benson and Jonathan Smith after making an appearance from the bench. Ironically it was Rooney's cross which found Benson's head in the only goal of the game.

Everything was looking pretty for the winger at the County Ground as he helped the Robins lift the League 2 title during the 2011/12 season. However, the following season Rooney fell out of contention and from Paolo Di Canio's plans.

He started the 2012/13 League 1 season on the bench for the Robins and continued to remain there for the opening games of the new campaign, starting his first game against Preston in early September; this proved to be the only game he would start that season. With Swindon 3-0 down at half-time, Di Canio decided to take his frustration out on the winger and substituted Rooney at the interval.

This was the start of Rooney's loss of love for the game. From this point, the London-born winger was made a part of Di Canio's "bomb-squad" – one of the players out of contention with the Robins manager. By the end of the month Rooney was allowed to leave and join Burton Albion on a month long deal - when that expired he then joined Rotherham for a further two months.

With nothing failing to materialise from the loan deals, it was confirmed that Di-Canio wanted Rooney off the books – but when a move failed to materialise, the youngster found himself out of contention again, training with the youth team and not even selected as a substitute when the Robins couldn't fill the bench for four consecutive games.

Di Canio then resigned from his post at Swindon, meaning that Rooney was given a stint back in the first team again. He made his first appearance for the Robins in almost six months against Bury as a substitute. New manager Kevin McDonald took charge at the club and Rooney was on the fringe of the first team before deciding to move on in the summer to Crawley Town.



Luke in action on his second appearance for the Town, at Halifax

Again it didn't work out for the 23-year-old and he then moved on to Maidstone Town to gain some playing time in an attempt to get his career back on track. The attacker spoke of his reasons for moving to Maidstone following his arrival at Kenilworth Road.

"It didn't work out at Crawley," says Rooney. "I didn't get that much of a chance as I wasn't starting many games. That was disappointing for me and it made me feel a bit bitter. That's been and gone now and I am looking towards the future.

"I moved to Maidstone to get some games in, I fell out of love with the game a bit and didn't have the appetite to train and get myself fit. I went down the route of going somewhere I could play games to get fit and that's why I chose Maidstone," Rooney said.

It has been a tough year for Rooney and after a stint at Maidstone he is ready to push on and help the Town gain promotion. Rooney was used as a substitute in the Town's 3-0 victory over Chester and admitted that he would love to be a part of the Hatters plans during the remainder of this season and beyond.

"I think it's something that the manager would be looking to do long term.

"It is definitely something that I would like to do long term," admitted Rooney. "It could be sorted next week, next month or at the end of the season."

With Rooney being thrown out in the cold in previous years by other managers, the Town's boss seen an opportunity to bring the 23-year-old back into the game and help him find his best form, and more importantly his love for the game.

Direction

The Town boss knows Rooney well from his time at Swindon, having kept an eye on him when current town players Benson and Smith featured for the Robins in previous seasons, and knows that the move is a step in the right direction for the Town's number 15.

"Rooney knows me and I know him and his family well. I think that I can put my arm around him and start to get the best out of him," said John Still.

"He fell out of love for football and became a bit disillusioned. I have always kept my eye on him and watched him at Maidstone.

"We have brought him in until the end of the season and we'll go from there."

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the road to recovery

GUTTRIDGE FIGHTING FIT

Town midfielder Luke Guttridge is on the road to recovery following a metatarsal injury picked up in the 3-0 win over Alfreton at the beginning of March.

The influential midfielder will miss the remainder of the season, but is well on his way to making a swift recovery as the 32-year-old admitted that an operation is no longer needed.

"I am recovering very well, I have decided against having an operation which is a huge bonus," he exclusively told Hatters Player. "I have a scan on the injury next week and hopefully that goes well. I may be able to start jogging again in the next couple of weeks.

Guttridge knew from the moment the injury happened that there was something wrong, as it is not the first time that the number 21 has picked up such an injury in his career.

"There was no contact; I just twisted my foot in a funny way. It felt like it did last time, there is only one way to describe it and it was like a biscuit breaking," Guttridge said.

Fortunate

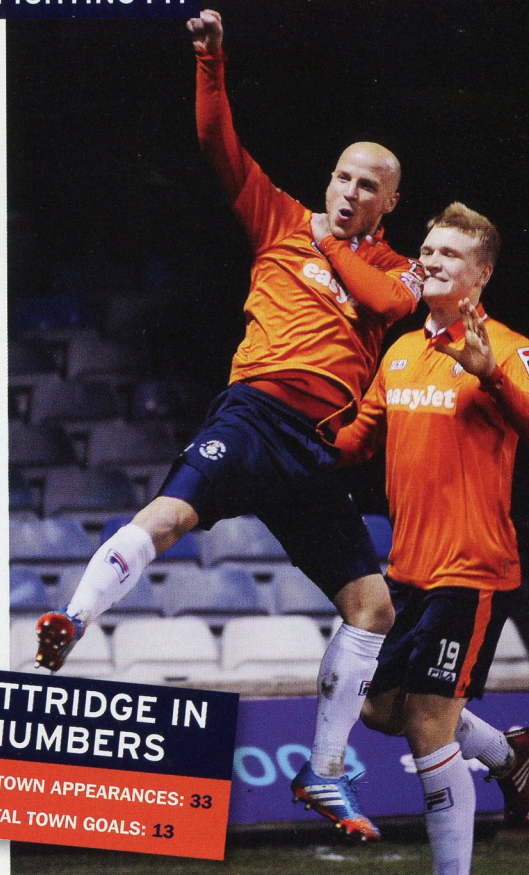
"Thankfully it was just a small crack as I already have a pin in my foot. I have been really fortunate that the injury wasn't worse than it is. I knew as soon as I did it that my season was over and I was upset.

The Town midfielder hailed his side's recent performances, as the Hatters continue to grind out results to take them closer to promotion and lifting the league title. Guttridge admitted that he would rather take maximum points with a not so good performance than zero points and a good team performance.

"Performances aren't at the level we would have liked but the results haven't been that bad," admitted the former Northampton man who watched the Town beat former club Aldershot at the weekend.

"I would rather not play well and win than play well and not win, and thankfully that's what we are doing at the minute.

"I was fortunate enough to win the league with Southend and when you are winning so much every other team wants to beat you that little bit more, and we are that team. It's a mental thing more than anything and the lads have done well to overcome it."



Guttridge aims to return for pre-season at the start of the next campaign, hoping that he will get the go ahead in his scan next week and avoid having an operation on his foot which could see him remain sidelined for even longer.

Return

"I'm hoping that after seeing the specialist next week that it will be good news," he said. "If it's bad news I will more than likely have to go ahead with the operation which will keep me out until the start of pre-season, dependant on how the rehab goes. Hopefully whatever happens I will be ready to return at the start of next season."



CLUB HISTORIAN ROGER WASH DELVES INTO HIS PHOTOGRAPHIC ARCHIVE

picture the past

Jack Taylor helps himself to a goal past a helpless Swindon defender during the 5th round FA Cup tie at Kenilworth Road in February 1952 which the Town won 3-1. The crowd that day of 27,553 represented a new record for the ground but this figure was beaten two weeks later when 28433 were shoehorned in for the visit of Arsenal in the quarter-final.

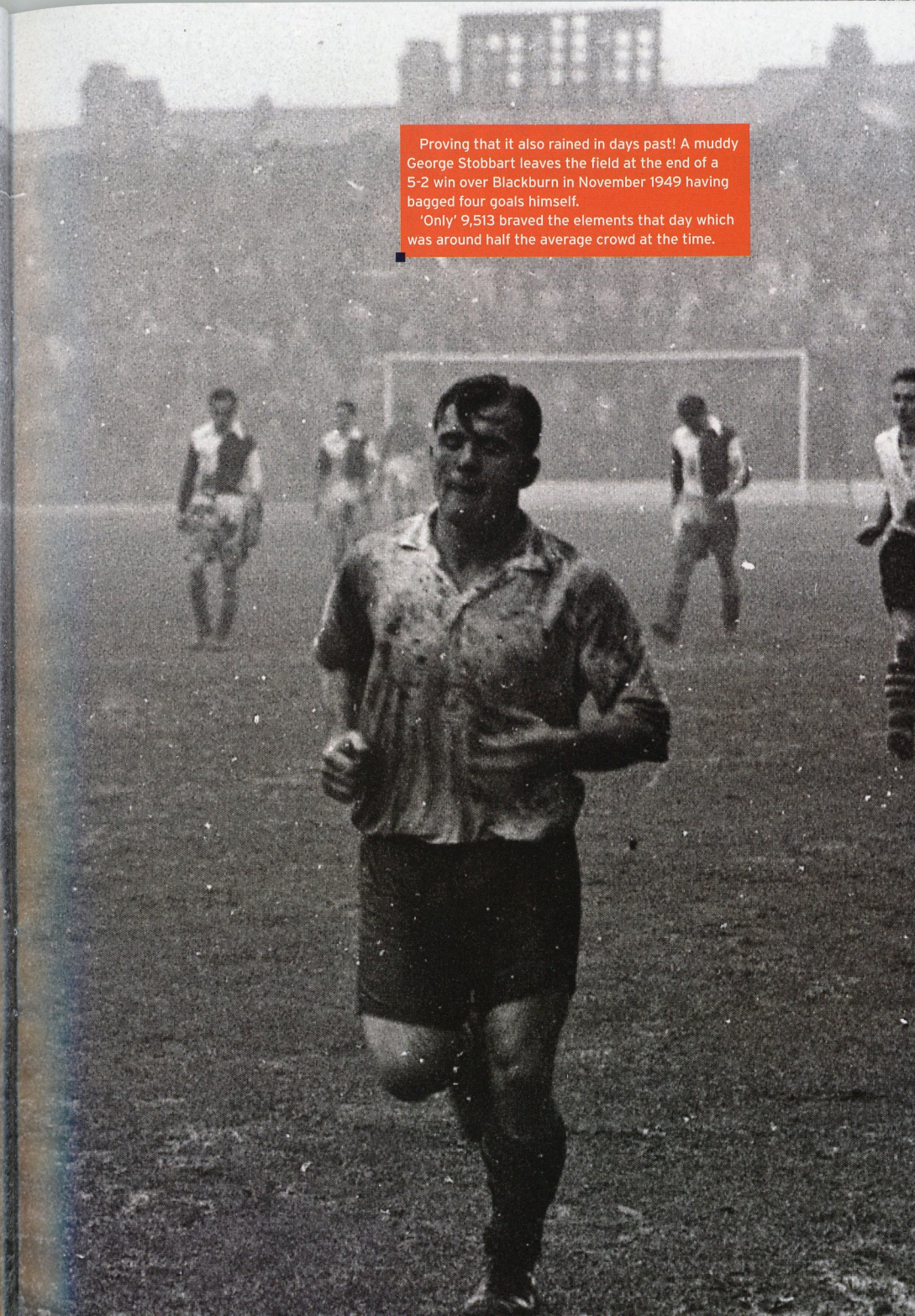
camera never lies

CLUB HISTORIAN ROGER WASH DELVES INTO HIS PHOTOGRAPHIC ARCHIVE



Proving that it also rained in days past! A muddy George Stobbart leaves the field at the end of a 5-2 win over Blackburn in November 1949 having bagged four goals himself.

'Only' 9,513 braved the elements that day which was around half the average crowd at the time.



yesterday's pages

CLUB HISTORIAN ROGER WASH LOOKS THROUGH PAST PROGRAMMES

LUTON TOWN 5-0 PORT VALE 14th MAY 1966

After relegation to Division Four (now League 2) at the end of the 1964/65 season the Town had pushed their way up to the promotion places on the back of a superb home record and the goalscoring talents of a young striker, John O'Rourke, who had been signed on a free transfer from Chelsea two years before.

With five games left to play, O'Rourke had scored 29 times in 36 outings, including four hat-tricks, and was being watched with envy by a good many clubs from the top three divisions. He was the fulcrum of a free scoring forward line that was to hit the back of the net 90 times by the end of a season that had promised so much but ended, eventually, in massive disappointment both on and off the pitch.

In a bid to be different, the Town had decided to play their home game against Port Vale on the Saturday evening of 14th May, only a couple of hours after the end of the FA Cup final.

Probably mindful of the number of people who emerge from an afternoon in front of the television watching the cup final to fill the local parks with a heaving mass of bodies trying to emulate the players they had just seen in action, the Board obviously thought that a real live game was guaranteed to pull in the crowds.

As it turned out, the 12,054 that filled the terraces on a balmy evening was the second highest crowd of the season and fully vindicated the directors' optimism



Ace goalscorer, John O'Rourke, in match action

and, with appetites whetted by an afternoon of Everton v Sheffield Wednesday, they settled down to a further helping of good football.

Port Vale were making their final appearance of a season which was to see them finish just above the re-election positions while the Town were sitting in sixth position with at least three games in hand on most of the clubs above them. The Hatters' severe fixture backlog had increased the previous Wednesday when, two goals ahead at Sealand Road Chester, the heavy rain that had been falling from the start, turned into a monsoon leaving the referee little option but to abandon the match.

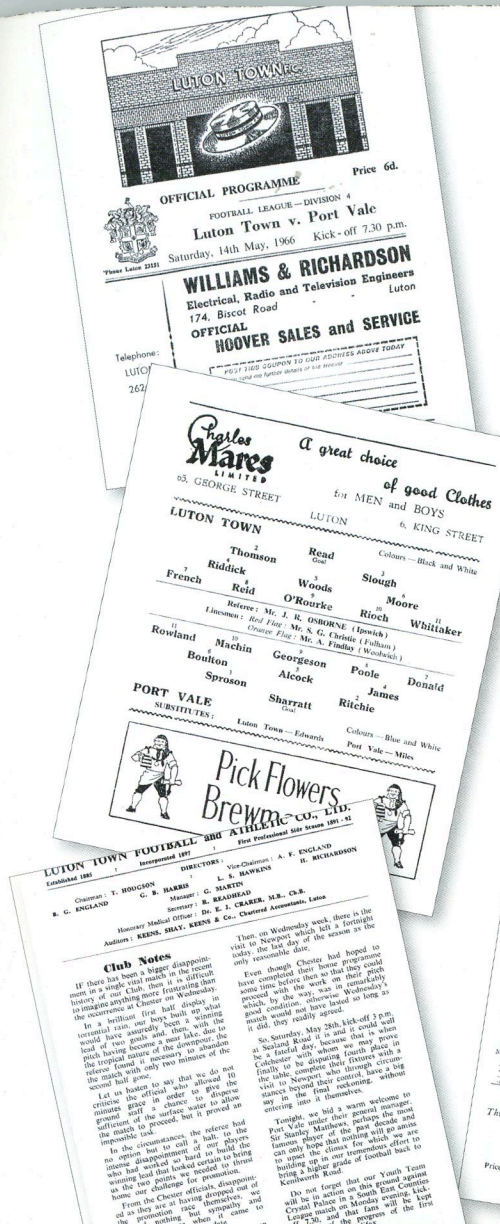
Still smarting from this disappointment the Town players set about Port Vale with a vengeance and tore great holes in their defence right from the start. After only seven minutes play the Hatters were already two up following strikes from Gordon Riddick and Ray Whittaker and after 18 minutes the lead had doubled after O'Rourke had netted twice in the space of 60 seconds.

Vale player-manager Jackie Mudie switched his young wing-halves John James and Clint Boulton to inside-forward, and pulled back old hands Henry Poole and Terry Miles in an attempt to stem the flow but Riddick headed his second and Luton's fifth after 23 minutes.

Armed with the knowledge that a hard game faced them on the following Monday evening at Halifax, the players were not inclined to take risks after having attained such an impregnable position, with the result that the rest of the game was a bit of an anti-climax. It was probably for the best otherwise the supporters would have had great difficulty in catching their breath!

In the second period what little Vale had to offer up front was easily dealt with by Luton goalkeeper Tony Read, who was making only his second appearance of the season between the sticks after 27 outings wearing the number eight shirt-during which time he had added 12 goals to the cause.

The game ended with O'Rourke shooting straight at Vale goalkeeper Stuart Sharratt from the penalty spot, thus denying himself hat-trick number five of the season.



THE PROGRAMME

The Town produced their normal 12-page programme for the visit of Vale with much of the editorial comment given over to the abandonment of the game at Chester three days before.

With the Town 2-0 ahead and, according to the reports, playing brilliantly in the torrential rain, the players were called off two minutes into the second half. Groundstaff were given a chance to disperse the surface water to no avail and to the intense disappointment of both sets of players- Chester also had eyes on promotion at the time.

When the game was eventually played, on the final Saturday of the season, a much weakened Luton side fought out a 1-1 draw when a win would have seen them promoted.

Given the rows over players promotion bonuses as the season drew to a close leaving the squad depleted and many senior professionals leaving that summer one wonders what sort of side the Town would have put out in the old Division Three if the original score had stood at Chester and we had won promotion? We will never know.

The Town went on to struggle the following season, only avoiding the re-election places at the death. One of the many reasons can be seen from the South East Counties league table shown in the Port Vale programme with the youth team winning only once over the 1965/66 season and conceding over 130 goals in the process! The club's scouting system was obviously struggling at the time.

Division 4 and Football Combination Fixtures :: 1965-66

Club	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40	41	42	43	44	45	46	47	48	49	50	51	52
Accrington	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40	41	42	43	44	45	46	47	48	49	50	51	52

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ELSEWHERE IN FOOTBALL

Northampton are relegated after their one and only season in the top flight. The FA Cup final generates record receipts of £109,600. Preston beat Cardiff 9-0 at Deepdale. John Atyeo retires after banging in 350 goals in 645 appearances for his only club, Bristol City. Southampton reach Division One (now the Premier League) for the first time in their history.



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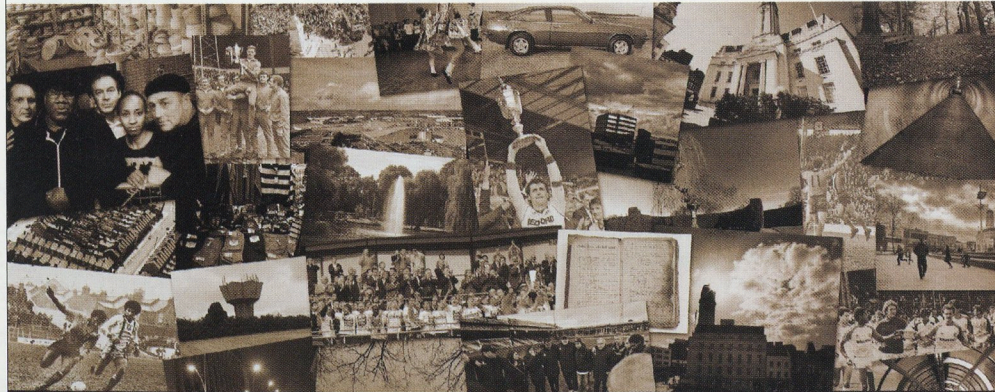


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Thank you all who helped in making this happen "You know who you are, you know who you are". A Big Thank You to Malcolm, James and Jay - One Town, One Club, One Family.
 Produced by James and Jay
 Recorded by Justin Sobon of Luton Leman Audio (mixed by Mark Bishop)
 Design, photos, graphics and Luton Town Football Club (Gareth Chewy, E. Gabriel Edry)
 Wonderful Town is a prequel to the production, made in Luton.



on this day

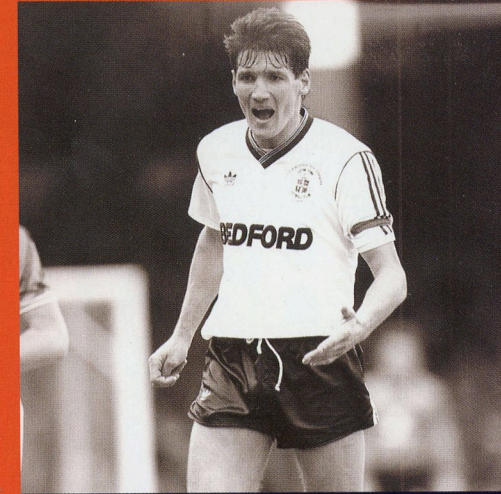
8th APRIL

THE RECORD

The Town don't possess the best of records on this day in history having won just five of the 22 matches played. The Hatters have drawn seven but lost 10 and only scored 23 times in the 22 matches. 33 goals have been conceded. The Town lost their first five matches on this day, scoring just three times.

The Hatters lost 1-0 to Leicester Fosse in 1898, 1-0 to Newton Heath in 1899, 4-2 at Bristol Rovers in 1911, 1-0 at Brighton a year later and then - whisper it quietly - 4-1 at Watford in Division 3 (South) in 1922. The Town finally broke their losing sequence on this day when drawing 0-0 with Bristol Rovers in 1933.

It wasn't until their seventh match on 8th April that the Hatters finally tasted success on this day when they beat Fulham 2-1 at Kenilworth Road in Division Two in 1939. 16,322 were there to witness the triumph.



Mick Harford scored twice on this day for the Town in 1985

IN RECENT TIMES

The Hatters haven't played on this day for 11 years. The last time the Town played on 8th April was a Division 2 (now League 1) fixture at Cheltenham Town. On that evening at Whaddon Road the Hatters were held to a 2-2 draw with Paul Hughes and Adrian Forbes on target for Joe Kinnear's side.

and the Town were left frustrated in a goalless draw. The Hatters would miss out on automatic promotion before they were knocked out at the semi-final stage of the Play-Offs against Crewe.

TOP FLIGHT TOWN

The Town have won one and lost one in the top flight on this day in history. The first game the Hatters played in the First Division on 8th April came in 1958 when the Town went down 2-1 at Filbert Street against Leicester City. It wasn't until 1985 that the Hatters would play again in the top flight on this day when the Town thumped Stoke City 4-0 at the Victoria Ground. Mick Harford scored twice while Emeka Nwajobi and David Moss were also target in a comfortable victory in the Potteries.

IN FORM

The Town haven't tasted defeat on this date since a 3-1 loss at Roker Park against Sunderland in 1978 and have not lost in five matches on 8th April. The 4-0 win over Stoke was followed by a 2-0 win over Notts County in Division One (now Championship) thanks to goals from Paul Telfer and Scott Oakes.

The draw with Wycombe in 1997 was followed three years later by a 2-1 win at Scunthorpe at Glanford Park in 2000. Phil Gray and Gary Doherty were on target for Lennie Lawrence's side in Division Two (League 1).

KENILWORTH CALLING

Tonight is the first time the Town have played on this day on home turf since 1997. The Hatters were in Division Two (now League 1) at the time and chasing promotion back to what is now the Championship. However, in front of a crowd of 8,117, the Hatters could not break down a stubborn Wycombe Wanderers defence

SUPERMAC

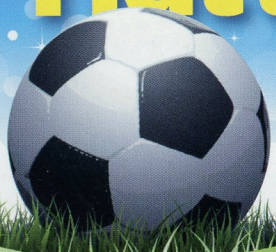
The Town's only other victory on this day came back in April 1970 when a certain Malcolm Macdonald scored the winner for the promotion-chasing Hatters at the striker's former club Fulham. 18,897 were present at Craven Cottage as the Hatters took one mighty leap to securing promotion.



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#CAMOON!

TEENAGER'S DELIGHT AT ALDERSHOT WINNER



Cameron McGeehan scored his first professional goal for the Hatters in the 1-0 win over the Shots last Saturday at Kenilworth Road.

It was the youngster's first senior goal in his career and his first for Luton Town, and came a day before the teenager turned 19. The midfielder on-loan from Premier League side Norwich City reflected on how it felt to net his first goal at Kenilworth Road in front of more than 8,500 Town supporters.

"It was unbelievable. It was great to score my first ever professional goal with the team playing so well. On a personal level it was great to score in front of so many fans, but the main thing is that we won the game and we're closing in on the title," McGeehan told Hatters Player following his first professional goal for the Town.

"It was a big relief for me as I hadn't got off the mark yet so it was great to end that. I didn't want to come to Luton and not score a goal, but to score the winner in the game made it that bit more special," McGeehan added.

McGeehan has settled in well since joining the club on loan from Norwich in January. The midfielder believes that the loan spell has been a huge success in helping to develop the youngster's career.

"It has been an unbelievable experience for me so far and priceless for my career as such a young player,"

said McGeehan, who lifted the FA Youth Cup last season whilst with Norwich's youth team. "All I am focusing on now is to keep battling and winning to try and seal the title. The job is not done yet, but we need to keep going."

"The players here have been so great with me. Luke Guttridge and Paul Benson have been brilliant with me and they are always helping me and giving me advice. With me being such a young player that is priceless as I am still learning and they have been there and done it. I am learning a lot every day here at Luton."

The Town squad consists of both youthful players and experience. McGeehan is happy with how things are functioning within the team, and believes that the overall balance of the squad has helped the Hatters throughout the campaign.

"We have a good balance; in the middle we have youth and energy with me and Pelly. I enjoy working with Pelly and Robinson in the middle. Ruddock has been great this season, he is powerful and strong; Robbo has also chipped in with some goals too and is great on the ball. I enjoy playing with these players; it's been great for me."

"There are also players like Benson and Steve McNulty, all of the older players pulling the younger players together. When we don't do something right we will get a bit of an ear bashing from one of them, but that's what you need to keep you on top."

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academy update

WITH OPERATIONS
MANAGER MARC TRACY



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PLAYERS, PLAYERS AND MORE PLAYERS!

Here at the Luton Town, we have a fantastic structure for young talented players to support their learning and provide pathways for progression within our academy, pre-academy, centre of excellence and Talent Identification Programme (TIPS).

Yesterday and again tomorrow, will be my first opportunity to identify, together with the other staff members, to monitor the progress our players in all structures are demonstrating in their learning.

Yesterday saw our pre-academy players participate against Cambridge United from Under-7-Under-15, which was interesting and pleasing to identify. I can confirm there were some promising performances and certainly a few players that quite the eye, which is always pleasing.

Tomorrow the academy, pre-academy and centre of excellence players will be coming together to play in a

series of internal fixtures, which I'm sure will be another beneficial and enjoyable exercise for all.

It is important players have the opportunities to demonstrate their natural talent, understanding and decision making within their training and games they participate in together with a pathway, which will challenge and test them in their game.

The identification and recruitment of players is crucial and with Ross O'Kane and Kevin Thoburn together with their support staff, we are continually identify and providing new opportunities for young players that demonstrate the criteria we adopt and believe in.

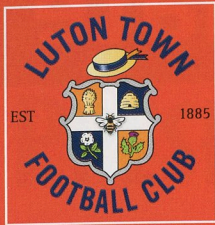
There is a lot of tremendous effort and hard work being created behind the scenes with the youth structure to ensure we can progress further with our philosophy and beliefs to ensure Luton Town continue to have a bright short and long-term future.

The future is bright...the long term is with the Hatters.



Pre-Academy players are put through their paces



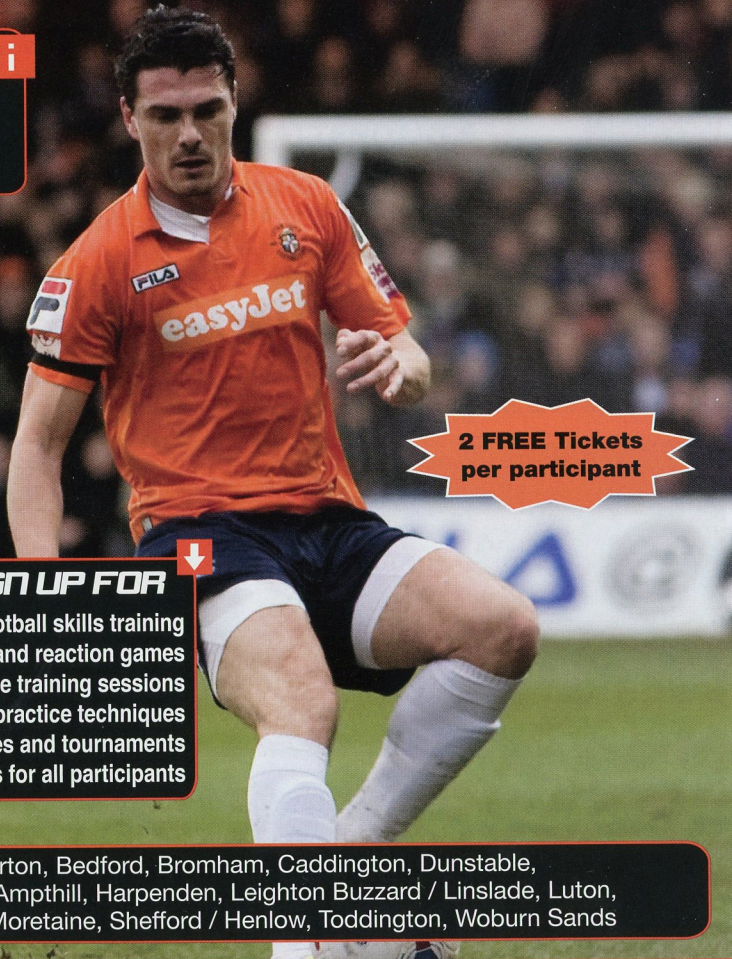


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Luton Ladies

LADIES ENSURE SURVIVAL

The sudden shock of briefly dropping into the relegation zone sparked the Town Ladies into action and survival is now assured after picking up seven points from a possible nine in the past week.

Following on from the hard-fought point at Ipswich, the Town completed the double over Ebbsfleet United.

All out attack was the way forward for Luton and that paid dividends after just nine minutes when Jess McKay struck from 30 yards finding the top corner of the net.

Attacks

The Town struck a second time early in the second half when a right-wing cross from Rachel Kosky was neatly looped over the keeper by Erica Byron.

The wave of attacks continued from the Town and Maisie Wyatt added a late third with a touch of brilliance controlling the ball before smashing an unstoppable volley into the roof of the net.

A much-changed Luton side was on duty for the second Ebbsfleet encounter and brought another Hatters win.

The first goal came when Nicky Livingstone made a surging run into the box and she appeared to have over run the ball but made a sliding effort to get the cross into the danger area where Byron was first off the mark to convert at the near post. Zara Carroll's thunderbolt of a free-kick struck the post but bounced clear as Town finished the half on top.

With 10 minutes to go Natalie Richardson made sure of the points with a 25-yard effort which the keeper could only push onto the inside of the post and into the net.

Delighted boss Nikki Baker told Talk of the Town: "Back to back fixtures are notoriously difficult to gain maximum points from and I thought the whole squad performed really well over the two games.

"The attacking and positive attitude from the players in the past week has paid dividends and we can hopefully build on that and climb the table further."

The Town Ladies will now become members of the FA Women's Premier League for 2014/15 following a reorganisation similar to that in the men's game in 1992.

Celebrations after a Town goal against Ebbsfleet



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A FAN'S TALE

MY NAME: Andy Darlington

MY AGE: 61

MY LOCATION: Worcester

MY TIME SUPPORTING LUTON TOWN: I was brought up in the town and first went to watch the Hatters when I was 10. I remember going with my dad in the Kenilworth Road end in the 1950s and, as I grew older, I stood in a variety of different places inside the old ground, including on the Bobbers, in the Oak Road and in the enclosure.

MY FIRST LUTON GAME: I can't actually remember! I'm sure it was in the top flight in the late 1950s but I honestly don't know. I was lucky enough to watch a number of games when I was young so it could have been against anyone. In those days all I was interested in was Luton and not the opposition!

MY FAVOURITE LUTON GAME: It just has to be the 1988 Littlewoods Cup victory over Arsenal. It just had everything. It surely has to be one of the most dramatic cup finals ever and the fact it was "little Luton" winning a major trophy makes it all the more special. It was a glorious day, wonderful weather and an incredible result. As you all know, it looked as though we were dead and buried when Arsenal won a penalty but, well, you know the rest! They missed, it stayed 2-1 and we went onto lift the cup!

MY FAVOURITE LUTON GOAL: Just for the sheer joy and ecstasy it has to be Brian Stein's winning goal in the Littlewoods Cup final. I don't often see many people mention this as their favourite goal, I guess that's because it isn't an audacious effort from 25 yards! But still, watch this, it's a magnificent finish, which epitomises Brian's quality in front of goal.

MY FAVOURITE LUTON PLAYER: Such a tough question as we have had so many exceptional players for us down the years. If I had a gun to my head and had to name one it would be Terry Branston. I was a teenager when we won the Division Four title and he was the captain that lifted the championship trophy. He was a no-nonsense centre-half and I wished I could play like him!

MY ALL-TIME LUTON TOWN XI:

GOALKEEPER – Alec Chamberlain. Always thought he was a confident and agile goalkeeper and was relatively young when he was thrown in the team – a team of course that were playing in the top flight at the time. Alec is often over-looked.

RIGHT-BACK – Graham Alexander. A solid, dependable right-back. Why is it those words are always synonymous with players in that position?!

LEFT-BACK – Matthew Taylor. Another more recent player that makes my team. Although we were playing in equivalent of Division Four at the time, he was a class above and had a wonderful left foot.

CENTRE-HALF – Terry Branston. My skipper and leader.

CENTRE-HALF – Steve Foster. The man who lifted the Littlewoods Cup. Who else to partner Terry?

RIGHT MIDFIELD – Ricky Hill. No doubt one of the most skilful players we have ever had. A travesty he wasn't recognised more for the national team.

CENTRE MIDFIELD – Kevin Nicholls. Another leader and driver of the team from central midfield. Helped the club to two promotions.

CENTRE MIDFIELD – David Preece. Again, another player who I think didn't get as much praise as he should have. An immense player.

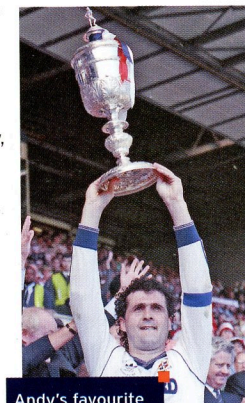
LEFT MIDFIELD – Graham French. It was Graham or Jean-Louis Valois for this position but Frenchy gets the nod. Mercurial!

STRIKER – Bruce Rioch. The first real goalscorer I came across. Had a bit of everything.

STRIKER – Malcolm Macdonald. Another star striker. I was gutted when he left but he went onto enjoy great things.

YOU ARE MY LUTON, MY ONLY LUTON...WHAT MAKES YOU HAPPIEST ABOUT FOLLOWING THE HATTERS?

As many have wrote on these pages, I love the club because it is like one big family. And, as other supporters have wrote – which sums it up perfectly – is that life is never dull at Kenilworth Road. Nobody knows what's going to happen next. The win at Dartford last week a prime example!



Andy's favourite Hatters moment

You too can share your Hatters memories. Use the headlines as a guide and email andrew.barringer@lutontown.co.uk, or submit your application by post.

from left midfield

BY KEVIN CROWE

AWAITING THE FINALE

Whether stood side-by-side on the concrete steps of Dartford's funny little eco conference centre, leaning edgily against the flipped-up seats of Kenilworth Road or sat at home with ears welded to radios and eyes peering intently through the internet, we waited patiently together this week for controlla-balls to find the back of non-league nets just a few more times.

The last week has felt like that weird, edgy bit before a party. Guests have been invited; they'll be round about 8ish. You've given the flat a quick run round with the Hoover, tidied up the kitchen and jumped in the shower.

Checks watch

Still a little while to go before anyone else arrives. Stick a bit of music on, grab yourself a beer maybe. Sit down on the sofa. Everything's ready.

Checks watch again

By now we know now that it's all but done: The Conference are bringing the trophy and the cameras to the Braintree game and it's barely possible for us to have an easier run-in on paper. If the name at the top of the table was any other than our own we'd be saying there's no way that they can throw it away. But before the party can start, there are football matches to win against teams we should beat.

That Dartford game was weird wasn't it? Not just the semi-rural setting or the 20ft high wooden statue of a bloke doing a star jump half way down the main stand. It was more than that.

Perhaps understandably at this point in such a fantastic season, it's taking our team of champions a

little while longer to break teams down at the moment and at Dartford for 80 minutes a strange nervous air seemed to emanate from the terraces too; a sort of tense force-field that welded hands to pockets and, barring a few token chimes of "Come on you Hatters", rendered us a little bit quiet.

It's to do with not wanting to moan or criticise I'm sure and it would be ridiculous to get on anyone's back after the season they've given us so far, but we just want it so much and we're so, so close that frustration at not being able to find the net has sometimes resulted in the absurd spectacle of thousands of fans who should be having a party, instead biting their lip for most of the game as our most dominant team in years marches on to achieve one of the tallest orders in football!

The long 80-minute stints at Dartford and at home to Aldershot eventually gave way to euphoria and relief of course as the onion bag finally bulged with Lutonian goals: Those final magical moments transforming an awkward lull that seemed like it would never ever end. Sound familiar?

The wonderful thing about this, the story of our sojourn to this faraway league, is that after five years of frustration, the ending is now near certain.

Eighty minutes. Five years. The moment that we finally know we're up, the elation of Pelly's top-cornering in Kent will pale in comparison to the crescendo of catharsis and truly communal joy that's on its way.

Checks watch again

Is that the doorbell...?

THE NON-LEAGUE PAPER

ESSENTIAL READING FOR FOLLOWERS OF THE NATIONAL GAME

BY CHIEF REPORTER STUART HAMMONDS

Team bonding. The infamous football phrase throws up images of dentist's chairs, young men naked bar a Budweiser label and copious amounts of alcohol - plus damage to property and reputation.

When I started my semi-pro career at Arnold Town, the social side involved crates of cheap French lager on the coach home from various northern outposts, a sing-song and then off into Nottingham for a team night out.

When I moved south, that trend continued at Sutton United, although we'd also sink a few beers in the Gander Green Lane bar after training on a Thursday - pay-day - not to mention pool balls as most of the team joined in games of 'Killer'.

At Bracknell, we'd have karaoke sessions inspired by my centre-half partner Neil Baker, the current Slough Town joint-manager, auditioning for reality TV show going, followed by Pantiles nightclub (now a care home, appropriately, as that's what we needed by midnight) or a curry.

We also had memorable end-of-season trips to Frankfurt and Magalluf...well, actually they weren't really as I recall very little from them!

By the time I got to Hitchin, I'd got a baby so things calmed down. It was generally a couple of Guinneses with assistant-manager Ken Gillard and current boss Mark Burke in the Canary Bar after training, though annual trips to the Cheltenham Festival were always arranged.

At Ware, I was older than the rest of the boys by about ten years so my entertainment was looking and listening on as they filled me in on what they'd been up to on nights out and weekends away that I couldn't get a pass for!

I just about managed the pre-match full English breakfast assistant-manager Barry Mason would cook up for us in the Wodson Park kitchen - designed to get spirits levels almost as high as our cholesterol!

Which brings me nicely to last Monday night and Burkey, who arranged a bonding session with a difference for his Southern Premier Hitchin boys. After trying (and failing) to prise some sponsorship money out of former Top Field player Carl Stock, now regional director for Pizza Express, the Town gaffer came up with the idea of a pizza-making night at the local restaurant.



The boys didn't just get beers and food placed in front of them before being left to come up with their own entertainment. They had to make it - with myself, Stevenage Comet sports reporter Damion Roberts and Spanish football TV presenter Guillem Balague judging their efforts.

With two willing waitresses demonstrating how to knead the dough and stretch it into shape - playing along with the banter you'd expect from instructions such as "Let's see who is the biggest tosser!" - the boys had a ball. Well, some were more intent on making doughballs than pizzas!

Apart from a bit of flour smeared on cheeks as warpaint, there was no alcohol-fuelled food fight to force other diners to complain - just good fun with all the players having to think about design and a name for their creation.

Striker Simon Martin named his 'Pepperoni Prolific', having displayed some OCD tendencies by laying his ingredients out in straight lines like well-manicured pitch! Inspired by Balague having presented the El Clasico coverage the previous night, I named mine 'El Crappio'. It certainly didn't fit the night, with some of the boys' pizzas well worthy of being placed on the restaurant chain's popular 'Classic' menu.

Forget dingy pubs, racecourses or paint-balling wars. If your team need a boys' bonding session, order them a slice of the action like Hitchin!

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league look

THE LATEST IN THE SKRILL PREMIER

The Town will be crowned champions this week if results go in their favour following Saturday's results in the Skrill Premier.

A victory tonight would mean the Hatters require just three points to be certain of a return to the Football League, but the title could be sealed if the Town are victorious this evening and Cambridge lose at Woking on Thursday night.

Cambridge kept-up their pursuit of the Town with a 3-1 home win over Southport that saw Richard Money's side recover from going a goal behind scored by former Hatter Jason Walker.

The race for the Play-Offs is slowly becoming clearer. Grimsby remain in third place after a 1-0 win at Kidderminster. The Mariners have a three-point cushion over sixth place and have two games in hand. The defeat for Kidderminster seriously dented their chances with Harriers now seven points short of the top five.

Gateshead's march towards the Play-Offs continued with a thumping 5-0 win over our visitors tonight, Tamworth. Gary Mills, whose York side beat the Town in the Play-Off final two years ago, has guided the Heed into fourth place with a run of five wins in six matches.

A late goal from Chris Smith helped Halifax to a crucial win over Nuneaton at Liberty Way which strengthened the Shaymen's chances of a top five finish and quashed

Boro's dreams of finishing in the Play-Offs. Halifax sit in fifth place, a point clear of Alfreton in sixth, whilst Nuneaton are now ninth and five points behind Halifax.

Alfreton, who have sat in the top five for most of the season, were held to a 2-2 draw at home to midtable Welling, while Braintree, who played their seventh game in just 15 days, lost 1-0 at home to Salisbury.

Braintree are now seventh, two points off the Play-Offs but with a game in hand.

Alan Devonshire's battle-weary troops visit Kenilworth Road on Saturday.

Barnet still have a shout of the Play-Offs following their 2-1 victory over Forest Green at the Hive. New manager Martin Allen has his side just three points off the top five. The defeat for Forest Green leaves the Gloucestershire outfit nine points adrift of the Play-Off spots.



Gary Mills has guided Gateshead into Play-Off contention

At the other end of the table Tamworth

desperately need a result tonight given the fact they lie nine points from safety with five games left. Dartford ground out a goalless draw at Lincoln on Saturday to move level on points with Aldershot on 41 points. Hereford lost again – this time to in-form Woking – to leave the Bulls just one point outside the bottom four. Chester are five points clear of the relegation zone after their 3-2 win over Hyde but Steve Burr's men have played a game more than all of the teams below them in the table. Life is never dull in the Skrill Premier!

LEADING GOALSCORERS

Gray (Luton)	27
Gregory (FC Halifax)	27
Williams (Aldershot)	20
Benson (Luton)	17
Norwood (FGR)	17
Tomlinson (Lincoln)	16
Jennings (G'by/Macc)	15
Rendell (Woking)	15

AVERAGE ATTENDANCES

Luton Town	7,064	Woking	1,440
Grimsby Town	3,461	Dartford	1,249
Cambridge United	3,077	Nuneaton Town	1,240
Wrexham	3,020	Forest Green Rovers	1,168
Lincoln City	2,323	Southport	1,015
Chester FC	2,214	Salisbury City	1,010
Kidderminster Harriers	2,047	Braintree Town	975
Aldershot Town	1,842	Tamworth	963
Barnet	1,724	Alfreton Town	771
Hereford United	1,723	Welling United	745
FC Halifax Town	1,548	Gateshead	729
Macclesfield Town	1,490	Hyde	615

TONIGHT'S FIXTURES

Alfreton v Aldershot
Braintree v Macclesfield
Forest Green v Kidderminster
Grimsby v Woking
Hyde v Salisbury
Southport v Barnet
Welling v Hereford
PLAYING THURSDAY
Dartford v Grimsby
Woking v Cambridge

hold the back page

WITH DIVERSE FM'S STEVE MOORE

"FORTY MEN TOGETHER CAN'T LOSE!"

A phrase uttered by NFL coaching great, George Allen and one I was reminded of by my Diverse FM colleague Stuart Lindsay on Friday.

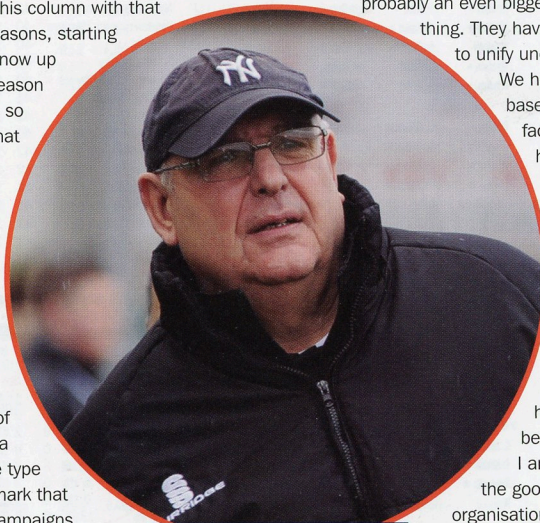
I thought I would start this column with that quote, for a number of reasons, starting with the fact that we are now up to 38 players used this season (including the FA Trophy), so we may well have used that many by the end of the season.

However, the main reason I wanted to use it is more because of the wider sentiment that it represents. John Still has talked about the "New Luton" that he believes has been created over the course of the last 12 months. It is a phrase that looks like the type of corny, over-the-top remark that typifies public relations campaigns and modern politics.

Looking at the past few years though, it is easy to see that something has been created of late that I don't believe I've seen at the club for more than the odd couple of weeks. Watching the Johnstone's Paint Trophy final again, five years on, shows not only what this club can do when united, but also how rare it is that we have been united.

Less than six months on from that, a club hero in Mick Harford was harangued out of the club in a way I never thought would be possible, despite assembling a very decent team as that JPT Final had proven. If we could not unify behind a club legend like Harford, who could generate the unity to get behind?

Well, thank whoever you want to for the unity that has been created this season. Whatever individual or incident you pick, it was just one of many catalysts to that unity and all parts of the club have managed to have the right reaction to it, even up to board level.



"The stronger the team, the stronger the team," says John

In giving the identity assets to the Trust the board did something that is not only good in and of itself, but managed to generate something else out of it that is probably an even bigger and more important thing. They have managed to get the fans to unify under one banner.

We have always been a fan base split into many different factions and cliques. We have Trust in Luton, Loyal Luton, the official supporters' club and many different websites, social media communities and organisations. In fact, we're so split we are basically split down the middle about what our home shirt colour should be!

I am not detracting from all the good work these different organisations do. However, how much more powerful can we be both in the club and the community as one unified body?

There is no greater example of this than with Charlton fans and the Valley party, turning it into a major political issue. By giving Trust the right to veto image changes, the board have made that the catch-all organisation for fans, uniting them in one fell swoop.

The unity is one of the main reasons we have been successful and this success is for everyone that has been a part of that unity.

It should also be for every Luton fan that is unable to be here, of which there are many. All of whom, I am sure, would be immensely proud of the unity we have achieved as well as the success. I know our former colleague Ian Pearce would be.

But I started on an Allenism and I'll finish with a Stillism:

"TEAM = Together Everyone Achieves More".



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tonights's teams



LUTON TOWN

- | | |
|---------------------|-------------------------|
| 1 Mark Tyler | 20 David Viana |
| 2 Fraser Franks | 21 Luke Guttridge |
| 3 Danny Fitzsimons | 22 Shaun Whalley |
| 4 Jonathan Smith | 23 Matt Robinson |
| 5 Steve McNulty | 24 Jernade Meade |
| 6 Anthony Charles | 25 Ronnie Henry |
| 7 Alex Lawless | 26 Paul Benson |
| 8 Solomon Taiwo | 27 Andre Gray |
| 9 Jon Shaw | 28 Jim Stevenson |
| 10 Alex Wall | 29 Kané Ferdinand |
| 11 Jake Howells | 30 Alex Lacey |
| 12 Scott Griffiths | 31 Jake Woolley |
| 13 Mark Cullen | 32 Brett Longden |
| 14 Andy Parry | 33 Jerome Jibodu |
| 15 Luke Rooney | 34 Zane Banton |
| 16 Elliot Justham | 39 Ian Rees |
| 17 JJ O'Donnell | 43 Pelly Ruddock Mpanzu |
| 18 Dave Martin | 44 Andy Mangan |
| 19 Cameron McGeehan | |



TAMWORTH

- | | |
|-----------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1 Dale Belford | 15 Duane Courtney |
| 2 Jack Evans | 17 Richard Peniket |
| 3 Claudio Hoban | 20 Andy Todd |
| 4 Michael Townsend | 25 Andy Haworth |
| 6 Benjamin Richards-Everton | 27 Courtney Baker-Richardson |
| 7 Lloyd Kerry | 28 Nick Chadwick |
| 8 Richard Baker | 29 Lee Hildreth |
| 9 Justin Richards | 30 Scott Lindsey |
| 10 Darren Byfield | 31 Dale Belford |
| 11 Kevin Thornton | 32 Gavin Mahon |
| 12 Jake Caprice | 33 David Morfan |
| 14 Matthew Godden | 34 Jordan Keane |

Referee: **R. Wigglesworth** | Assistant: **G. Ions** | Assistant: **J. Richardson** | Fourth official: **A. Serrano**

HERE NEXT

v **BRAINTREE TOWN**

SATURDAY 12th APRIL 2014 • 12.52PM

SKRILL PREMIER

