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Luton TOWN











WEDNESDAY 4TH MARCH 2026 7.30PM

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Jack WILSHERE



Welcome to Kenilworth Road to you all ahead of what we hope will be a special evening.

A warm welcome to Northampton Town, to their manager Kevin Nolan, his staff, players and supporters who have made the short journey down the M1 this evening. It's set up to be a wonderful occasion. A big crowd, under the lights, with a place at Wembley on the line. That's what nights like this are about.

The incentive couldn't be clearer. The winners head to Wembley. For every player stepping out onto that pitch, that's special. These are the moments you work for, the moments you want to embrace rather than shy away from.

To get here this evening, the players deserve a huge amount of credit for last week's victory against Plymouth. I've said it before and I'll keep saying it – there are characters in this group. There are leaders. There's personality. But most importantly, there are players who care. Players who are all in. All in to turn things around when they need turning around.

It wasn't easy. The Saturday before against Burton was difficult, especially the way that game ended. Conceding late, feeling the shift inside the stadium was tough for us all. It would have been easy for heads to drop. But the response against Plymouth was outstanding. Not just the result, but the performance. And even within that game, when we conceded, the way the players reacted again showed real character. They didn't panic or fold, they just went again.

We've spoken a lot about belief recently. We reviewed the Burton game honestly. We showed the good things – how many times we had to defend our box, how we suffered together, how we stuck at it when it wasn't pretty. We also spoke about the second half and how we tried to protect a lead instead of pushing on. That's not who we ultimately want to be, but we have to recognise where we are confidence-wise and build from there.

Against Plymouth, we asked the players to take what we didn't do well and make it better. But also to hold onto who we are. I thought they did that. There was more bravery in our play, more intent and more purpose. The balance between discipline and expression was stronger.

We'll go through the same process again ahead of the weekend. But tonight is about embracing the opportunity in front of us.

Northampton will make it difficult. Kevin's teams always compete, always fight, and in a semi-final you expect nothing less. We'll have to match that intensity first and foremost. If we do that, our quality can show.

The support tonight is crucial. The last time we were here against Plymouth, the atmosphere was wonderful. It drove the team forward. We'd love more of the same but we know that encouragement comes when we do what we need to do on the pitch.

Bring the noise. Bring the belief. There's a trip to Wembley at stake. Let's attack it together.

Enjoy the game.



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NORTHAMPTON TOWN

We welcome everyone associated with Northampton Town who have made the short trip down the M1 to Kenilworth Road for this Vertu Trophy semi-final.

The Cobblers' run in the competition has been a highlight of a disappointing season so far for Kevin Nolan's side.

A run of just one win in their last 15 games in League One has seen our visitors slip into the bottom four of the table.

Saturday's draw with local rivals Peterborough ended a run of three straight defeats but leaves them two points from safety with 11 league games left to play.

However, their performances in the Vertu Trophy have given Cobblers fans the opportunity to dream of Wembley.

Nolan's side have won all six of their matches in the competition, which included group-stage victories over Chelsea Under-21s, Walsall and Shrewsbury, and knockout wins over Wycombe, Walsall again and AFC Wimbledon – the latter setting up tonight's tie.

This evening is the first time Northampton have made the short journey here since they beat us 4-3 here in a League Two meeting in December 2015. Paul Benson scored twice and Danny Green converted a penalty but it was not enough for John Still's side as the Cobblers earned victory to take them top of the table.

The win was Northampton's seventh in 44 visits overall with the Hatters coming out on top 29 times.

Earlier this season a solitary strike from Lamine Fanne earned the Town all three points at Sixfields in the League One meeting in October – the Hatters' first in Northampton since 2001.

NORTHAMPTON AT-A-GLANCE

FOUNDED: 1897

NICKNAME: The Cobblers

GROUND: Sixfields

MAJOR HONOURS: Division Three (South) champions 1962/63, Fourth Division/League Two champions 1986/87, 2015/16

RIVALS: Peterborough

LAST TIME AT THE KENNY: Town 3-4 Northampton 12/12/15

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NORTHAMPTON TOWN

THE AWAY END

The Boss

KEVIN NOLAN Former Bolton, Newcastle and West Ham midfielder appointed Cobblers boss in December 2024. Previously managed Notts County and Leyton Orient and has held coaching roles at West Ham United.

Goalkeeper

LEE BURGE Signed from Sunderland in June 2022. Previously played for Coventry and has made over 100 appearances for the Cobblers.

Defenders

CONOR McCARTHY Centre-back who joined from Barnsley in 2025. Began his career at Cork City before spells a spell with St Mirren in Scotland.

MAX DYCHE Academy graduate who progressed into the first team in 2020. Has established himself as a senior squad member in recent seasons.

ELLIOTT MOORE Defender signed from Oxford in January 2026. Previously came through the Leicester academy and captained Oxford, where he made over 200 league appearances.

NESTA GUINNESS-WALKER Left-back who joined the Cobblers from Reading in 2024. Previously played for AFC Wimbledon after beginning his senior career at Metropolitan Police.

JON GUTHRIE Cobblers captain who has made over 150 league appearances at Sixfields. The experienced defender signed from Livingston.

Midfielders

TERRY TAYLOR Scottish-born Welsh Under-21 midfielder now in his second loan spell from Charlton.

CAMERON McGEEHAN Former Hatters midfielder who signed in 2024. Has previously played for Colchester, Barnsley and Oostende. Has scored five goals in all competitions this season.

DEAN CAMPBELL Midfielder who joined from Barrow in 2025. Came through the Aberdeen academy before moving into English football.

JACK PERKINS Young midfielder who arrived at Sixfields in the summer of 2025 following his release from Nottingham Forest. Can also play at wing-back.

ELLIOTT LIST Attacking midfielder or forward who signed in summer 2025. Previously played for Stevenage, where he spent six years, and Gillingham.

MICHAEL JACOBS Left winger who re-signed for the Cobblers in 2025. Former Derby, Wigan and Portsmouth player with extensive League One and Championship experience.

Forwards

SAM HOSKINS Long-serving forward who joined Northampton in 2015 after spells with Southampton, Preston and Yeovil. Has scored six goals in all competitions this term.

TOM EAVES Striker signed in the summer of 2024. Previously played for Hull and Rotherham. Has 10 goals in all competitions to his name this season.

KAMARAI SIMON-SWYER Attacking midfielder or forward who signed in the summer following his release from West Ham.

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Hatters bring the COBBLERS TO HEEL

Club historian ***Roger Wash*** *looks back on the time the Town kicked the Shoe Army out of the FA Cup!*



Alec Ashworth moves on to a loose ball

Defeat in the 1959 FA Cup final is generally seen as a watershed moment in the Hatters' history with the break-up of an ageing side followed by relegation from the top flight after five years at the top.

The Town therefore started the 1960/61 season back in Division Two (now the Championship) with a new manager, ex-Charlton goalkeeper Sam Bartram, given the task of picking up the pieces.

If supporters thought that the team would bounce back at the first attempt they were sadly mistaken as the players struggled to bring about any consistency. Bartram was eventually to use 33 players during the campaign in an attempt to produce a winning side, but mid-table mediocrity was the final disappointing outcome.

The FA Cup was therefore seen as a welcome break from the tedium of league games with the third-round draw pairing the Town with near neighbours Northampton. The Cobblers were enjoying a good campaign that would end in promotion from Division Four and, at the time of the cup-tie, had gone eight league games unbeaten.

Such was the interest in the first meeting of the sides since 1937 that the Hatters decided to make the game all-ticket but on the day of the game a bus strike meant that, although 26,000 tickets had been sold, turnstiles were opened at the Kenilworth Road end for cash customers.

As the game kicked off 26,220 were present, a crowd that has only been bettered once since and which included a girl from Aylesbury who had spent over four hours in getting to the match. Although supporters of today laugh in disbelief when they hear of young fans being passed over the heads of spectators down to the front of the terraces, I can assure them that it happened to me that day and it was frightening!

Northampton manager Dave Bowen's tactics were evident from the first kick of the ball. He instructed his young side to hustle and harry the Town out of their stride and a bruising encounter

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was the outcome with some of the Cobblers' tackling rather robust but allowed to pass by a lenient referee.

One player however refused to become intimidated by all the rough and tumble going on around him. Record Luton goalscorer, Gordon Turner, was prepared to bide his time and wait for the inevitable mistake and he did not have long to linger on the edge of the action for, after 10 minutes, a clever pass from Alec Ashworth set him clear down the right.

With the Northampton defenders expecting him to square the ball to Allan Brown and moving out accordingly Turner instead squeezed an effort between visiting goalkeeper Norman Coe and the near post.

The remainder of the first half was a disappointing affair with free-flowing football out of the question due to the pitch which was cutting up badly.

The second half was only six minutes old when, completely out of the blue, the Town increased their lead with Turner, once more, the man on target. Standing outside the area he snapped up a pass from John Bramwell, beat the Cobblers' Colin Gale easily and whipped in a shot which surprised Coe who was late in his attempt to save.

The second goal knocked the stuffing out of the Cobblers and from then on it was one-way traffic with Northampton needing to pull everyone back apart from a forlorn looking Laurie Brown, later to move to Arsenal at the season's end.

Turner set up the third goal just after the hour mark when he played a delightful through ball to Brown who waltzed through the Cobblers defence to net from an acute angle.

The Hatters had not yet finished and a cross from Turner caused panic in the Cobblers' defence with Ashworth, later to star at Northampton's County Ground, quickest to react, hooking the ball into the roof of the net from close in.



Allan Brown watches as Gordon Turner's shot squeezes home for the first goal



Allan Brown gets his head to the ball

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Don Hutchison celebrates against the Cobblers in 2007

TROPHY *tales*

This evening will be our third meeting with the Cobblers in the Football League Trophy, having crossed paths twice 10 years apart, firstly in 1997 and then in 2007.

In 1996/97 the Town were playing in the Auto Windscreens Shield for the very first time and had beaten Leyton Orient 2-1 at Kenilworth Road in the first round.

Third Division (now League Two) Northampton were up next in what was the first meeting between the two clubs in 28 years. It would also be the Town's first ever visit to the Cobblers' new Sixfields stadium.

Over 1,100 Hatters fans made the short trip up the M1 but, despite boss Lennie Lawrence naming a strong side, the travelling supporters watched on in horror as the Town succumbed to an 88th minute winner from the hosts' Matthew Rush.

Northampton won at Plymouth in the southern section quarter-finals before losing at Colchester in the southern area semis.

Having been relegated from the second tier in 2007 the Town were back in the competition, this time sponsored by Johnstone's Paint.

On a balmy September evening at Kenilworth Road, the Hatters eased to a 2-0 victory thanks to goals from Don Hutchison and substitute Paul Peschisolido. It would prove to be the only goals both players scored in their brief spells in Bedfordshire.



Darren Patterson in action at Sixfields in 1997

The Town would bow out in the next round, going down 4-3 at Gillingham in what would prove to be their final defeat in the competition until promotion back to the Football League in 2014 having lifted the trophy at Wembley in April 2009.

Tonight's game represents the furthest Northampton have gone in the competition while the Hatters have previously reached the semi-final stage twice, beating Brighton on penalties in 2009 and losing to Oxford in 2017.

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EFL TROPHY *SO FAR...*

And then there were four.

Back in early September 64 teams – all the clubs from Leagues One and Two, plus 16 from Premier League academies – kicked off the 45th season of the competition.

The Town and Northampton meet this evening to decide who will face either Doncaster or Stockport at Wembley on 12th April.

While the Hatters have made it through to this stage having lost two matches, Northampton arrive at Kenilworth Road having won all six of their ties. It is the best record of any of the remaining four clubs.

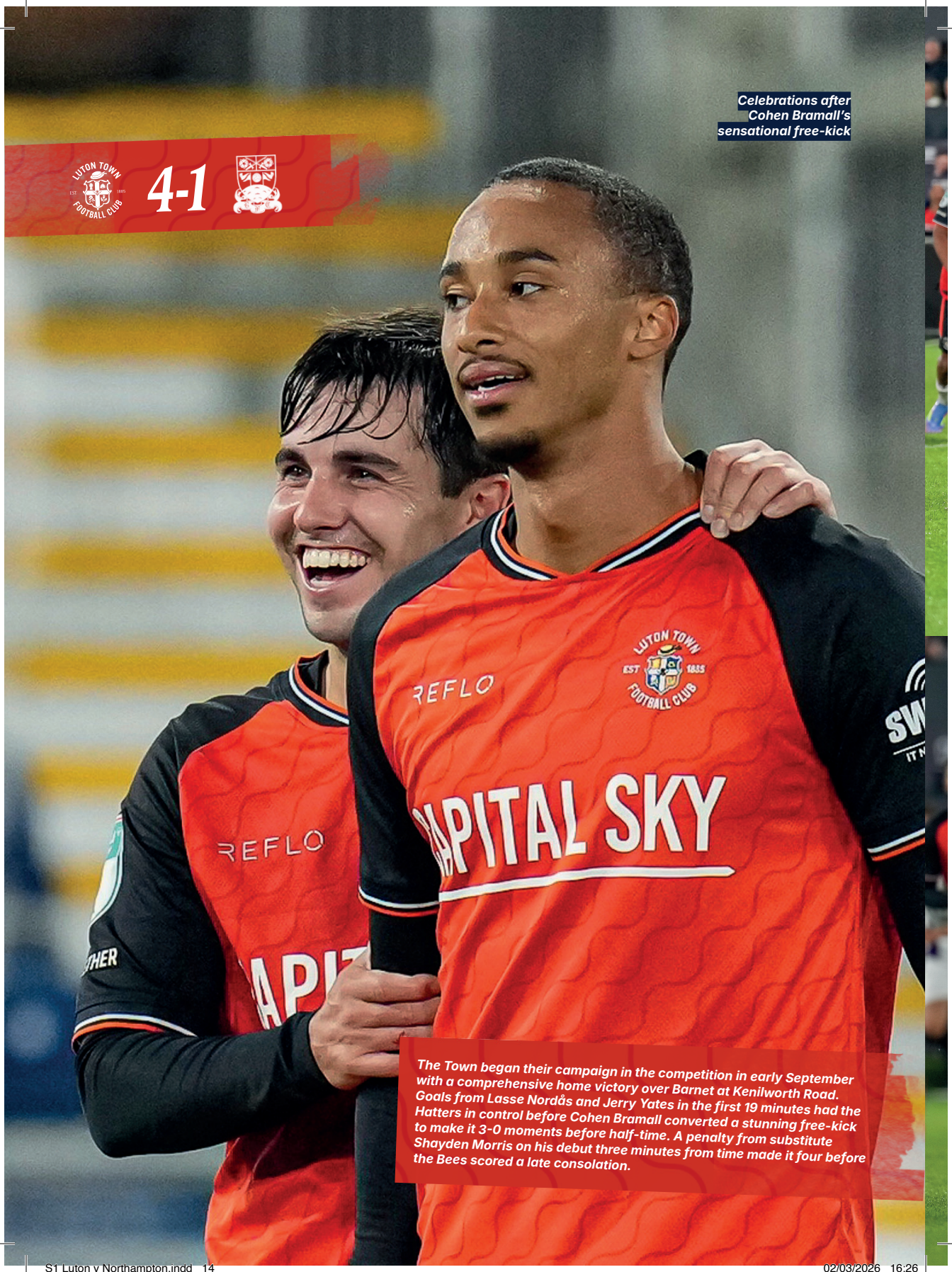
Doncaster enjoyed an almost similarly successful run, winning five games and drawing one – their quarter-final win over Huddersfield made remarkable by Rovers goalkeeper Thimothee Lo-Tutala saving all three of the Terriers penalties in the shootout. Prior to last night, Doncaster striker Billy Sharp was the competition's top scorer with six goals.

Before last night's tie, Stockport had lost once and drawn twice – winning two penalty shootouts in the process. The 'other' Hatters saw off Port Vale in their quarter-final meeting.

Two clubs left are aiming to lift the trophy for the second time. Who can forget the Town's triumph under the arch against Scunthorpe in 2009? Claude Gnakpa's extra-time winner sealed a 3-2 victory in front of more than 40,000 Town supporters.

Doncaster are also aiming for a second EFL Trophy win, their first coming in 2007 when they also won 3-2 in extra-time. Rovers saw off Bristol Rovers at the Millennium Stadium in Cardiff.

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Celebrations after Cohen Bramall's sensational free-kick

The Town began their campaign in the competition in early September with a comprehensive home victory over Barnet at Kenilworth Road. Goals from Lasse Nordås and Jerry Yates in the first 19 minutes had the Hatters in control before Cohen Bramall converted a stunning free-kick to make it 3-0 moments before half-time. A penalty from substitute Shayden Morris on his debut three minutes from time made it four before the Bees scored a late consolation.



Shayden Morris scores on his Hatters debut



Jake Richards gets things moving



Celebration time!

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Mads Andersen wheels away after putting the Town in front

The group stage continued with a short trip to Cambridge but the Town's hope of maintaining a 100 per cent record was dashed after they were well beaten at the Abbey Stadium. A Mads Andersen goal had the Hatters, led by Alex Lawless and Paul Benson, in front after 15 minutes but that was as good as it got as the hosts stormed back. Glenn McConnell levelled shortly after the hour mark before a second-half double from Elias Kachunga made the points safe for Cambridge. Pelly Ruddock Mpanzu was introduced in the second period for the hosts and the midfielder received an emotional ovation from the travelling Town supporters after the final whistle.



Jordan Clark about to cross into the Cambridge box



Teden Mengi enters the field



Kal Naismith with Pelly Ruddock Mpanzu



Fin Evans can't believe he's scored on his Luton debut!



Jerry Yates gets the ball rolling with the opener

The Hatters ensured their passage through to the knockout rounds with a comfortable home win over Brighton's Under-21s. A first-half double from Jerry Yates in the space of seven minutes had the Town 2-0 up at the break. The young Seagulls pulled a goal back on 74 minutes to set-up a nervy final quarter-of-an-hour, but any doubts were eased when 16-year-old debutant Fin Evans netted with 11 minutes left to restore the two-goal cushion. It was a historic moment: Evans became the youngest ever goalscorer in the Town's history at 16 years and 271 days.



Joe Gbodé runs at the Brighton defence



Harry Fox in action on his Town debut



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Shayden Morris races into the Exeter penalty area



Celebrations after Lasse Nordås' strike

Goals continued to flow in the first knockout round in the competition as the Hatters eased past Exeter at Kenilworth Road. Again the goals came early. Lasse Nordås fired the Town in front on 13 minutes before Shayden Morris doubled the lead 11 minutes before half-time. Nordås added his second and the Hatters' third just before the break and a fourth followed thanks to Zack Nelson in the second half.



James Shea clears downfield



Jack Lorentzen-Jones on his Town debut



Jerry Yates fires the Hatters in front from the spot

LUTON TOWN FOOTBALL CLUB 1-2

Controversy followed in the Town's next outing in the competition against Swindon. An early Jerry Yates penalty put the Hatters in front against the League Two side but former Town academy defender Will Wright levelled for the Robins before half-time. Filozofe Mabete added a second after the break for Ian Holloway's men but the game was then halted for several minutes after the officials realised Swindon substitute Aaron Drinan was not named on the teamsheet. The game finished 2-1 to Swindon but, following an EFL investigation, the Hatters were reinstated in the competition after it was also deemed the visitors played the suspended Ollie Clarke in the tie.



Swindon boss Ian Holloway tries to explain things to the Town supporters behind the dugouts



Emilio Lawrence takes on the Swindon defence



Harry Fox looks for a pass



Jordan Clark celebrates the winning goal

A late Jordan Clark penalty last week set-up this evening's semi-final as the Town beat Plymouth at Kenilworth Road. Another early goal got the Hatters on their way when Izzy Jones struck on 16 minutes, finishing at the back post following Jake Richards' low cross. Argyle levelled with 13 minutes left through Tegan Finn's 30-yard finish following a mix-up in the Town defence. However, with penalties looming, Nahki Wells was upended in the box and Clark converted from 12 yards to send the Town through to tonight's semi-final meeting with the Cobblers.



Izzy Jones celebrates after putting the Hatters ahead



Jake Richards shields the ball



Davy van den Berg in action on his full debut

THE HATTERS HERALD

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LUTON TOWN V NORTHAMPTON TOWN

TONIGHT'S SPONSORS & MASCOTS

For this evening's game against the Cobblers we're delighted to welcome AC Stevens Landscapes as our match sponsors.

We also have the pleasure of welcoming Paul Burton and his guests as our matchball sponsors.

There are also four mascots who will get to experience the matchday atmosphere under the lights this evening.

A big shoutout to Lewis Bates, Finlay Cocozza, Joseph Lanni and Archie Stagnell.

We hope you all have a wonderful evening with us!

Remember, if you're interested in sponsorship, matchday hospitality or mascot packages, we have a few remaining matches between now and the end of the season available, so please get in touch with our commercial team on **01582 411622** or via **commercial@lutontown.co.uk** if you're interested.



NEW DATE FOR LEAGUE MEETING

We can confirm that a new date has been agreed for our Sky Bet League One fixture at home to Northampton, which was due to take place on Saturday 11th April, the day before the Vertu Trophy final.

With either ourselves or the Cobblers guaranteed to be playing at Wembley on Sunday 12th, the scheduled league fixture has had to be postponed.

That match will now take place at Kenilworth Road on Wednesday 15th April, with a 7.45pm kick-off.



REMEMBERING GRAHAM

Today marks the first anniversary of the passing of **Graham Snoxell**, a true lifelong Hatter who spent all of his working life in Luton's hat trade.

Graham's sons Mark, Justin and Daran, together with his grandson Matthew, are here today supporting the Town and honouring his memory. They will be raising a glass to him in the Eric Morecambe, a place he loved spending time with family and friends.

Once a Hatter, always a Hatter.



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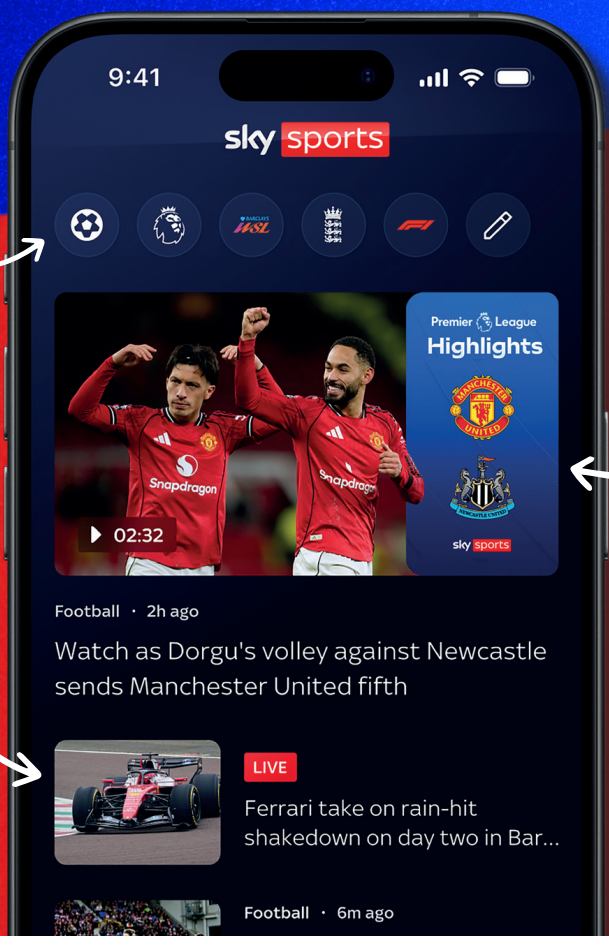
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4	SVERRE **SANDAL**
5	MADS **ANDERSEN**
6	DAVY **VAN DEN BERG**
8	LIAM **WALSH**
11	ELIJAH **ADEBAYO**
12	ALI **AL-HAMADI**
14	SHAYDEN **MORRIS**
15	TEDEN **MENGI**
16	HAKEEM **ODOFFIN**
17	NIGEL **LONWIJK**
18	JORDAN **CLARK**
21	NAHKI **WELLS**
22	DEVANTE **COLE**
23	GEORGE **SAVILLE**
24	JOSH **KEELEY**
25	ISAIAH **JONES**
26	SHANDON **BAPTISTE**
27	JAKE **RICHARDS**
30	GIDEON **KODUA**
32	EMILIO **LAWRENCE**
33	COHEN **BRAMALL**
38	JOE **JOHNSON**
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NORTHAMPTON TOWN

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5	JON **GUTHRIE**
6	JORDAN **WILLIS**
7	SAM **HOSKINS**
8	CAMERON **McGEEHAN**
9	TOM **EAVES**
10	ELLIOTT **LIST**
11	KAMARAI **SWYER**
12	NESTA **GUINNESS-WALKER**
14	TYRESE **FORNAH**
15	JAKE **EVANS**
16	JOE **WORMLEIGHTON**
17	MICHAEL **JACOBS**
18	MICHAEL **FORBES**
20	THEO **AVERY**
21	JACK **PERKINS**
22	KYLE **EDWARDS**
23	TERRY **TAYLOR**
24	ELLIOT **MOORE**
25	JOSH **TOMLINSON**
26	KYLE **McADAM**
27	JACK **VALE**
28	BEN **HAMMOND**
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