

Half-time

By Hatters for Hatters

ORANGE



Season 10-11 No.9

Wrexham dress rehearsal edition



Flipping heck
Jason, the goal's
over there lad

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hatters matters

... a word from the editor

SO it's going to be Wrexham.

No real surprise who the opponents are, although it pits two traditional Football League clubs against one another as they bid for a return to the Football League.

After last season's disappointment in the play-off semi-final defeat to York and this season's FA Trophy semi-final loss to Mansfield I'm sure all Hatters fans are desperate for a successful two-legged affair. The Red Dragons certainly won't make things easy, but what is weird is that they are visiting Kenilworth Road today.

It's strange how the fixture lists seem to throw up



UNHAPPY HUNTING GROUND: Town will need to be at the races at the Racecourse Ground to give themselves a solid start

these anomalies every season.

What team should Brabin put out this afternoon? Should it be his first choice XI to get some cohesion and continuity before the play-offs begin? It would also give them the

chance to get a sight of their opponents.

Or perhaps he should play his cards close to his chest and pick no-one who will feature in the play-offs?

But we all know it's next week that matters...



Life at Luton Town is never dull. So why not send us your views on the Hatters by emailing **orange@bedsnews.com**

The best messages will be featured in this fanzine or the letters pages of the Luton News/Dunstable Gazette

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The news at

Orange Awards

WITH the season drawing to a close, it's time for the Half-time Orange awards for 2010-11.

>> **PLAYER OF THE SEASON:** Zdenek Kroca - Apart from his sterling defensive work, the Czech can often be found charging forward to score too

>> **GOAL OF THE SEASON:** Andy Drury v Charlton. Not the penalty rebound, no way, the 25-yarder spanked into the top corner. Glorious.



>> **SAVE OF THE SEASON:** Mark Tyler. AFC Wimbledon at home. Somehow stopped Lee Minshull thunderous close-range blast. It may well have been with his face, but they all count!

>> **YOUNG PLAYER OF THE SEASON:** Jake Howells - the youngster has played left back, left wing, central midfield, you name it, he's done it. Over 100 games for the Hatters now and hard to believe he's still just 19.



>> **GOAL CELEBRATION OF THE SEASON:** Straight shoot-out between Lloyd Owusu and Claude Gnaka.

The Frenchman's dance routines are always received well, but there's no beating a good old raise the roof!

>> **DOUBLE-BARRELLED SURNAME PLAYER OF THE SEASON:** Three horse race between Barnes-Homer, Amari and Ed. Has to go Town's leading scorer really with 19 goals and counting.



Ken Rumours, speculation, gossip and half-truths

Town fans celebrate as Crow and Willmott are left up for a corner



Dmitri Kharine

>> **CHANT OF THE SEASON:** "We've left two players up, we've left two players up."

Gary Brabin's first home match against Barrow. The new boss did away with Mr Money's infuriating tactics of bringing everyone back which was warmly received by the Kenilworth Road faithful.

>> **WARM UP GOAL OF THE SEASON:** Dmitri Kharine's turn and volley into the top corner at Mansfield. Statuesque Kevin Pilkington was left with no chance

Bottom of the class



Worst player of the season - Pavel Besta. Truly dreadful.
Miss of the season - Taiwo Atieno. Take your pick!
Worst ground visited - Corby Town, never again.
Worst goal conceded - Wrexham away. Freddie Murray heads across his own goal. Easy tap in.
Worst game seen - Southport away. Quite possible the most dire game known to man.

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our survey says...
it's 1pt for a right result and 2pts for a precise score

20 pts  mark wood	Town 2 Wrexham 0 With third place secure Town are able to shuffle their pack and triumph in this dead rubber.	Wrexham 0 Town 0 Windy weather cost Town dear in Wales last time out and this time there are no mistakes.	Town 2 Wrexham 0 An early goal settles Luton's nerves and a late second ensures Town's place at Eastlands.	Town 3 ????? 0 My money's on AFC in the play-off final and Luton throw off the shackles on a memorable day.
17 pt  steve sims	Town 0 Wrexham 1 A disappointing match made even worse by a late goal, but who cares?	Wrexham 1 Town 0 Both teams are extremely nervy in a tentative encounter. Town have it all to do in the return.	Town 0 Wrexham 1 Town huff and puff but the lack of firepower when the going gets tough again proves costly.	Town 2 ????? 1 I've just knocked us out, but if we do get through the semis I reckon we'll win in Manchester.
15 pts  mike simmonds	Town 1 Wrexham 1 Both sides keep their power dry in anticipation of the forthcoming play-off encounters.	Wrexham 2 Town 1 Crucially, Hatters get the away goal they need to set up quite a night at Kenilworth Road	Town 3 Wrexham 1 On a night packed with drama, Town banish the memories of last season with a famous win.	Town 2 ????? 1 Although Dons finished higher than Hatters, it counts for little, as Luton are left celebrating.
13 pts  steve nolan	Town 0 Wrexham 0 Both sides field their reserves and we're left with a nothing game to bore the crowd.	Wrexham 1 Town 0 We're no good at two-legged games and here's further proof. We never win there too.	Town 2 Wrexham 0 Town come back from the brink and secure their place in the play-off final at Eastlands.	Town 1 ????? 0 Back in the Football League thanks to a dramatic strike from Matthew Barnes-Homer.

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Tom's take



Tom Skinner gives his thoughts on the latest Hatters news

THE last few weeks have provided a chance to reflect, both on and off the pitch, following that turbulent ending to March.

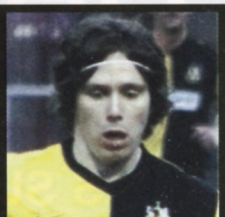
The funeral of Ian Pearce has taken place and, along with many other Hatters, I queued up before the Southport game to sign the book of condolence for 'Mr Luton'.

While it was a chance in writing to say goodbye to Ian, his spirit will undoubtedly remain with the club.

On the pitch, the team have continued to pick up points, with signs that fluency and pace are returning to our attacking game.



TWINS Jimmy Bullard, left, and John-Paul Kiscock, right



Brabs says he wants to get the whole squad firing all cylinders, so I'm a bit surprised at the lack of opportunity given to Dan Walker and particularly Lloyd Owusu.

I'm willing Jason Walker to do well, but his embarrassed celebration against Southport said it all.

We've got to get him confident in time for

those play-off games.

I wouldn't mind seeing big Lloyd upfront, Amari playing just off him, Gnackpa and Willmott as willing runners on the flanks and Lawless and Keane in the centre.

But then what about Jake Howells? Maybe this football manager malarky isn't so easy after all...

One player I would

consider bringing to the club would be Southport's John-Paul Kiscock. A bit of a Jimmy Bullard lookalike, his energy, neat close control and range of passing put him in a select group of opposition players who have impressed me since we've been in this league.

Today's game is a dress rehearsal for some play-off drama against Wrexham.

We slayed the Red Dragon(s) on St George's Day at the Racecourse to secure the League One title in 2005

Hopefully May 2011 is the time to write a new legend!

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What a beauty!

Rema

VITAL STATISTICS

Full name: Rema Banallal

Age: 22

Occupation: Student

Attached? Single

Been a supporter since: 2008

Best looking Hatter:

Mark Tyler

Most valuable player:

George Pilkington

Player to flog: Matthew

Barnes-Homer

Ideal night out: Staying in
with a movie!

Favourite TV shows: Bones

If you'd like to put yourself, or a mate, forward for this feature then don't be shy send an email to orange@bedsnews.com





Steve's line-up for today



SUBS: Lawless, Kidd, Gnakpa, Barnes-Homer, Lacey

If Half-time Orange's Steve Nolan was in charge of the team, this is what he'd do.



SO, the dreaded play-offs it is for another year then.

We all know what happened at this stage 12 months ago.

But Brabin's men look to have hit a patch of timely form in the last couple of games, albeit against a couple of pub sides who were already relegated anyway.

You would assume the boss would look to rest most of his first team for today's nothing game, ironically against the side we hope to beat in the semis over the next couple of weeks.

The last thing he's going to want is injuries to key players.

Pilkington would take over from Tyler between the sticks with Ed Asafu-Adjaye, Luke Graham, Kroca and Jake Howells at

left-back making up the back four.

Adam Newton would play on the right wing for me, with Carden and Poku in the middle of midfield and Dan Walker on the left.

Lloyd Owusu would partner Jason Walker up front for the Town.

Some of the usual faces could make up the bench - but you would assume Wrexham won't put out a strong team, so hopefully they won't be called upon unless needed.

Come on the Hatters - please avoid a repeat of last year's play-off disappointment.

I don't know about anyone else but I don't think I can get anything like excited about the prospect of another season of playing a load of teams I've never heard of!

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From the Kenny End



With Petey Staniforth

IT'S certainly been, as ever, another season that we won't forget at Kenilworth Road.

Starting it with what I felt was the best squad in the division, I, as many others did, thought this was our year to win the BSP title.

Rather typically, nothing has gone to script at all, and we're now looking at the play-offs for a second season in a row.

But if we wanted it to be straightforward we wouldn't support Luton, would we?

Has the new manager made a difference? I'd reply positively to that, and say that yes, he has.

Should he have perhaps been given a little bit more time to make that difference? Once more, I'd say yes.

Is the jury still slightly



BIG SUPPORT:
Luton fans at last season's play-off semis

out on Mr Brabin? I'd have to, yet again, answer that question in the affirmative, but this isn't really to knock him as all things take time.

Is this a bad thing? Not at all.

Looking to the here and now, the shadow of the play-offs are looming and who can forget last

season's loss to York.

But it's fair to say this time around we're better equipped as a club, as a squad, and as a group of fans to deal with the situation.

I had to take four months off from going to the games this season, due to personal issues, and I will never ever for-

get the support given to me from both Luton players and fans when myself and partner Hannah lost a baby late last year.

And they often say that what you experience, can make you stronger.

This has been the case in my life since then, and it's certainly fair to call that this could well be the case for our Hatters, and that we will overcome the disappointment of last season and head to Manchester and triumph in the play-off final.

To finish my column I give you the words from a well-known song that seem relevant right now - "I get knocked down, but I get up again, you ain't ever gonna keep me down..."

*Take it easy,
Petey*

Royal Wedding XI

WITH the whole world's attention reaching fever pitch over the Royal Wedding between Prince William and Kate Middleton yesterday, it seemed only right that here at Orange, we came up with our top line-up to help the happy couple celebrate their special day.

Ryan CHARLES
HARRY Haslam
Tom KING
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John PAGE(boy)
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WILLIAM Crump
Nathan ABBEY
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Blast from the past

Roger Wash looks back to see how the Town fared on this day in years gone by

April 30, 1982
Luton Town 4
Shrewsbury Town 1
WITH the momentous 1981/82 season drawing to a close a 2-2 draw at Rotherham, where rookie goalkeeper Alan Judge saved a last minute penalty, was seen as a pivotal moment in the Town's bid for promotion back to the top flight.

After the dust had settled it was quickly worked out that a win over struggling Shrewsbury Town at Kenilworth Road would be enough to guarantee a return to Division One.

A tense crowd of 14,563 gathered on a balmy Friday evening and transmitted their anxiety on to the



pitch, where it became obvious that the Shrews were hoping for a point.

Nerves were settled for a while when Brian Stein latched on to a route one clearance from goalkeeper Jake Findlay in the 14th minute to cleverly lob the Town into the lead.

The Hatters, however, failed to control the midfield and stuttered through the rest of

the first half without playing any of the free flowing football that had brought them to the gates of promotion.

Hearts sank when Ian Atkins, with just about the Shrew's only real attack of the game, equalised on the hour with a brilliant volley, but when Raddy Antic was brought on a few minutes later the Town

started to look a team again. It is now written into Kenilworth Road folklore as to how Ricky Hill ended the stalemate with a volley after a corner was headed on to him by Mal Donaghy in the 78th minute and, with the floodgates now open, goals from Steve White and David Moss secured a flattering victory. The supporters did not care. The Hatters were up!

Luton Town: Findlay, Stephens, Goodyear, Donaghy, Money, Hill, Horton, Fuccillo (Antic), Stein, White, Moss.

Shrewsbury Town: Wardle, MacLaren, Griffin, Keay, Johnson (Petts), Turner, McNally, Tong, Bates, Atkins, Cross.

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AND now, the end is near... well, for the golden boys at least.

As you read this we're busy preparing for our final home game of the season – an absolutely nailbiter at home to our local rivals QPR.

Who knows, dependant on the outcome QPR will be, er, probably champions. If we win, we could finish the season 10th, or if we lose 14th.

Wow, the tension – not even a Sky Sports presenter could make that sound interesting. It's been a season



NO MORE: Monday's visit to Histon was final

of largely boring mid-table mediocrity for us, with the odd flirtation with a play-off place, and for once we will take that on the chin.

Bearing in mind everybody, and most probably you with a big grin, predicted a bottom three place and Division One next season, mid-

table is virtually a title victory. No, we thought we'd give Sheffield United that pleasure!

So we have no money, a half-built ground and we'll no doubt sell our star striker in the summer but somehow we're still a Championship club.

And as for you... well, the play-offs loom. Again.

What could happen? Will it be Plymouth Argyle next season? Or will it be Braintree?

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