

HATTERS MATTERS

ISSUE 21 — SEPTEMBER 1996
292 Icknield Way, Luton, Beds, LU3 2JS.
(01582) 573485

Apology

The match at Wrexham on Tuesday October 1st was postponed due to international call-ups from Wrexham's squad. I regret that I was unable to get this issue out in time to give prior notification of this. The match was only called off on Saturday 28th, and I was unable to get things finished in time.

Transfers/Contracts

John Taylor has joined Lincoln City on a one month loan spell which may lead to a permanent deal. This took place in time for their fixture on Sept 28th, in which he scored. If the deal becomes permanent Taylor will be offered a free transfer.

Jamie Woodsford has joined Conference side Kettering on loan and scored a goal on his debut at Slough on 24th. It is unclear whether a permanent transfer will follow. (HP 26 09)

It has been suggested that Charlton Athletic and Sheffield United are both taking an interest in Steve Davis, but no bid has been made. (LN 18 09)

Defender Gary Simpson has been given a free transfer and has joined ICIS League Aylesbury. (LN 25 09)

Injuries

Dwight Marshall continues to progress towards full fitness, and could be back in training early in October, perhaps with a first reserve outing late in the month. (LN 11 09)

Des Linton has had a cartilage operation, and is expected to be out of action for a month. (HP 12 09)

Ceri Hughes received a dead leg in the cup match at Derby, missing the home match against Blackpool.

Other News

Tony Thorpe was fined a week's wages following his sending off at Bristol City. (LN 4 09)

Steve Davis has been replaced as team captain by Gary Waddock, but retains the position of club captain. (LN 4 09)

The gate for the home game against Rotherham was the lowest for a Saturday match at Kenilworth Road since September 1966. (HP 5 09)

Kim Grant flew to South Africa to make an appearance for his country, Ghana, on 21 September. He played against South Africa in Pretoria before a crowd of 50,000, in a game that finished goalless. He is likely to miss several more matches in the coming months as Ghana play in African Nations Cup and World Cup qualifying rounds.

Stories that Lennie Lawrence had resigned as Luton manager to become assistant at Manchester City to Dave Bassett were hotly denied by both Lawrence and the club. It was suggested that the story was an embellishment of the truth, which is apparently that Bassett asked Lawrence about being his assistant, and no more. (LN25 09)

As you no doubt all know, the draw for the third round of the Coca Cola Cup paired Luton Town with Wimbledon, a tie that will be played at Selhurst on Tuesday October 22nd.

The Boxing day fixture at Gillingham will kick-off at 12 noon.

Results and Reports

Difficult to compile this month as the main source of information, the Luton News, no longer carries match reports for every game. I'll try and fill the gaps next month.

31/08/96 ROTHERHAM UTD H 1-0

Att: 4,547 Ref: Mike Bailey, Cambridge.

Team: Feuer, James (Upson 88 min), Davis, Johnson, Thomas, Alexander, Waddock, Hughes, Showler, Grant (Guentchev 57 min), Oldfield (Thorpe 83 min).

Goal: Thomas, 58 min - towering header from Alexander's free-kick.

Booked: Steve Davis for a foul on Garner.

Comment: An acceptable result, but a match lacking entertainment, with Rotherham a very poor side.

04/09/96 BRISTOL RVRS A 1-2

Att: 2,320 Ref: Andy D'Urso, Billericay.

Team: Feuer, James, Davis, Johnson, Thomas, Linton, Alexander, Hughes, Showler (Fotiadis h t), Oldfield, Guentchev. Unused subs: Thorpe, McLaren.

Goals: Andy Gurney, 6 min - close range tap-in from Lee Archer's left wing cross. Archer, 18 min - cracking drive from the side of the penalty box. Oldfield, 63 min - shot into an empty net after receiving Fotiadis' pass and picking his way round a defender and the keeper.

Bookings: Errr, none apparently.

Comment: Painful, and worrying in the first half, but excellent for Town fans after that.

07/09/96 WYCOMBE WDRS A 1-0

Att: 6,471 Ref: Eddie Lomas, Manchester.

Team: Feuer, James, Davis, Johnson, Thomas, Alexander, Waddock, Hughes, Guentchev, Fotiadis (Thorpe 77 min), Oldfield. Unused subs: Showler, McLaren.

Goal: Oldfield, 52 min - netted from close range after Fotiadis headed back a deep cross by Thomas.

Comment: A well earned victory, and a rare away win which sees Town undefeated at Adams Park.

10/09/96 GILLINGHAM H 2-1

Att: 4,604 Ref: Clive Wilkes, Gloucester.

Team: Feuer, James, Davis, Johnson, Thomas, Waddock, Hughes, Alexander, Guentchev, Oldfield, Fotiadis (Grant). Unused subs: Showler, McLaren.

Goals: Bontcho Guentchev, 13 min - right foot volley from Davis' low hard right wing cross. Oldfield, xx min - Ian Chapman, 80 min - free kick.

Bookings: none?

Comment: Not very pretty, with Gillingham playing a very physical game.

14/09/96 CHESTERFIELD H 0-1

Att: 4,763 Ref: Roger Fumandiz, Doncaster.

Team: Feuer, James, Davis, Johnson, Thomas, Alexander,

Waddock, Hughes, Guentchev, Fotiadis (Grant 63 min), Oldfield (Showler 65 min). Unused sub: McLaren.

Goal: Tommy Curtis, 26 min - penalty, after Marvin Johnson handled a cross shot by Curtis at the near post.

Comment: Miserable and frustrating for Town fans, who saw their team mugged. Chesterfield invited the Town to attack, and found it all too easy to keep out a team bereft of ideas.

17/09/96 DERBY COUNTY H 1-0

Att: 4,459 Ref: Graham Poll, Tring.

Team: Feuer, James, Davis, Johnson, Thomas, Alexander, Hughes, Waddock, Guentchev, Grant (Fotiadis 74 min), Oldfield.

Goal: Julian James, 25 min - strike from about 20 yards out after Grant laid back Thomas's long cross.

Comment: Excellent performance by the Town against a below par Premiership side. A bigger margin of victory would not have been undeserved. The pressbox voting for Man of the Match saw every Town player nominated, and no derby players.

21/09/96 BURY A 0-0

Att: 3,588

Ref: Ian Cruikshanks, Hartlepool, replaced after pulling a muscle after 25 minutes by Graham Edgeley of Northwich.

Team: Feuer, James, Davis, Johnson, Thomas, Alexander, Hughes, Waddock, Guentchev, Oldfield, Fotiadis (Douglas 68 min). Unused subs: Showler.

Bookings: Waddock, Hughes and Fotiadis, all for fouls, along with Bury's Paul Butler.

Comment: Poor quality entertainment, but a point well earned by a disciplined Town performance. However, watching the game was hard work.

25/09/96 DERBY COUNTY A 2-2

Att: 13,569 Ref: John Brandwood, Lichfield.

Team: Feuer, James, Davis, Johnson, Thomas, Alexander, Hughes (Thorpe h t), Waddock, Guentchev, Oldfield, Grant. Unused subs: Patterson, Showler.

Goals: Grant, 11 min - shot from Oldfield's pass. Dean Sturridge, 39 min. Paul Simpson, 43 min. Thorpe, 68 min - calmly struck round a defender.

Comment: Deserved victory over two legs, with 2 goals and some solid defending securing the result.

28/09/96 BLACKPOOL H 1-0

Att: 5,303 Ref: Mick Fletcher, West Midlands.

Team: Feuer, James, Davis, Johnson, Thomas, Alexander, Thorpe, Waddock, Guentchev, Oldfield (Douglas 83 min), Grant (Fotiadis 80 min). Unused sub: Showler.

Goal: Grant, 26 min - shot into roof of net after keeper parried Oldfield's effort.

Booked: Marvin Bryan and Jason Lydiate of Blackpool, for fouls.

Comment: What the home fans wanted, with Blackpool lucky to escape a real pasting.

Forthcoming Fixtures

Sat Oct 5 WALSALL H

Sat Oct 12 SHREWSBURY TOWN A

Tues Oct 15 STOCKPORT COUNTY A

Sat Oct 19 PETERBOROUGH UTD H

Tues Oct 22 WIMBLEDON A CCC

Sat Oct 26 AFC BOURNEMOUTH H

Tues Oct 29 WATFORD A

Sat Nov 2 PLYMOUTH ARGYLE A

Pay on day only. Seats £10, terrace £7, no concessions.

Pay on day only. Seats £10, cons £4, terrace £8, cons £4.

Pay on day only. Seats £12, concessions £6.

Pay on day only. Seats £11, concessions £8.

No details yet.

All midweek games kick-off at 7.45 pm. Concessions refers to Juniors and Senior Citizens.

Reserves and Youth

Reserves

Thu Oct 3 Arsenal A LC

Mon Oct 7 Swindon Town A

Wed Oct 23 West Ham United H

Wed Oct 30 Bedford United A

Wed Nov 6 Tottenham Hotspur A

Youth

Sat Oct 5 Oxford United H

Sat Oct 12 Swindon Town A

Wed Oct 16 Rushden & Diamonds A EJC

Sat Oct 19 Colchester United A LC

Sat Oct 26 Wimbledon H

Home matches at Kenilworth Road (reserves) and Luton Rugby Club, Newlands Road (youth). LC = League Cup, BPC = Bedfordshire FA Premier Cup, EJC = Eastern Junior Cup.

The reserves opened with a home defeat against Wimbledon on Thursday 5th, Tony Thorpe scoring a penalty for Luton in the 2-1 loss. The next game saw improved fortunes when a visit to Portsmouth on 18th, resulted in a 2-0 victory, thanks to goals by Stuart Douglas and John Taylor. On Thursday 26th Bristol City were beaten 2-1 on their visit to Luton, with Paul Showler and Sean Evers getting their names on the scoresheet.

The youth side have had a busy month with no less than seven matches taking place. On August 31st, a trip to Colchester ended in a 2-3 defeat, after Liam George and Gary Doherty had scored for the Town. Bournemouth were the visitors on Tuesday 3rd for a replay of the Southern Junior Floodlit Cup (SJFC), and were beaten 3-0 with goals by Andrew Barr, Andrew Smith and Steve Augustine. Smith scores again the following Saturday when Southampton were beaten 1-0 at Newlands Road. The 14th saw another cup tie, this time in the South East Counties League Cup, and extra time was required before two goals from Augustine saw off their hosts, Cambridge United. The youngsters then had the opportunity to play in the glamorous surroundings of Molineux, after being drawn away to Wolves in the SJFC. Unfortunately the trip did not end in glory as they were beaten 2-1, Liam George scoring the Town goal. This was

followed up with a 1-0 defeat at home to Crystal Palace on 21st, but the following Saturday saw Tottenham Hotspur falling victim to the visiting Town team, with Smith and Barr again the scorers, in a 2-0 win.

Hatters Matters matters

As I have just finished transferring all the mailing list to a new database — manually, due to the 'wonders' of modern technology — please check that the address on your envelope is correct. If it isn't please let me know. Incidentally, although not registered under the Data Protection Act, this database is considered confidential, and will not be used for any other purpose than mailings for Hatters Matters, although I wonder whether we ought to be trying to put people in touch with each other for car sharing and that sort of thing. As ever, your comments will be welcome.

I have experimented with the layout of HM this month, and it seems to work well for me, but I would be interested to know what you think, especially if you don't like it. If nothing else, the results are a bit better!

The gaps in the match reports section are a matter of concern (six matches in which there were no bookings?), but I am working on filling the gaps and will, I hope, provide further details next month.

Finally, having transferred the database, I can tell you that HM now has 84 subscribers (including 13 who have not yet renewed from last month), and no postcode area (ie. LU) has more than three, although in terms of real places Quedgeley, near Gloucester, Portishead, near Bristol and Cannock, Staffordshire deserve a mention for having two each. The latest count for each county puts Cambridgeshire at the top of the list with 5, followed by Avon, Gloucestershire and West Midlands with 4 each, although if we were talking about old style counties Gloucestershire and Staffordshire would probably be vying for top slot.

HATTERS MATTERS

ISSUE 22 — OCTOBER 1996
292 Icknield Way, Luton, Beds, LU3 2JS.
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Latest News

Lennie Lawrence has been named as the Nationwide Manager of the Month for the Second Division for October, following the Town's unbeaten run during the month.

Transfers/Contracts

Darren Patterson joined Preston North End on a months loan at the start of the month, but the spell was cut short by the Lancashire club. (LN 9/10, 30/10)

Andrew Fotiadis has signed a new contract, barely three months after turning professional. The new deal gives him a pay rise, and ties him to the club for a longer period, although the club have refused to say how many years this will be. (LN 9/10)

John Taylor is back at Kenilworth Road after his loan spell at Lincoln, and the club are looking to let him go on loan elsewhere. (LN30/10)

Injuries

Dwight Marshall is now training with the senior professionals and could make a return to the reserve side in the next week. (LN 30/10)

After receiving a head injury against Shrewsbury, Stuart Douglas had to take two weeks rest from competitive football under Football League requirements. (LN 9/10)

Aaron Skelton is back to full fitness, and made a full appearance in the Bournemouth match.

Kim Grant missed three matches with a calf muscle strain, and Steve Davis has had a similar problem, causing him to miss the Bournemouth match.

Andrew Fotiadis has been suffering a hamstring strain.

Des Linton is back in full training five weeks after a knee operation. (LN 23/10)

Other News

On 5th October, Kim Grant was in action for Ghana, scoring his first international goal in their 2-1 home victory against Angola, in an African Nations Cup tie. (LN9/10)

Julian James escaped unscathed after a car crash on the M1 the day before the Peterborough match. His M-registered Mercedes however may be a write-off. The incident happened in rain after the Friday training session when his car was struck by two lorries. (LN 23/10)

In the Auto Windshields Cup Town have been drawn at home to Leyton Orient. The match will be played on December 10th.

The FA Cup 1st round draw paired Town with Torquay United, whilst the Coca Cola Cup 4th round draw has the winners of Town and Wimbledon at home to holders Aston Villa.

Kim Grant is wanted again by Ghana for a match against Gabon on Sunday 10th November, but his release is subject to fitness. (LN 30/10)

Stuart Douglas and Andrew Fotiadis have been selected for a three day training get together of the England under-19 squad. (LN 30/10)

Results and Reports

Commencing with the information missing from last month's reports, kindly provided by Peter and Russell Bulkeley.

04/09/96 Bristol Rovers A

Bookings: Julian James and Rovers' player-manager Ian Holloway for ungentlemanly conduct.

07/09/96 Wycombe Wanderers A

Bookings: Wycombe's Lawrence (foul) and Bell (dissent).

10/09/96 Gillingham H

Goals: Guentchev, 13 min - right foot volley from Davis' low hard right wing cross. Oldfield, 51 min - follow up in six yard box after 'keeper Stannard parried Hughes long range effort. Ian Chapman, 80 min - wellied a free kick, without subtlety, past the Town wall from 22 yards.

Bookings: James for retaliation, and Johnson for a foul. For Gillingham, Harris, Bryant and Hessenthaler for fouls, and Fortune-West for retaliation.

17/09/96 Derby County H

Luton's unused subs were Showler and McLaren.

Bookings: Ian Feuer for handball (outside his area), along with Derby's Paul Parker for a foul on Guentchev and Ward for dissent.

25/09/96 Derby County A

Goals: Kim Grant, 12 min - well placed shot from 8 yards after receiving Oldfield's pass. Dean Sturridge, 40 min - scored from 8 yards from Dailly's cross after Town defence had been caught square. Paul Simpson, 44 min - beat Feuer with a left foot shot from 20 yards. Tony Thorpe, 68 min - waist high half-volley after pass from Thomas.

Bookings: Ceri Hughes for a foul and Mitchell Thomas for time wasting. Derby's Ward for a foul.

05/10/96 WALSALL H 3-1

Att: 5,002 Ref: Barry Knight, Orpington.

Team: Feuer, James, Davis, Johnson, Thomas, Alexander, Waddock, Hughes (McLaren 82 min), Guentchev (Showler 52 min), Thorpe, Fotiadis (Douglas 86 min).

Goals: Thorpe, 45 min - received pass from Hughes and skipped through the defence to net the ball. Showler, 60 min - diving header from Thomas' headed pass. Fotiadis, 69 min - lob over keeper from 25 yards after pass from Thorpe. Kyle Lightbourne, 70 min - cracking 20 yard drive.

Bookings: None!

Comment: A very good contest with Walsall threatening to walk it in the first half hour, but then beaten by sharper finishing.

League position: 11th.

12/10/96 SHREWSBURY TOWN A 3-0

Att: 3,357 Ref: Richard Poulain, Huddersfield.

Team: Feuer, James (McLaren 77 min), Davis, Johnson, Thomas, Alexander, Waddock, Hughes, Showler, Thorpe

(Douglas 64 min (Guentchev 89 min)), Grant.
 Goals: Showler, 3 min - touched in a shot by Alexander.
 Thomas, 58 min - close range angled downward header from Alexander's corner, helped in by a defender (which is why it hit the roof of the net). Grant, 88 min - rounded keeper and tapped into empty net, after brave headed pass by Douglas.
 Booked: Waddock and Alexander, both for fouls.
 Comment: Lovely to watch for the Town fans with their team a class above the Shrews.
 League position: 8th.

15/10/96 STOCKPORT COUNTY A 1-1
 Att: 5,352 Ref: David Laws, Whitley Bay.
 Team: Feuer, James, Davis, Johnson, Thomas, Alexander, Waddock, Hughes, Showler, Thorpe (Oldfield 65 min), Grant.
 Unused subs: Guentchev, McLaren.
 Goals: Steve Davis, 26 min - headed goal from Alexander's corner. Brett Angell, 57 min - headed goal from goalmouth melee.
 Booked: Grant for playing on after an offside decision, and Stockport's mike Flynn for a foul on Oldfield.
 Comment: The Town had to show battling qualities in the second half to hang on for a draw after playing tremendous football in the first half.

19/10/96 PETERBOROUGH UTD H 3-0
 Att: 5,964 Ref: Roy Pearson, Durham.
 Team: Feuer, James, Davis, Johnson, Thomas, Alexander, Waddock, Hughes (McLaren 80 min), Showler, Thorpe (Guentchev 82 min), Oldfield (Fotiadis 71 min).
 Goals: Davis, 10 min - towering far post header after Alexander's corner. Showler, 24 min - deflected in Thorpe's drive after another Alexander corner. Showler, 54 min - shot after pass by Thorpe (but no corner!).
 Booked: Thomas for a foul, and Simon Clark of Peterborough for a foul on Oldfield.
 Comment: Good attacking football, and goals. Just what we need to bring the fans back.

League position: 7th.

22/10/96 WIMBLEDON A 1-1
 Att: 5,043 (over 2,000 from Luton)
 Ref: Mike Pierce, Bournemouth.
 Team: Feuer, James, Davis, Johnson, Thomas, Alexander, Waddock, Hughes, Showler, Thorpe, Oldfield. Unused subs: Guentchev, Skelton, McLaren.
 Goals: Dean Holdsworth, 24 min - scored after mistake by Marvin Johnson. Hughes, 41 min - tricked two defenders and scored from 20 yards.
 Booking: Vinnie Jones, for a foul on Hughes.
 Comment: Brilliant for Town fans.

26/10/96 AFC BOURNEMOUTH H 2-0
 Att: 5,635 Ref: Carl Finch, Bury St Edmunds.
 Team: Feuer, James, Skelton, Johnson, Thomas, Alexander (McLaren 82 min), Waddock, Hughes, Showler (Guentchev 76 min), Thorpe, Oldfield (Douglas 69 min).
 Goals: Thorpe, 58 min - penalty, after being tripped by Coll. Thorpe, 60 min - beat 'keeper to a back-pass by Cox.
 Bookings: Hughes, and Bournemouth's Robinson, Bailey and Young, all for fouls.
 Comment: Not the best football, but heartening for the fans to see that they can win without being at their best. Overtaking Watford in the table was even more heartening.
 League position: 5th.

29/10/96 WATFORD A 1-1
 Att: 14,109 (about 4,600 from Luton)
 Ref: Trevor West, Kingston-upon-Hull.
 Team: Feuer, James, Davis, Johnson, Thomas, Alexander, Waddock, Hughes, Showler, Thorpe, Oldfield (Douglas).
 Goals: Showler, 75 min - right footed shot from left angle of penalty area, going in off the crossbar. Bazeley, 90 min.
 League position: 6th.
 Full details next issue.

Forthcoming Fixtures

Sat	Nov	9	NOTTS COUNTY	H
Tue	Nov	12	WIMBLEDON	H (CCC3R)
Sat	Nov	16	TORQUAY UNITED	A (FAC 1)
Tue	Nov	19	PRESTON NORTH END	A
Sat	Nov	23	BRISTOL ROVERS	H
Tue	Nov	26	**See Below	
Sat	Nov	30	AFC BOURNEMOUTH	A

Seats £8 no cons, in advance only, terrace £8 adults, £4 cons. Pay on day for terrace.
 Pay on day. Terrace only, £8.50 adults, £4.50 cons.

Seats £8.50, cons £4.50 limited availability.
 Terrace £7.50, cons £4.00, pay on day only.

Tuesday November 26th is the date set aside for an FA Cup replay against Torquay United, or a Coca Cola Cup tie against Aston Villa — the FA Cup taking precedence. If neither of these takes place the Town will play away to Wrexham in a league match.

All midweek games kick-off at 7.45 pm. Concessions refers to Juniors and Senior Citizens.

Reserves and Youth

Reserves

Wed	Nov	6	Tottenham Hotspur	H(KR)
Mon	Nov	18	Norwich City	H(HT) LC
Wed	Dec	4	Ipswich Town	A LC

Youth

Sat	Nov	9	Barnet	H
Tue	Nov	12	Hereford United	A FAYC
Sat	Nov	16	AFC Bournemouth	A
Sat	Nov	30	Brighton & Hove Albion	H

Home matches at Kenilworth Road (KR) or Hitchin Town (HT) (reserves) and Luton Rugby Club, Newlands Road (youth). LC = League Cup, FAYC = FA Youth Cup.

The reserves beat a strong Arsenal side at Highbury on 3rd October, through a goal by Liam George. This was in spite of the handicap of Trevor Peake having to leave the field, after only 4 minutes, with a twisted knee. The trip to Swindon on 7th was not so profitable, with a 1-0 result for the home side. It would seem that Premiership second string sides are more vulnerable, as was proved when West Ham brought some of their 'League of Nations' squad to Kenilworth Road on 23rd, and were beaten 2-1. Liam George opened the scoring, and Matthew Upson got the winner. Rather more mundane opponents and surroundings on 30th, with a visit to Bedford United in the Bedfordshire Premier Cup. On this occasion Liam George (again) scored both the Luton goals in a 2-1 win.

The youth side drew 1-1 at home to Oxford on October 5th, with Liam George (him again) putting a penalty away after Andrew Barr had been brought down. Barr got on the scoresheet himself at Swindon Town on 12th, when a 2-2 draw was secured, with Terry Sweeney the other Town scorer. A visit to Rushden & Diamonds FC in the Eastern Junior Cup saw the Town progress after a 3-2 extra time victory. Matthew Spring and Jimmy Cox scored in normal time, and Mark Hillyard was responsible for the winner. On 19th Steve Augustine got on the scoresheet twice during the visit to Colchester for a South East Counties League Cup tie. Unfortunately, when he headed a corner past the 'keeper he was at the wrong end of the pitch. He later rectified this error, but the Town were still beaten 3-2. Sweeney was the other Town scorer. At home to Wimbledon on 26th, Luton secured a 2-0 victory thanks to goals from Barr and Sweeney.

HATTERS MATTERS

ISSUE 23 — NOVEMBER 1996
292 Icknield Way, Luton, Beds, LU3 2JS.
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Here we are with another late issue of HM. No excuses this time, as I can't find the book! The flow of news has been a bit difficult to maintain, as all the local free papers seem to have decided that this address does not exist.

Transfers/Contracts

John Taylor joined Colchester United for a month's loan. (LN6/11)

Injuries

Dwight Marshall has now returned to action (details below). Kim Grant suffered a knee injury in the game against Wimbledon, but a couple of weeks rest solved the problem. Trevor Peake has had an operation to cure a knee ligament problem. This is the first time in his career that he has needed surgery. (LN13/11)
Richard Harvey has been told he will soon be able to think about light training after a serious knee operation, and he could be playing again by the end of the season. (LN 13/11)
Gary Waddock missed the game at Bournemouth after suffering a groin strain.
David Oldfield, Andrew Fotiadis and Stuart Douglas all missed games due to hamstring injuries.

Other News

After being sent off at Plymouth, Mitchell Thomas missed the FA Cup match at Torquay while serving a one match ban. Kim Grant declined the opportunity for international football with Ghana in order to prove his fitness and fight for a first team place for his club against Notts County. (LN 6/11)
An alleged interest by Manchester City in Ian Feuer did not materialise into a firm bid for the Town player. It is unlikely that there will be any player sales before the New Year unless any outstanding offers are received.
The derby match against Watford in January has been put back to Sunday January 26th for live showing on Sky TV. This will only happen if both sides are out of the FA Cup by then.
An attempt by Luton Town to reduce admission prices for the Auto Windscreens Shield match was vetoed by Leyton Orient. This was because the two clubs share the match proceeds.
If a replay of the FA Cup match against Borehamwood is required, it will be played at their ground on Tuesday 17th December, kick-off 7.30 pm. The match would be all ticket, with seats available at £10 (£7 cons) and terracing at £8 (£5 cons). This assumes that the Hertfordshire Police would allow the tie to proceed on this basis.
The 1997/98 season will commence on August 9.
Ceri Hughes has been named as a standby player for the latest Welsh international side.
The KohlerDome public enquiry resumed on 3rd December.

Results and Reports

29/10/96 WATFORD A 1-1
Att: 14,109 (inc about 4,600 from Luton)
Ref: Trevor West, Kingston-upon-Hull.

Team: Feuer, James, Davis, Johnson, Thomas, Alexander, Waddock, Hughes, Showler, Thorpe, Oldfield (Douglas 71 min). Unused subs: Guentchev, McLaren.
Goals: Showler, 75 min - right footed shot from left angle of penalty area, going in off the crossbar. Bazeley, 90 min - shot through crowded goalmouth to score via deflection off Davis.
Booked: Julian James and Mitchell Thomas for fouls.
Comment: A derby cracker after a poor first half, with Watford lucky to find a referee so generous with the stoppage time.
League position: 6th.

02/11/96 PLYMOUTH ARGYLE A 3-3

Att: 7,134 (340 from Luton)
Ref: Alan Wiley, Staffordshire.
Team: Feuer, James, Davis, Johnson, Thomas, Alexander, Waddock, Hughes, Showler (Guentchev 74 min), Thorpe, Douglas (Grant 72 min). Unused sub: McLaren.
Goals: Thorpe, 9 min - low drive from Alexander's corner, pulled back to the edge of the penalty area. Ronnie Mauge, 32 min - Far post header from left wing cross by Evans. Thorpe, 64 min - fell after receiving diagonal ball from Hughes, but struck past defender to score. Michael Evans, 71 min - penalty, after Thomas handled on the line. Evans, 74 min - cross-shot from the edge of the area. Thorpe, 86 min - crisp shot from low cross by Grant.
Sent-off: Thomas for handling on the line to keep out Mauge's header.
Booked: James for a foul, Feuer and Alexander for dissent. Argyle's Chris Billy, Jason Rowbotham and Ronnie Mauge, all for fouls.
Comment: On a dreadful rainswept day, this was a gripping confrontation, with each side having it's moments, and a full blooded hectic finale. Oh, and Tony Thorpe's first hat-trick.
League position: 8th, 28 points.

09/11/96 NOTTS COUNTY H 2-0

Att: 5,664 Ref: Mike Bailey, Cambridge.
Team: Feuer, James, Johnson, Davis, Thomas, Alexander, Waddock, Hughes, Guentchev, Thorpe (Douglas h/t), Grant. Unused subs: McLaren, Marshall.
Goals: Thorpe, 21 min - quick control and shot on the turn from pass by Grant. Hughes, 22 min - 40 yard free-kick that floated in off Strodder's head.
Booked: County's Strodder, for a foul, and Jones, for dissent.
Comment: Top class first half, not so good in the second, but an enjoyable result for Town fans.
League position: 5th.

12/11/96 WIMBLEDON H 1-2

Coca Cola Cup 2nd Round replay. Result after extra time.
Att: 8,076 Ref: Mike Riley, Leeds.
Team: Feuer, James, Johnson, Davis, Thomas, Alexander, Waddock, Hughes, Showler (Guentchev 90 min), Thorpe (Douglas 85 min), Grant (McLaren 97 min).

Goals: Dean Blackwell (own goal), 27 min - back header into his own net from Hughes' free kick. Stewart Castledine, 90 min - . Peter Fear, 97 min - .

Booked: Graham Alexander for a foul on Peter Fear, and Fear for retaliating to it.

Comment: A cracking cup tie, with the Town on top in the first half, but paying the price for not converting their chances.

16/11/96 TORQUAY UNITED A 1-0

Att: 3,450 (757 from Luton)

Ref: John Brandwood, Lichfield.

Team: Feuer, James, Johnson, Davis, Skelton, Alexander, Waddock, Hughes, Showler, Douglas (Marshall 75 min), Guentchev. Unused subs: Patterson and McLaren.

Goal: Ceri Hughes, 41 min - blistering shot from 20 yards, after Torquay failed to get away an Alexander corner.

Booked: Charlie Oatway of Torquay for a foul on Waddock.

Comment: Not brilliant football, but a relief to get through the game with our ever diminishing band of strikers.

Waddock (McLaren 22 min), Hughes, Showler, Douglas (Marshall 23 min), Guentchev (Skelton 76 min).

Goals: David Moyes, 35 min - headed goal from a corner. Moyes, 40 min - header from corner. Davis, 45 min - headed goal from Alexander's corner. Lee Ashcroft, 88 min - slotted home after slip-up by Skelton. Davis, 90 min - hooked ball in after Thomas touched on Hughes' long throw.

Booked: McLaren for a foul, Feuer for a push on Holt, and Holt for retaliating.

23/11/96 BRISTOL ROVERS H 2-1

Att: 5,315

Ref: Graham Pooley, Bishop's Stortford.

Team: Feuer, James, Johnson, Davis, Thomas, Alexander, McLaren, Hughes, Showler (Guentchev 83 min), Thorpe, Marshall (Grant 76 min). Unused sub: Skelton.

Goals: Marshall, 29 min - beat the keeper to a flicked pass from Thorpe. Jason Harris, 80 min - shot from a Matthew Hayfield corner. Thorpe, 90 min - injury time penalty after handball by Marcus Browning.

Comment: Mixed for Town fans, but eventually a happy ending.

League position: 4th.

19/11/96 PRESTON NORTH END A 2-3

Att: 7,004

Ref:

Team: Feuer, James, Johnson, Davis, Thomas, Alexander,

30/11/96 AFC BOURNEMOUTH A 2-3

Details next issue.

Forthcoming Fixtures

Sat Dec 7 BOREHAMWOOD H (FAC2)

Replay details above (Other News section).

Tues Dec 10 LEYTON ORIENT H (AWS1)

Sat Dec 14 CREWE ALEXANDRA H

Wed Dec 18 MILLWALL A

Thur Dec 26 GILLINGHAM A

Pay on Day only. Seats £12, cons £6.

Some seats available in advance, apply to LTFC for details. Terracing is Pay on the Day only, £8.50 adults, £6.50 senior citizens, £4 juniors.

Sat Dec 28 WYCOMBE WDRS H

Wed Jan 1 BURY H

All midweek games kick-off at 7.45 pm. Concessions refers to Juniors and Senior Citizens.

Reserves and Youth

Reserves

Mon Dec 9 Oxford United H (HT 7.00pm)

Tue Dec 17 Crystal Palace A

Mon Jan 6 Swansea City H (HT 7.00pm)

Youth

Sat Dec 7 Brentford A

Tue Dec 10 Royston A EJC

Sat Dec 14 Bristol City II

Thu Dec 19 Oxford United H FAYC

Sat Dec 21 Bristol Rovers H

Home matches at Kenilworth Road (KR) or Hitchin Town (HT) (reserves) and Luton Rugby Club, Newlands Road (youth). LC = League Cup, FAYC = FA Youth Cup, EJC = Eastern Junior Cup.

The reserves beat Tottenham Hotspur 2-1 on November 6th, with goals by Matthew Upson and Liam George. The game marked Dwight Marshall's first public appearance in a Town shirt since breaking his leg, when he came on for the last 15 minutes. The only other game for the second string side was the season's first match at Top Field, home of Hitchin Town FC. This ended as a 3-0 win for the Town over Norwich City, with Jamie Woodsford scoring two goals, and Paul McLaren adding one of his own.

A busy month for the youth team started on 2nd with a 1-0 win away to Wycombe Wdrs, Gary Doherty getting the goal. A brace for Liam George secured a 2-1 win at Barnet a week later, and this was followed with a trip to Hereford in the FA Youth Cup on 12th. The Town won 3-1 with goals from George, Richard Clarke and Matthew Spring. Andrew Barr scored both goals in a 2-0 victory at Bournemouth on 16th, and a week later the Town went top of their table with a 2-1 win at home to Swindon, when George and Steve Augustine netted. Terry Sweeney and Barr were on the scoresheet as the top place was maintained with a 2-2 draw at home to Brighton on 30th. The 2nd December saw a 1-1 draw at Oxford in the FA Youth Cup, with Liam George scoring the Town goal.

HATTERS MATTERS

ISSUE 24 — DECEMBER 1996
292 Icknield Way, Luton, Beds, LU3 2JS.
(01582) 573485

Just for a change this issue comes out early. This is because I'm moving house soon after Christmas and the computer needs to go into it's box for a week or so. However, I don't have a date for the move yet, so I can't tell you the new address.

Transfers/Contracts

John Taylor's loan spell at Colchester has been extended for a second month, and the striker has been offered a permanent deal by the Essex club. If he agrees terms he will be granted a free transfer from Luton. (LN 11/12)

Jamie Woodsford has joined Hitchin Town on a months loan, and made his debut for them on Saturday 21st December.

Injuries

Marvin Johnson, Mitchell Thomas and Ceri Hughes all missed matches during the month with injury or illness. Thomas suffered an ankle injury, whilst Johnson went down with a virus and Hughes suffered a stomach bug.

By mid-December the only first team squad player still on the injured list was Richard Harvey. He will step up his training and could be back in action before the end of the season.

Other News

Luton Town have opened a satellite branch of the club shop in the Asda Superstore in Wigmore Lane, Luton. (HP 5/12)

The date of the derby match against Watford has been changed again. It will now be played on Monday January 27th and shown live on Sky TV (Sky Sports 3), with a 7.45pm kick-off. The only threat to the game is now if either side is in the fourth round of the FA Cup and selected for a live TV game on the Sunday. (HP 12/12)

The Town were drawn away to Northampton Town in the 2nd round of the Auto Windscreens Shield (see below for details), giving Town their first visit to Sixfields Stadium.

The directors have pledged that offers for players will not be entertained while the club is in with a chance of promotion, although Lennie Lawrence commented that "if really silly money was on offer, it would have to be considered". The club is set to lose £1.5 million this season, but could make up to an extra million pounds through sponsorship and TV money in the First Division next season. (LN24/14)

The home match against Wycombe on December 28th was postponed due to a frozen pitch, in spite of the pitch covers being used. The New Years Day match against Bury followed suit when snow covered the already frozen pitch.

The much postponed match away to Wrexham has been provisionally re-arranged for Tuesday 11th March, but this is also a date set aside for the Auto Windscreens Shield.

Results and Reports

30/11/96 AFC BOURNEMOUTH A 2-3

Att: 4,322 Ref: John Brandwood, Lichfield.

Team: Feuer, James, Johnson, Davis, Thomas, Alexander, Skelton (Linton 68 min), Hughes, Showler (Guentchev 81 min), Thorpe, Marshall (Grant 81 min).

Goals: Steve Robinson, 16 min - tap-in after Feuer parried a drive by Jon O'Neill. James, 23 min - 25 yard drive went in off the post after an Alexander cross was half cleared. Marshall, 44 min - headed in at near post from an excellent cross by Hughes. Ian Cox, 77 min - header from a free kick by Rawlinson. Robinson, 80 min - close range header from Jason Brissett's headed pass after the Town defence had hesitated believing the ball had curled out of play.

Booked: Davis and Linton for fouls, and Bournemouth's Dale Gordon, Mark Rawlinson for fouls and Rob Murray for dissent.

Comment: Great first hour for the Town, but very poor thereafter as they caved in to a long ball assault.

League position: 6th.

03/12/96 YORK CITY H 2-0

Att: 4,401 Ref: David Orr, Iver.

Team: Feuer, James, Davis, Johnson, Thomas, Alexander, Hughes, McLaren, Showler, Thorpe, Marshall (Grant 74 min). Unused subs: Guentchev and Linton.

Goals: Marshall, 47 min - knocked in rebound after Thorpe's header, from a far post cross by Thomas, was parried by the keeper. Thorpe, 69 min - instant shot from Showler's centre.

Booked: Steve Davis for a foul on Gary Bull.

Comment: Dreadful first half, second a bit better.

League position: 4th.

07/12/96 BOREHAM WOOD H 2-1

FA Cup Round 2

Att: 5,332 Ref: Barry Knight, Orpington.

Team: Feuer, James, Patterson, Davis, Skelton (Grant 61 min), Waddock, Alexander (Guentchev 78 min), Hughes, Showler, Thorpe, Marshall. Unused sub: McLaren.

Goals: Terry Robbins, 59 min - simple goal after Tony Samuels played a square ball to by-pass the advancing Feuer. Marshall, 66 min - expert low drive after Feuer's long punt took a lucky bounce off a defender's head. Marshall, 83 min - low shot through crowded penalty area after Patterson nodded down Hughes' deep free kick.

Booked: Alexander for dissent and Hughes for a foul. Boreham Wood's Steve Heffer and Tony Joyce for time wasting.

Comment: All right by the time the final whistle went, but the visitors had the home fans rattled when they took the lead. And they recieved a big hand at the end of a game they were probably a little unlucky to lose.

10/12/96 LEYTON ORIENT H 2-0

Auto Windscreens Shield, Round 1.

Att: 1,594 - lowest first team gate since 1933.

Ref: Mike Bailey, Cambridge.

Team: K. Davis, James (Alexander 66 min), S. Davis, Patterson, Skelton, Linton, Hughes, Waddock (Showler 80 min), Guentchev, Marshall (Oldfield 63 min), Grant.

Goals: Martin Ling, 26 min - close range header after header by Colin West came back off the bar. Steve Davis, 51 min - far post header from corner by Ceri Hughes. Grant, 85 min -

header from Showler's left wing cross.

Booked: Mark Warren of Orient for a foul on Marshall.

Comment: Patchy entertainment, with Orient a poor side and Town struggling to raise any enthusiasm.

14/12/96 CREWE ALEXANDRA H 6-0

Att: 5,455 Ref: Steve Bennett, Dartford.

Team: Feuer, James, Johnson, Davis, Thomas, Alexander, Waddock, McLaren, Showler, Thorpe (Oldfield 76 min), Marshall (Grant 72 min). Unused sub: Linton.

Goals: Alexander, 2 min - close range drive after Thorpe's cross was parried by the keeper. Thorpe, 20 min - volley from Alexander's right wing cross. Thorpe, 29 min - penalty, after Shaun Smith brought down Marshall and was sent off. Thorpe, 60 min - beat keeper to the ball to deflect Alexander's shot in to the net with his knee. Showler, 64 min - far post header from right wing cross by Alexander. Oldfield, 90 min - slotted ball through keepers legs from an opening made by Showler.

Sent Off: Crewe's Shaun Smith, for a 'professional' foul on Marshall, and Ashley Westwood for 2 yellow cards; one for a 17 min foul on Marshall, then a 75 min clattering of Thorpe. Booked: Julian James and Crewe's Phil Charnock for fouls.

Comment: A day when it all came together, and Crewe's loss of two players made little difference to the result. An irresistible team performance.

League position: 3rd.

18/12/96 MILLWALL A 1-0

Att: 7,701 Ref: Gurnam Singh, Wolverhampton.

Team: Feuer, James, Johnson, Davis, Thomas, Alexander, Waddock, Hughes, Guentchev, Thorpe, Marshall. Unused subs: Goal: Hughes, 90 min - careful low drive into bottom right corner from the edge of the penalty area, after receiving pass from Waddock and forcing his way past David Sinclair.

Booked: Jason Dair of Millwall, after fouling Alexander.

Comment: A hardv and uncompromising contest, with Millwall having little to offer beyond endeavour and sagging confidence, and the Town taking a long time to make their second half superiority count. An absolutely superb end to the game with the Town not only winning, but going to the top of the table.

League position: 1st.

26/12/96 GILLINGHAM A 2-1

Att: 8,598 Ref:

Team: Feuer, James, Johnson, Davis, Thomas, Alexander, Waddock, Hughes, Guentchev, Thorpe, Marshall (Oldfield 89 min). Unused subs: Grant, McLaren.

Goals: Thorpe, 25 min. Onuora, 26 min. Thorpe, 60 min.

League position: 2nd. FULL DETAILS NEXT ISSUE.

Forthcoming Fixtures

Sat Jan 4 BOLTON WANDERERS H (FA Cup 3)

Tue Jan 7 NORTHAMPTON TN A

Sat Jan 11 BLACKPOOL A

Tue Jan 14 Bolton Wdrs (Provisional) A (Cup replay)

Sat Jan 18 WREXHAM H

Sat Jan 25 F. A. Cup 4th Round.

Mon Jan 27 WATFORD H (k.o. 7.45)

Sat Feb 1 NOTTS COUNTY A

Not all ticket, but Town fans advised to buy tickets in advance. Seats only, £8.50.

Pay on the day only. Terracing £8.50 adults, £6.50 cons.

Seats £15/£9 advance. Terrace £11/£8 Pay on day.

No ticket details yet.

All midweek games kick-off at 7.45 pm. Concessions refers to Juniors and Senior Citizens.

Reserves and Youth

Reserves

Mon Jan 6 Swansea City H (HT 7.00pm)

Wed Jan 15 Bristol Rovers A

Mon Jan 20 Cardiff City H (HT 7.00pm)

Wed Feb 5 Ipswich Town A

T.B.A. Stotfold A (BPC S-F)

Youth

Sat Jan 4 Bristol City A

Wed Jan 8 Torquay United A (FAYC)

Sat Jan 11 Colchester United H

Sat Jan 18 Southampton A

Sat Jan 25 Crystal Palace A

Sat Feb 1 Reading A

Home matches at Kenilworth Road (KR) or Hitchin Town (HT) (reserves) and Luton Rugby Club, Newlands Road (youth). LC = League Cup, FAYC = FA Youth Cup, EJC = Eastern Junior Cup, BPC = Bedfordshire Premier Cup.

The reserve match at Ipswich scheduled for December 4th was postponed with the Portman Road pitch waterlogged. An experienced Oxford United side won 2-0 on their visit to Hitchin's Top Field on 9th, in spite of having to defend that lead from the 27th minute with only ten men. This was after Todd Lumsden was red carded for a 'tackle' which saw Jamie Woodsford stretchered off. On Monday 17th they lost 2-0 to Crystal Palace at Plough Lane, although the bright spot was that both David Oldfield and Andrew Fotiadis played in the match on return from injury.

The youth team retained top spot in Division Two of the South East Counties League with a 3-1 win against Brentford on December 7th, when Richard Clarke, Terry Sweeney and Andrew Barr scored the goals. Then on Thursday 19th, at Kenilworth Road, they replayed their FA Youth Cup tie with Oxford United and won 3-2 after being 2-0 down in the first 10 minutes, securing a visit to Torquay in the next round. The goals were scored by Sweeney, Jimmy Cox and Liam George. With the other Town sides resting on 21st, they played at home to Bristol Rovers at Newlands Road with Matthew Spring and George scoring in a 2-1 victory.

HATTERS MATTERS

ISSUE 25 — JANUARY 1997

38 TWIGDEN COURT, MOUNT PLEASANT ROAD, LUTON, LU3 2RL.

(01582) 573485

Just when you were thinking that HM had disappeared for good, it drops onto your doormat. Very late, I know, but better late than never! I apologise for this. The next issue will also be slightly late, otherwise there won't be anything to put in it. Please note the change of address.

Transfers/Contracts

John Taylor has finally left Luton Town, joining Cambridge United on a free transfer.

Injuries

Gary Waddock has been struggling with a recurring calf muscle strain, and missed a number of matches as a result. This has now been found to be a torn muscle, and it is hoped this will now be on the mend.

Kim Grant picked up an ankle injury in the pre-match warm up for the Wrexham game, and was replaced on the bench at very short notice by Des Linton. Paul McLaren picked up a hamstring strain during the same match.

Other News

With the freezing weather making training as difficult as playing real matches, the Town welcomed the chance to play a behind closed doors friendly at Highbury against an Arsenal reserve side. Although little has been made public about the game, the result was 3-1 in favour of the home side. Arsenal used the match to give keeper David Seaman a fitness test.

Kim Grant was the only Town player to get a chance to play in a serious game when he played for Ghana in their World Cup qualifier against Morocco on Sunday 12th January. He played as a sub in the 2-2 draw. He made a further trip, this time to Harare, for the African Nations Cup match against Zimbabwe on 26th January and played a full 90 minutes in the goalless match, which was interrupted shortly before half-time in a bizarre incident when the players were forced to leave the field due to a swarm of bees.

The extended period of bad weather means a fixture pile up with several matches to be re-arranged. The Auto Windscreens Shield created further difficulty in fixing dates for these matches.

The home match against Brentford will take place on Friday March 21st, and will be televised live by Sky TV.

A consequence of the cold spell was the cash flow problems it caused for the club. With each home match bringing in £30,000, and the budget allowing for two home games a month, the club were left £60,000 short by mid-January.

Striker Liam George has signed a professional contract a couple of weeks before his 18th birthday, which is a reward for his goalscoring exploits for both youth and reserve teams.

Stuart Douglas and Andrew Fotiadis were called up for a three day England under-19 training camp at Bisham Abbey.

As a reward for being top of the table, the Luton players were rewarded with the installation of a hi-fi system in the dressing room. This stemmed from a promise by David Kohler in the autumn that he would buy the system in the event of the team being top at Christmas. It means that Marvin Johnson's

ghetto blaster is no longer needed for home matches, but will still be doing it's duty at away games.

Ceri Hughes has been suspended for two matches after collecting his sixth yellow card of the season at Bolton. He will miss the game at home to Plymouth Argyle on February 8th, and the following match. Steve Davis and Julian James are both two bookings away from a suspension.

Ceri Hughes was called up for the Wales squad for their match against the Republic of Ireland, but not selected for the starting line up. He did, however, win another cap after appearing as a substitute.

Kelvin Davis was called up for the England under-21 squad to face Italy at Bristol City's Ashton Gate on February 12th.

After being fined a suspended £10,000 last summer for having the second worst disciplinary record in the First Division last season, the Town are now placed top of the Second Division Fair Play League, compiled by the FA. Points are awarded for goals scored, with bonuses for those in away matches, and points deducted for red and yellow cards. The latest table shows the Town 19 points ahead of Brentford, and the winners stand to win £10,000.

Rearranged dates for postponed matches are as follows (all these games kick off at 7.45 unless stated):

4th March	Chesterfield	A
11th March	Wrexham	A
8th April	Wycombe Wanderers	H
15th April	Blackpool (7.30)	A
22nd April	Bury	H

Results and Reports

26/12/96 GILLINGHAM A 2-1

Att: 8,598

Ref: Paul Rejer, Tipton.

Team: Feuer, James, Johnson, Davis, Thomas, Alexander, Waddock, Hughes, Guentchev, Thorpe, Marshall (Oldfield 89 min). Unused subs: Grant, McLaren.

Goals: Thorpe, 23 min - calm and composed strike after intercepting a poor back pass by Steve Butler. Onuora, 25 min - strike from not far out after Butters headed down a long free kick. Thorpe, 51 min - clinical angled drive from opening made by Alexander's pass.

Booked: Ceri Hughes and Neil Smith for a handbags at three paces altercation.

Other: Steve Butler had an injury time penalty saved by Ian Feuer, after Hessenthaler had been impeded by Bontcho Guentchev. Luton players thought that the Gillingham man had dived and a mass argument blew up after the final whistle.

Comment: Not brilliant in football terms, but a smashing day out for the Town fans. The Town proved that their footballing approach was more effective than the thud and blunder approach by Gillingham, even if the defence looked vulnerable at times to the airborne direct long ball.

League position: 2nd.

18/01/97 WREXHAM H 0-0
 Att: 5,734 Ref: Robert Styles, Waterloooville.
 Team: Feuer, James, Johnson, Davis, Thomas, Alexander, McLaren (Linton 74 min), Hughes, Showler (Guentchev 78 min), Thorpe, Marshall (Oldfield 60 min).
 Booked: Wrexham's Martyn Chalk and Brian Carey for fouls and Karl Connolly for playing on after being given offside, along with Guentchev, for diving.
 Comment: Good entertainment compared to the previous three Saturdays! In reality, it was rather poor.
 League position: 2nd.

21/01/97 BOLTON WANDERERS H 1-1
 Att: 7,414 Ref: Carl Finch, Bury St Edmunds.
 Team: Feuer, James, Johnson, Davis, Thomas, Alexander, Linton, Hughes, Showler, Thorpe, Marshall (Grant h/t).
 Unused subs: Guentchev and Skelton.
 Goals: Jamie Pollock, 26 min - strike set up by a suspiciously offside looking Nathan Blake. Marvin Johnson, 90 min - knocked in from goalmouth scramble in injury time after Ian Feuer had gone up for the corner to cause a bit of chaos.
 Booked: Jamie Pollock for time wasting.
 Comment: A memorable finish to a good entertaining match, with Marvin's third goal in over 350 matches for the Town.

25/01/97 BOLTON WANDERERS A 2-6
 Att: 9,713 Ref: Carl Finch, Bury St. Edmunds.
 Team: Feuer, James, Johnson, Davis, Thomas, Linton, Alexander, Hughes, Showler (Guentchev 68 min), Thorpe, Marshall (Fotiadis 68 min). Unused sub: Patterson.
 Goals: John McGinlay, 8 min - expert shot into far corner from Per Frandson's incisive pass. Thorpe, 30 min - close range flicked header after Davis headed back Alexander's corner. Marshall, 35 min - close range volley after Taggart tried to chest down Davis' long free kick. Nathan Blake, 51 min - powerful shot from McGinlay's cross. Alan Thompson, 62 min - superbly struck free kick into top left corner. Blake, 65 min - raced clear to fire home after Johnson missed Thomas's pass. Jamie Pollock, 82 min - strike from Thompson's pass. Scott Green, 90 min - final nail in the coffin, put together by all three Bolton subs.
 Booked: James and Hughes for fouls, and Bolton's Pollock for a foul and Blake for dissent.
 Comment: If the game had ended at half-time it would have been wonderful. But the second half was not a happy experience for Town fans, although the result flattered Bolton a little.

27/01/97 WATFORD H 0-0
 Att: 7,428 Ref: Mike Pierce, Portsmouth.
 Team: Feuer, James, Johnson, Davis, Thomas, Linton, Alexander, Hughes, Showler, Thorpe, Marshall (Oldfield 61 min). Unused subs: Grant and Patterson.
 Booked: Marvin Johnson for a foul and Watford's Devon

White for handball.
 Comment: Full of frantic endeavour, but short of quality football. Played in an excellent spirit throughout.
 League position: 2nd.

01/02/97 NOTTS COUNTY A 2-1
 Att: 5,025 (inc. 1,370 from Luton)
 Ref: Trevor West, Hull.
 Team: Feuer, James, Johnson, Davis, Thomas, Linton (Marshall 68 min), Alexander, Hughes, Guentchev, Thorpe (Grant 77 min), Oldfield. Unused sub: Patterson.
 Goals: Ian Richardson, 61 min - got behind the Town defence to tuck away a through ball from Robinson, who had been fed by Ceri Hughes. Hughes, 65 min - 30 yard right footer which the keeper should have saved. Alexander, 87 min - low drive set up by a super pass from Oldfield.
 Booked: James and Linton for fouls, Alexander for dissent, and County's Redmile for a foul on Guentchev.
 Comment: Much of the football was poor, but a good result for the Town.
 League position: 2nd.

04/02/97 NORTHAMPTON TN A 0-1
 Auto Windscreens Shield, Round 2.
 Att: 4,201 (inc 1,100 from Luton)
 Ref: Mick Fletcher, Warley, West Midlands.
 Team: Feuer, Patterson, Johnson, Davis, Thomas, Evers, Alexander, Hughes, Guentchev (Oldfield 61 min), Marshall (Fotiadis 61 min), Grant. Unused sub: Willmott.
 Goal: Matthew Rush, 88 min - screaming shot into bottom corner, after free kick was touched onto him.
 Booked: Patterson and Johnson for fouls, and Cobbler's David Martin for persistent fouling.
 Comment: The Bovril at half time wasn't bad.

08/02/97 PLYMOUTH ARGYLE H 2-2
 Att: 6,439 Ref: Terry Lunt, Ashton in Makerfield.
 Team: Feuer, James, Johnson, Davis, Thomas, Evers (Linton h/t), Alexander, Oldfield, Guentchev, Thorpe, Marshall (Fotiadis 74 min). Unused sub: Patterson.
 Goals: Thorpe, 56 min - turn and shot from a quick free kick by Oldfield. Adrian Littlejohn, 58 min - angled drive from a through ball by Mark Saunders. Thorpe, 61 min - header after Marshall headed on a cross by Davis. Michael Evans, 68 min - solo run and shot after leaving Davis for dead near the halfway line, with the cover too far upfield.
 Booked: Des Linton for a foul, and Plymouth's Mick Heathcote for a foul and Littlejohn for dissent.
 Other: Ian Feuer saved a 36th minute penalty by Evans, awarded after Evers was penalised for pulling back Mark Saunders.
 Comment: Picked up in the second half, but the result spoiled it for Town fans.
 League position: 2nd.

Forthcoming Fixtures

Sat Feb 15 **BRISTOL ROVERS** A
 Sat Feb 22 **PRESTON NORTH END** H
 Sat Mar 1 **YORK CITY** A

Tue Mar 4 **CHESTERFIELD** A
 Sat Mar 8 **MILLWALL** H
 Tue Mar 11 **WREXHAM** A

All ticket. Terrace only £8. Most tickets already sold.

Pay on the day. Seats £10 or £8, cons £6 or £5. Terrace £7, cons £4.

Pay on the day. Seats £9, terrace £8, no concessions.

No ticket details yet.

All midweek games kick-off at 7.45 pm. Concessions refers to Juniors and Senior Citizens.

Reserves and Youth

Reserves

Thu	Feb	27	Arsenal	A	
Wed	Mar	5	Charlton	A	
Mon	Mar	10	Ipswich Town	A	LC
Wed	Mar	12	AFC Bournemouth	H(KR)	
Wed	Mar	19	Southampton	A	
Wed	Mar	26	Watford	H(KR)	

Youth

Sat	Feb	15	Oxford United	A
Sat	Mar	1	Wimbledon	A
Sat	Mar	8	Wycombe Wanderers	H
Sat	Mar	15	AFC Bournemouth	H
Sat	Mar	22	Barnet	A

Home matches at Kenilworth Road (KR) or Hitchin Town (HT) (reserves) and Luton Rugby Club, Newlands Road (youth). LC = League Cup, FAYC = FA Youth Cup, EJC = Eastern Junior Cup, BPC = Bedfordshire Premier Cup.

The reserves rewarded their trip to Bristol Rovers, on January 15th, with a 2-1 win, with goals from Sean Evers and Robert Kean, but then went down 3-2 at home to Cardiff City on the 20th when the marksmen for the Town were Evers and Chris Willmott. On Monday 3rd February, a mixed reserve and youth side progressed to the final of the Bedfordshire Premier Cup with a 2-0 win at Stotfold. The goals at Roker Park (the one in Stotfold) were scored by Liam George and Chris Willmott, who netted a penalty after George had been brought down. In the final the Town will meet either Leighton Town or Wootton Blue Cross over two legs. On 5th February there was a fruitless visit to Ipswich Town for a 0-1 defeat, and the home game against AFC Bournemouth on 10th was called off due to a waterlogged pitch at Hitchin Town's Top Field.

The youth side made further progress in the FA Youth Cup when they won their third round tie at Torquay on 8th January. Both goals in the 2-0 victory were scored by Liam George, the first being a shot through the keepers legs, the second a penalty. Back in the league, the title challenge was maintained when Liam George celebrated his new professional contract with a hat-trick in the visit to Southampton on January 18th. Coach John Moore was pleased with the 3-1 victory but said, "Winning the South East Counties title is not important to the club. The youth department is about developing players for the good of the club." Almost inevitably, the Town then went top of the league by beating Crystal Palace 2-1 on their own ground at Mitcham on 25th. Ian Jones and Matthew Spring scored the Town goals. A week later the top spot was maintained after a 2-1 win away to Reading, the goals being an equaliser by Ian Jones and the winner from Liam George. The position was further strengthened on 8th February when third placed Spurs were beaten 3-1, with goals by Gary Doherty, Michael McIndoe and substitute Liam George who now has 20 goals from 28 appearances. This result leaves the Town three points clear of Palace with ten matches to play, in a league where a win is only worth two points. The big result of the recent spell, however, was on 11th February when the Town youngsters made a trip to Roker Park for a Fourth Round FA Youth Cup tie against Sunderland. A 5-2 victory, with the goals including a hat-trick from Liam George, and one each from Matthew Upson and Ian Jones, put the Town into the 5th round. The fifth round is in fact the quarter final stage, and the Town will be playing at home (at Kenilworth Road) to the winners of the Manchester United v Watford tie, which is to be played at Old Trafford on Saturday 15th February.

HATTERS MATTERS

ISSUE 26 — FEBRUARY 1997

38 TWIGDEN COURT, MOUNT PLEASANT ROAD, LUTON, LU3 2RL.
(01582) 573485

So, here we go with another late arriving issue of Hatters Matters. I will promise here and now that there will be two more issues of HM before the end of the season.

Transfers/Contracts

Jamie Woodsford has joined ICIS league Boreham Wood on a free transfer. The 20 year-old striker, who was once selected for the England under-18 squad, only made 2 full appearances for the Town and had fallen behind Stuart Douglas and Andrew Fotiadis in the pecking order for first team places. He also had loan spells at Portadown, Kettering and Hitchin in the last year.

Injuries

Mitchell Thomas suffered a broken nose in the match at York City, which will keep him out of the team for about three weeks after undergoing surgery.

Richard Harvey is now back in full training, after suffering a knee ligament injury last August.

Reserve team player Chris Willmott has suffered a cruciate ligament injury which will keep him out of action for the rest of the season.

Other News

Bontcho Guentchev was suspended for three matches after being sent off at Bristol Rovers.

A survey carried out by the Conservative Party in the Luton North constituency showed 83% of the 15,000 respondents were in favour of the KohlerDome proposals.

David Oldfield, who won an England under-21 cap, is looking into qualifying to play international football for Australia, the country of his birth.

Luton Town will meet Leighton Town in the final of the Beds FA Premier Cup. The final will be played over two legs with the Town away in the first leg. No date has yet been arranged.

Steve Davis is one booking away from a suspension after being booked at Chesterfield, which took him to 20 points.

Darren Patterson, will miss the home game against Brentford after passing 21 disciplinary points. The total includes a booking received playing in a county cup game whilst on loan at Preston earlier in the season.

Julian James will miss two games after his sending off against Millwall. His first booking took him past 21 points for a one match ban, and the red card adds another match to that. As a result he will miss the Easter games against Burnely and Bristol City.

A story in the Luton News suggesting that Gary Waddock is about to make his 600th league and cup appearance seems likely to be somewhat premature. Although the exact facts and figures are not readily available it is likely that the correct figure is rather closer to 500. Perhaps someone (Roger) can provide some figures for both Gary and other players.

Results and Reports

15/02/97 BRISTOL ROVERS A 2-3

Att: 5,612 (800 from Luton)

Ref: Fraser Stretton, Nottingham.

Team: Feuer, James, Johnson, Davis, Thomas (Marshall 77 min), Linton (Waddock 55 min), Alexander, McLaren, Guentchev, Thorpe, Oldfield (Fotiadis 84 min).

Goals: Thorpe, 9 mins - penalty, after being brought down by Tom White. Paul Miller, 22 mins - unmarked to meet a cross field pass from Lockwood. Andy Tillson, 46 mins - header from a free kick by Archer. Ian Holloway, 53 mins - after Cureton got to the by-line and cut the ball back. Waddock, 63 mins - cracking 25-yarder after swapping passes with James and Oldfield.

Sent off: Guentchev, for using an elbow on Dave Pritchard.

Booked: Tom White for the foul that led to the Town's penalty and Dave Pritchard for time wasting in the closing minutes.

Comment: A cracking match in terms of excitement, but wrecked for Town fans by Bontcho's botch-up and some schoolboy defending early in the second half.

League position: 2nd.

22/02/97 PRESTON NTH END H 5-1

Att: 6,454

Ref: Clive Wilkes, Gloucester.

Team: Feuer, James, Johnson, Davis, Thomas, Alexander, Hughes (McLaren 72 min), Waddock, Showler, Thorpe (Grant 65 min), Oldfield (Marshall 80 min).

Goals: Oldfield, 23 min - divind header from pinpoint cross by Showler. Oldfield, 33 min - left foot half volley on the turn from Showler's cross. Oldfield, 38 min - right foot block-buster from Hughes' through ball. Waddock, 44 min - excellent drive from an angle, from a pass by Oldfield. David Reeves, 46 min - header from a free kick by Paul McKenna. Thomas, 72 min - flying near post header from Alexander's corner.

Booked: Thorpe for playing on after being given offside, and Preston's Sean Gregan for dissent.

Comment: After looking a bit fragile for the first twenty minutes, the game was transformed by David Oldfield's first ever hat-trick.

League position: 2nd.

01/03/97 YORK CITY A 1-1

Att: 3,788 (862 from Luton)

Ref: Terry Heilbron, Newton Aycliffe.

Team: Feuer, James, Johnson, Davis, Thomas (McLaren 35 min), Alexander, Hughes, Waddock, Showler, Thorpe, Oldfield (Marshall 72 min). Unused sub: Grant.

Goals: Steve Davis, 11 min - thumping header from Hughes' cross. Neil Tolson, 48 min - powerful drive from Bull's pass, after a clearance by Davis was charged down.

Sent off: York manager Alan Little for complaining too loudly that the ref had missed three handball offences by the Town in quick succession.

Comment: A gentle first half stroll for the Town turned into a tremendous scrap in the second half, when York showed real passion and determination, and took advantage of the Town's loss of shape after losing Thomas.

League position: 2nd.

04/03/97 CHESTERFIELD A 1-1

Att: 3,731

Ref: Phil Richards, Blackburn.

Team: Feuer, Patterson, Davis, Johnson, James, Alexander, Hughes, Waddock, Showler, Oldfield (Grant 80 min), Thorpe. Unused subs: Linton and Marshall.

Goals: Kevin Davies, 15 min - header from right wing cross. Thorpe, 40 min - penalty, after being manhandled by Chris Perkins.

Booked: Steve Davis and Darren Patterson, both for fouls.

Other: The half-time interval was extended to half an hour in the hope that the fog would clear. It didn't.

Comment: Very poor, with the Toown well below their best and Chesterfield with half a mind on their FA Cup quarter final. Luckily for fans of both sides it was a foggy night and half the action was hidden from view.

League position: 2nd.

08/03/97 MILLWALL H 0-2

Att: 8,585

Ref: Graham Frankland, Cleveland.

Team: Feuer, Patterson, Davis, Johnson, James, Alexander, Hughes (Marshall 83 min), Waddock (McLaren 80 min), Showler, Thorpe, Oldfield (Grant 80 min).

Goals: Tony Dolby, 78 min - excellent 20-yard free kick, at the second attempt after the first had been charged down by Waddock. Paul Hartley, 88 min - angled shot deflecting into the net off Marvin Johnson, when the Town were stretched chasing the game.

Sent off: Julian James, for a second bookable offence. The first, for raising an elbow, might have been a bit harsh, but

the second, for a wild lunge at Tony Witter in the Millwall penalty area, might have produced a red card on its own.

Booked: Gary Waddock for encroaching at the free kick which produced the first goal. Millwall's Tony Roche for a foul on Alexander and 'keeper Tim Carter for time wasting.

Comment: Superb entertainment; the Town played some stunning football, and well deserved to win. The Town hit the woodwork four times, and had 12 on-target efforts saved, including three goal line clearances by Lucas Neill.

League position: 2nd.

12/03/97 WREXHAM A 1-2

Att: 3,342

Ref: Eddie Lomas, Manchester.

Team: Feuer, Patterson, Davis, Johnson, James, Alexander, Hughes, Waddock (McLaren 69 min), Showler, Oldfield (Marshall 59 min), Thorpe (Grant 59 min).

Goals: Davis, 23 min - excellent headed goal from Ceri Hughes diagonal free kick. Gary Bennett, 24 min - penalty, after Marvin Johnson brought down Martyn Chalk. Bennett, 54 min - scored at the third attempt after two efforts by teammates had been blocked.

Booked: Waddock and James, and Wrexham's Steve Watkin and Martyn Chalk, all for fouls.

Comment: End to end excitement, but the Town were unable to build on a good first half.

League position: 2nd.

15/03/97 CREWE ALEXANDRA A 0-0

Att: 4,474 (about 700 from Luton)

Ref: Brian Coddington, Sheffield.

Team: Feuer, Patterson, Davis, Johnson, James, Alexander, Hughes, Waddock, McLaren, Thorpe, Oldfield. Unused subs: Grant, Showler, Guentchev.

Booked: Hughes and Johnson for fouls and Patterson for playing on after a whistle.

Comment: Remarkably good for a goalless draw, with two good-looking teams cancelling each other out.

League position: 2nd.

Forthcoming Fixtures

Fri	Mar	21	BRENTFORD	H
Sat	Mar	29	BURNLEY	A
Tue	Apr	1	BRISTOL CITY	H
Sat	Apr	5	ROTHERHAM UNITED	A

Tue	Apr	8	WYCOMBE WDRS	H
Sat	Apr	12	WALSALL	A

Tue	Apr	15	BLACKPOOL	A (7.30)
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Pay on the day. Seats only, £12 adults, concessions £6.

Pay on the day. Seats £10, concessions £6.50. Terrace £7.50, concessions £5.

Seats only, £10 adults, £6 cons. Not all ticket, but LTFC recommend buying in advance due to limited capacity.

No ticket details yet. Not likely to be all ticket.

All midweek games kick-off at 7.45 pm unless otherwise stated. Concessions refers to Juniors and Senior Citizens.

Play-off dates (just in case): Semi-final 1st leg: Sunday 11th May, 2nd leg: Wednesday 14th May. Final Sunday 25th May. Team finishing 3rd play 6th place team (and 4th v 5th) with lower placed team home in first leg.

Reserves and Youth

Reserves

Thu	Mar	27	Watford
Mon	Apr	7	AFC Bournemouth
Wed	Apr	9	Norwich City
Mon	Apr	14	Swansea City
Wed	Apr	16	Chelsea
Wed	Apr	23	Millwall

H(KR)	7.00
H(HT)	7.00
A	7.30
H(HT)	7.00
H(KR)	2.00
A	2.00

Youth

Sat	Mar	22	Barnet	A
Tue	Mar	25	Watford (FA Youth Cup)	H(KR) 7.30
Sat	Mar	29	Bristol City	A
Sat	Apr	5	Brighton & Hove Albion	A
Sat	Apr	12	Brentford	H
Sat	Apr	19	Colchester United	H

Home matches at Kenilworth Road (KR) or Hitchin Town (HT) (reserves) and Luton Rugby Club, Newlands Road (youth). LC = League Cup, FAYC = FA Youth Cup, EJC = Eastern Junior Cup, BPC = Bedfordshire Premier Cup.

The reserve game at home to Brighton on 24th February was postponed due to heavy rain making Hitchin's pitch unplayable. Liam George scored for the reserve team in their 1-1 draw away to Charlton Athletic on March 5th. A 2-0 defeat at Ipswich Town put the reserves out of the Combination Cup on March 10th. The game was played in thick fog, and apart from Bontcho Guentchev the Town fielded a young side, including an all-youth back four. The home match against Bournemouth on March 12th was postponed due to the first team being in action at Wrexham.

The youth team followed up their FA Youth Cup win at Sunderland with a 2-2 draw at Oxford United on 15th February. The goalscorers were Liam George and Terry Sweeney. Another cup victory, this time in the Eastern Junior Cup, was secured on 26th February when Bishop's Stortford were beaten 7-0. The scorers in this emphatic win were Andrew Barr, who netted 4 times, Stuart Fraser, Richard Clarke and Moses Jerry. This puts the Town into the semi finals of this competition. Back in league action they then went back into top place with a 1-0 win at Wimbledon on March 1st, with Liam George again the goalscorer. The goal was scored when his left foot volley hit the underside of the bar, but the linesman confirmed it was a goal. Another victory consolidated top spot when Wycombe were beaten 2-1 at home on 8th, with goals by Gary Doherty and Michael McIndoe. On the 15th AFC Bournemouth went home from their visit having been beaten 4-1. On this occasion the scorers were Doherty, with two, Andre Scarlett and, almost inevitably, Liam George.

The youth team will be playing Watford in their FA Youth Cup quarter final on Tuesday 25th March. The match will take place at Kenilworth Road with a 7.30 kick-off. Admission will be £3.00. The winners of the tie will play Tranmere Rovers or Leeds United in the semi-final.

HATTERS MATTERS

ISSUE 27 — MARCH 1997

38 TWIGDEN COURT, MOUNT PLEASANT ROAD, LUTON, LU3 2RL.
(01582) 573485

With this issue of HM we get closer to the preferred timing, and not before time. The timing of the next issue may well depend on the progress of the youth team in the FA Youth Cup, and what else there is to report. At the latest, it will be posted on May 7th.

Transfers/Contracts

Des Linton joined Peterborough United on deadline day, for a fee of £25,000. Linton had joined Luton in October 1991, but failed to make himself a first team regular, with only three appearances this season. He turned down a move to the same club a year ago.

Lennie Lawrence made two deadline day signings of his own, but both on a loan basis. Gavin McGowan was signed from Arsenal and Andy Kiwomya from Bradford City. McGowan is a 21 year-old defender who can play in a number of positions, and has a handful of Premiership appearances to his credit and has won England under-21 caps. Kiwomya is a 29 year old left sided midfielder player who was at Bradford under Lawrence. He has previously played for Barnsley, Sheffield Wednesday, Dundee, Rotherham, Halifax and Scunthorpe. Both loan deals are for the remainder of the season.

Injuries

Paul Showler will be out of action for three to four weeks after undergoing a cartilage operation on his right knee.

Liam George has been sidelined for the rest of the season after suffering damaged medial ligaments. His youth team strike partner, Andrew Barr, is also out of action with a groin injury which will require surgery. Another youth team player, Chris Willmott, is back on his feet again after undergoing cruciate ligament surgery.

Richard Harvey and Aaron Skelton are both back in reserve team action after lengthy lay-offs.

Gavin McGowan has returned to Highbury for treatment to a calf muscle injury which may well need surgery. It is not known whether he will play again this season.

Andy Kiwomya starined a hamstring in his first appearance for the Town, putting him out of action for a couple of weeks.

Other News

Ceri Hughes was on the bench for Wales match against Belgium on 29th March.

Darren Patterson was called up for the Northern Ireland squad for the matches against Portugal and Ukraine but did not win another cap. He was a substitute for the first match.

It has been announced that the last match of the season, at home to Stockport, will be all ticket.

Gary Waddock, Steve Davis and Marvin Johnson all need to avoid being booked at Walsall to be free of suspension for the promotion run-in.

Graeme Tomlinson, the loan player from Manchester United who broke a leg a year ago whilst playing for the Town, is back in action in United's reserve side.

Tony Thorpe's third hat-trick of the season, at Rotherham, meant that he became the first Town player to score thirty goals in a season since Malcolm MacDonald in 1970/71.

Results and Reports

21/03/97 BRENTFORD H 1-0

Att: 8,164

Ref: Paul Taylor, Cheshunt.

Team: Feuer, James, Davis, Johnson, Thomas, Alexander, Hughes, Waddock, Showler (McLaren 88 min), Thorpe (Grant 89 min), Oldfield. Unused sub: Guentchev.

Goal: Thorpe, 65 min - low drive into the bottom corner after taking a short pass from Showler and turning close marker Bates.

Booked: Waddock for a foul, and Brentford's Smith and McGhee for fouls and Anderson for encroaching at a free kick.

Comment: A cracking match, with Brentford playing a full part and showing why they have the best away record in the division. But Tony Thorpe's moment of brilliance won the match.

League position: 1st.

29/03/97 BURNLEY A 2-0

Att: 15,490 (incl 844 from Luton)

Ref: Trevor Jones, Hull.

Team: Feuer, McGowan (Guentchev 80 min), Davis, Johnson, Thomas, Alexander, McLaren, Waddock, Kiwomya (Marshall 64 min), Thorpe, Oldfield. Unused sub: Grant.

Goals: Tony Thorpe, 13 min - low angled drive into far corner after a shot by Alexander was deflected into his path. Thorpe, 38 min - header which only just crossed the line, from Thomas's near post flick on of Alexander's corner.

Booked: Johnson for a foul and Thomas for time wasting, along with Burnley's Andrew Cooke for a foul on McGowan.

Comment: A wonderful contest in which the Town out-footballed Burnley in the first half, and were resolute and determined in the face of an onslaught in the second.

League position: 2nd.

01/04/97 BRISTOL CITY H 2-2

Att: 7,105

Ref: Gurnam Singh, Wolverhampton.

Team: Feuer, McGowan (McLaren h/t), Davis, Johnson, Thomas, Alexander, Hughes, Waddock, Guentchev (Marshall h/t), Thorpe, Oldfield (Grant 58 min).

Goals: Shaun Goater, 3 min - first to the rebound after Feuer saved his penalty, awarded after Johnson had fouled Paul Agostino in a mistimed tackle. Agostino, 40 min - swept in Paul Allen's low cross with the Town caught on the break. Davis, 45 min - header from Alexander's cross. Thorpe, 74 min - Header from a corner by Ceri Hughes.

Booked: City goalkeeper Keith Welch for fouling Guentchev outside his area.

Comment: Exciting, if only because the Town had to fight back after the defence got into rare tangles to give City a two-goal start.

League position: 3rd.

05/04/97 ROTHERHAM UNITED A 3-0

Att: 2,609 (incl about 1100 from Luton)

Ref: Ian Cruikshanks, Hartlepool.

Team: Feuer, James, Davis, Johnson (Patterson 84 min), Thomas, Alexander, Waddock, McLaren (Grant 65 min), Hughes, Thorpe (Marshall 80 min), Oldfield.

Goals: Tony Thorpe, hat-trick. 5 min - header from Alexander's cross. 41 min - header from centre by James. 79 min - neat chip from 30 yards over the advancing keeper, after Grant had flicked a header on from Feuer's long clearance.

Booked: Paul Dillon and John McGlashan of the home side for fouls.

Comment: Not the best of football matches, because Rotherham were dreadful, and the Town players needed to do

little more than stroll to get the result.

League position: 2nd.

08/04/97 WYCOMBE WDRS H 0-0

Att: 7,626

Ref: Roger Furnandiz, Doncaster.

Team: Feuer, James, Davis, Johnson, Thomas, Alexander, Hughes, Waddock, McLaren (Grant), Thorpe, Oldfield (Marshall). Unused sub: Patterson.

Comment: Game in which Wycombe got the point they came looking for, mainly by keeping the Town attack well away from their goal.

League position: 2nd.

Forthcoming Fixtures

Sat	Apr	12	WALSALL	A	Seats only, £10 adults, £6 cons. Not all ticket, but LTFC recommend buying in advance due to limited capacity.
Tue	Apr	15	BLACKPOOL	A (7.30)	Pay on the day. Terrace only £8.50, no concessions.
Sat	Apr	19	SHREWSBURY TOWN	H	
Tue	Apr	22	BURY	H (7.45)	
Sat	Apr	26	PETERBOROUGH UTD	A	All ticket match. Seats £11 or £9, terrace £7, no cons.
Sat	May	3	STOCKPORT COUNTY	H	All ticket match, no tickets on sale on the day.

All midweek games kick-off at 7.45 pm unless otherwise stated. Concessions refers to Juniors and Senior Citizens.

Play-off dates (just in case): Semi-final 1st leg: Sunday 11th May, 2nd leg: Wednesday 14th May. Final Sunday 25th May. Team finishing 3rd play 6th place team (and 4th v 5th) with lower placed team at home in first leg.

Reserves and Youth

Reserves

Mon	Apr	14	Swansea City	H(HT)	7.00
Wed	Apr	23	Millwall	A	2.00
Mon	Apr	28	Queen's Park Rangers	A	7.00

Youth

Sat	Apr	12	Brentford	H	
Wed	Apr	16	Leeds United (FA Yth Cup)	A	7.30
Sat	Apr	19	Colchester United	H	
Sat	Apr	26	Bristol City	H	

Home matches at Kenilworth Road (KR) or Hitchin Town (HT) (reserves) and Luton Rugby Club, Newlands Road (youth). LC = League Cup, FAYC = FA Youth Cup, EJC = Eastern Junior Cup, BPC = Bedfordshire Premier Cup.

The reserves continued the run of success against local rivals Watford by winning a home Combination game (27th March) by 2-0. Bontcho Guentchev (penalty) and Kim Grant were the goalscorers. Against Bournemouth on Monday 7th April, an Andrew Fotiadis goal helped secure a 1-1 draw. The matches at Norwich City on 9th, and at home to Chelsea on 16th have been postponed due to the youth team's progress in the Cup. The Beds Premier Cup Final against Leighton Town has yet to have dates fixed, as have the Combination fixtures against Chelsea (H), Brighton (H) and Norwich (A).

The youth side continued their leadership in the South East Counties League with a 1-1 draw at Barnet on 22nd March, courtesy of a goal by Andre Scarlett. Their next match was on a slightly different stage, as they faced Watford in the quarter final of the FA Youth Cup. The match, on the 25th, was played at Kenilworth Road in front of a crowd of 2,927 which generated a good atmosphere, in spite of the match being goalless. The Town side were kept in the game by a series of good saves by keeper Nick Webb. The return to league action saw a visit to Bristol City where the outcome was a 1-2 defeat, with Gary Doherty, a central defender playing as an emergency striker, scoring the goal. On 2nd April, the replay of the FA Youth Cup tie took place at Vicarage Road, in front of a crowd of 2,950. The first 45 minutes saw the score at 1-1, after Luton had taken the lead through Jimmy Cox. The scores were still level after 90 minutes, and extra time failed to break the deadlock. This meant that penalties were used to decide the game, and Luton triumphed 5-3. The decisive penalty was that taken by Watford's first team player Gifton Noel-Williams, who put the third spot kick wide. Among the Luton spot-kickers was keeper Nick Webb, and Terry Sweeney, who took all the glory by taking the fifth, and winning, kick. In the semi-final first leg, Leeds United were the visitors. The other semi final is between Crystal Palace and Blackburn Rovers. On 5th April, title hopes were revived with a 3-2 win over Brighton, with Gary Doherty (2) and Andre Scarlett scoring.

The youth team are also in the semi-final of the Eastern Junior Cup, where they will be at home to Hitchin or Ipswich.

HATTERS MATTERS

ISSUE 28 — APRIL 1997
38 TWIGDEN COURT, MOUNT PLEASANT ROAD, LUTON, LU3 2RL.
(01582) 573485

As most of you will by now know, Luton Town are going to have to go through the play-off route to gain promotion. This issue of HMT is being sent out now in order to give outline ticket details for the play-off matches.

Transfers/Contracts

Youth players Matthew Upson, Terry Sweeney and Liam George have all been awarded professional contracts, and an offer is to be made to Steve Augustine. Nick Webb, Andrew Barr and Ian Jones will also be offered extensions to their current deals.

Injuries

Gavin McGowan has had a routine operation for a calf muscle injury, and is expected to be out of action until early May. This will mean that his loan is effectively over unless he is required for the play-offs.

Ceri Hughes has missed a couple of games with a calf strain. Paul Showler is training again after knee surgery, and could be fit for the play-offs.

Other News

Steve Davis and Tony Thorpe were both named in the Second Division team of the year at the PFA awards.

Graham Alexander missed the match at Blackpool after his wife had given birth to a baby boy.

Kim Grant missed out on the Peterborough match as he was away to play for Ghana in a home World Cup qualifier against Gabon.

Darren Patterson was called up for Northern Ireland for their match against Armenia.

At the Luton Town Supporters Club presentation evening Tony Thorpe received the Players Player of the Year and LTSC Player of the Year trophies. Ian Feuer was the recipient of the Young Supporters Player of the Year, whilst the Young Player of the Year award went to Liam George.

Recent figures show that the club, at the beginning of April 1997, had 2750 season ticket holders and a further 7500 members.

Results and Reports

08/04/97 WYCOMBE WDRS H 0-0
Att: 7,626

Ref: Roger Furnandiz, Doncaster.

Team: Feuer, James, Davis, Johnson, Thomas, Alexander, Hughes, Waddock, McLaren (Grant 70 min), Thorpe, Oldfield (Marshall 79 min). Unused sub: Patterson.

Comment: Game in which Wycombe got the point they came looking for, mainly by keeping the Town attack well away from their goal in spite of allowing the Town the majority of the possession.

League position: 2nd.

12/04/97 WALSALL A 2-3

Att: 5,415 (incl 1803 from Luton)

Ref: Tony Leake, Darwen.

Team: Feuer, James, Davis, Johnson (Patterson 77 min), Thomas, Alexander, McLaren, Waddock (Guentchev 84 min), Kiwomya, Thorpe, Oldfield (Fotiadis 77 min).

Goals: Kyle Lighthourne, 18 min - header at second attempt after Feuer brilliantly parried the first, following a right wing cross by John Hodge. Kiwomya, 53 min - curled free kick from 25 yards. Davis, 55 min - header from left wing cross by Alexander. Lighthourne, 60 min - clinical shot across Feuer into far corner after outpacing Davis. Hodge, 76 min - accurate shot after Lighthourne crossed following a weak and misdirected back-header by Johnson.

Booked: James and McLaren for fouls, and Walsall keeper James Walker for time wasting.

Comment: A cracking match for neutrals and Walsall fans, with plenty of action and goalmouth thrills. A rotten day out for Town fans.

League position: 4th.

15/04/97 BLACKPOOL A 0-0

Att: 4,382.

Ref: Alan Bates, Stoke.

Team: Feuer, James, Davis, Johnson, Thomas, McLaren, Waddock, Kiwomya (Marshall 67 min), Fotiadis, Thorpe, Oldfield. Unused subs: Patterson, Guentchev.

Booked: Blackpool defenders Marvin Bryan and Gary Brabin for fouls on Thomas and Thorpe.

Comment: Patchy entertainment with neither side on top of its game. Town played some decent passing football in the first half and created the best chance of the match, the keeper denying Andrew Fotiadis. The defence looked secure and Feuer was scarcely troubled.

League position: 4th.

19/04/97 SHREWSBURY TOWN H

Att: 6,968

Ref: Chris Foy, Merseyside.

Team: Feuer, James, Davis, Johnson, Thomas, Alexander, McLaren (Marshall 64 min), Waddock, Oldfield, Thorpe, Fotiadis (Harvey 84 min). Unused sub: Patterson.

Goals: Thorpe, 44 min - penalty after Lee Taylor tripped Fotiadis. Marshall, 74 min - flicked Oldfield's cross-shot in with his heel, almost by accident.

Booked: McLaren for a foul and Shrewsbury's Mark Dempsey for dissent after trying to con the referee into giving him a penalty.

Comment: Less than convincing performance by the Town in completing their fourth double of the season, with all the entertainment coming from the result.

League position: 3rd.

22/04/97 BURY H 0-0
 Att: 7,769
 Ref: Andrew D'Urso, Billericay.
 Team: Feuer, James, Davis, Johnson, Thomas, Alexander (Marshall 75 min), Hughes, Waddock, Kiwomya, Fotiadis (Oldfield 59 min), Thorpe. Unused sub: Patterson.
 Booked: Bury's West, Butler, Battershy for fouls and Johnson for encroaching.
 Comment: A very poor game with Bury content to defend in great numbers. They came to stop the Town scoring and did so because they were good professionals and the Town were short of wit and creativity.
 League position: 3rd.

26/04/97 PETERBOROUGH UTD A 1-0
 Att: 9,499 (incl 3,400 from Luton)
 Ref: Barry Knight, Orpington.
 Team: Feuer, James, Davis, Johnson, Thomas, Alexander, Hughes, Waddock, Kiwomya (Fotiadis h/t), Thorpe, Oldfield.
 Unused subs: Patterson and Guentchev.
 Goal: Fotiadis, 53 mins - converted a low cross from Oldfield at the second attempt after the keeper had failed to gather the first attempt.
 Booked: Ceri Hughes for a foul.
 Comment: Never mind the quality, feel the result. Not top quality football, with both teams needing the points, but Town's battling display deserving them.
 League position: 3rd.

Forthcoming Fixtures

Sat May 3 STOCKPORT COUNTY H	All tickets sold.
<u>PLAY-OFFS</u>	
Sun May 11 semi-final, 1st leg A	All ticket. See below.
Wed May 14 semi-final, 2nd leg H	All ticket. See below.
Sun May 25 Final Wembley	

Tickets for both play-off semi final games will be on sale from 10 am Sunday 4 May, with priority for season ticket holders for away match tickets. This particularly applies if Crewe are the opponents with room for under 1000 away fans, but could also apply at Brentford (2233) and Blackpool (3339), but less likely at Bristol City (5500). Obviously prices etc will not be known until the opponents are known. If Wembley is on the agenda, it is likely that tickets will be reasonably easy to obtain.

All midweek games kick-off at 7.45 pm unless otherwise stated. Concessions refers to Juniors and Senior Citizens.

Reserves and Youth

<u>Reserves</u>	<u>Youth</u>
Mon May 5 Norwich City A	TBA Ipswich Town H EJC s/f
Wed May 7 Chelsea H (KR) 2.00	
Mon May 12 Leighton Town A BPC Final	

Home matches at Kenilworth Road (KR) or Hitchin Town (HT) (reserves) and Luton Rugby Club, Newlands Road (youth). I.C. = League Cup, FAYC = FA Youth Cup, EJC = Eastern Junior Cup, BPC = Bedfordshire Premier Cup.

The reserves home match against Swansea City on 14th April was apparently a dull affair, with only one decent goal effort in a game which ended 0-0. On 23rd a trip to Millwall was rewarded with a 1-0 victory, Robert Kean scoring the goal. The visit to QPR on Monday 28th saw the Town secure a 3-0 victory with Bontcho Guentchev scoring twice in the first four minutes, one from a penalty, and Sean Evers netting the third. As noted above, the Beds Premier Cup Final has now been arranged, but will not now be played over two legs.

The youth side maintained their title challenge on 12th with a 6-2 home win against Brentford. Jimmy Cox scored a hat-trick, Matthew Upson got two and Gary Doherty was the other marksman. The visit to Elland Road in the FA Youth Cup semi-final second leg was less rewarding, and the Town went out after losing 1-0 on the night, and 3-1 on aggregate. But after having cup final dreams shattered, the disappointment was thrown off as Colchester United were beaten 2-0 on the 19th, to bring the South East Counties League Division Two championship to Kenilworth Road. The goals were scored by Emerson Boyce and Michael McIndoe, as Town secured the title with a game to spare thanks to Crystal Palace, their only challengers, losing their final game. It is the first time the league has been won by Luton Town since 1985. In the final league game of the season, on 26th, the visitors Bristol City were beaten 3-1 with goals by Richard Clarke, Andre Scarlett and Gary Doherty.

HATTERS MATTERS

ISSUE 29 — MAY 1997

38 TWIGDEN COURT, MOUNT PLEASANT ROAD, LUTON, LU3 2RL.

(01582) 573485

Having promised a monthly newsletter when HM started, I offer my apologies for the lack of any sort of service during the last couple of months. This has been due to a mixture of pressure of work, and a temporary lack of interest. However, HM is back and normal service will now be resumed. All subscriptions will be adjusted to take account of the gap in service.

Transfers/Contracts

Youth team captain Matthew Upson has been sold to Arsenal for an initial fee of £1 million. The 18 year old had made only one league appearance for the Town (as a sub, for about two minutes) and one start in an Anglo Italian Cup match. Another £750,000 will be paid in instalments if he makes up to 100 appearances for Arsenal, plus £250,000 if he plays for England, and £100,000 for major cup success. The Town will also benefit from a 25% sell on clause if Arsenal sell Upson at a profit.

Bontcho Guentchev, Richard Harvey and Aaron Skelton have all been released. Harvey will be allowed to stay on a month-to-month contract if he has not found a new club by the start of the season, but there will be no reprieve for the Bulgarian. Skelton has joined Colchester United.

Julian James, Dwight Marshall and Darren Patterson have all been offered new improved contracts. None have signed yet.

Two more members of the successful youth team have signed on long-term contracts. Robert Kean and goalkeeper Nathan Abbey join other former YTS apprentices Steve Augustine, Ian Jones, Andrew Barr and Nick Webb in signing pro forms with the club.

It looks as if Kim Grant could be leaving the club, after comments from Lennie Lawrence recently describing the Grant situation as unacceptable.

Ceri Hughes has joined Wimbledon in a deal that is initially worth £400,000. This will rise to a total of £750,000 if Hughes makes 60 appearances for the south London club.

Negotiations are taking place with Arsenal to take defender Gavin McGowan on loan from the start of the season.

Injuries

Ceri Hughes had a hernia operation, keeping him out of the play-offs. It had been hoped to delay the operation, but he suffered pain during a training session and was booked into hospital straight away.

Marvin Johnson missed the Crewe (away) play-off match after sustaining a hamstring injury in training.

Gary Waddock suffered a gashed shin during the match at Crewe, an injury which required four stitches.

Other News

Tickets for the play-off match at Crewe were sold out within two hours. The allocation was smaller than for the league match for "security" reasons.

The Loyal Luton Supporters Club Player of the Year award went to Tony Thorpe.

Ticket prices for the 1997/98 season have been announced, and reflect across the board increases.

As a result of being sent off at Crewe, Julian James missed the

home leg of the play-off semi final, and will miss the first match of next season.

Pre-season friendlies are detailed under the "Forthcoming Fixtures" heading below.

Luton have been drawn against Colchester United in the Coca Cola Cup First Round. The first leg will be away from home.

Dwight Marshall has been involved with the Jamaican national squad in the last month. It is not known if he actually won an international cap.

Results and Reports

03/05/97 STOCKPORT COUNTY H 1-1

Att: 9,347 (actually a sell-out).

Ref: David Orr, Iver.

Team: Feuer, James, Patterson, Johnson, Thomas, Alexander, McLaren, Waddock, Harvey (Grant h/t), Oldfield, Fotiadis (Marshall 60 min), Oldfield. Unused sub: Guentchev.

Goal: Kevin Cooper, 7 min - penalty, after Feuer had been left exposed by the defence and had upended Alun Armstrong. Fotiadis, 38 mins - clever lob over the advancing keeper after being put clear by Marvin Johnson's headed clearance.

Booked: Waddock for a foul, Alexander for dissent, and Stockport's Tom Bennett for fouling Marvin Johnson.

Comment: The Town stuttered in the first half, but made changes and looked a class side in the second, being denied only by a very good goalkeeper. The lap of honour by both teams at full time was deserved for the performance in this match alone.

Final league position: 3rd.

11/05/97 CREWE ALEXANDRA A 1-2

Division 2 play-off semi-final, 1st leg

Att: 5,467 (incl almost 1,000 from Luton).

Ref: Terry Heilbron, Newton Aycliffe.

Team: Feuer, James, S. Davis, Patterson, Thomas, Alexander, Waddock (Marshall 8 min), McLaren, Oldfield, Thorpe, Fotiadis (Grant 59 min). Unused sub: K. Davis.

Goals: Oldfield, 3 min - converted the rebound after Jason Kearton failed to hold a stinging low cross by Fotiadis. Mark Rivers, 53 min - low drive after James gave the ball away. Colin Little, 68 min - open goal after defence and Feuer got into a tangle when the offside trap failed.

Sent off: Julian James, 57 mins, for a second bookable offence, both for fouls on Rivers.

Booked: Alexander for a foul on Gareth Whalley, and Crewe's Danny Murphy for a foul on Alexander.

Comment: Excellent first half for Town fans, but then everything went wrong. An early injury taking out Gary Waddock was bad enough, but the dismissal of James led to a midfield and defensive formation that was woefully disjointed (the midfield that finished the game was Grant, Oldfield, McLaren and Marshall).

14/05/97 CREWE ALEXANDRA H 2-2
Play-off semi-final, 2nd leg. Crewe win 4-3 on aggregate
 Att: 8,168
 Ref: Roy Pearson, Durham.
 Team: Feuer, Patterson, S. Davis, Johnson, Thomas, Alexander, Waddock (Fotiadis 66 min), McLaren, Showler (Marshall 80 min), Thorpe, Oldfield. Unused sub: K. Davis
 Goals: Oldfield, 19 min - left foot drive from Showler's cross. Oldfield, 30 min - low, right foot drive from back heeled pass

by Thorpe. Colin Little, 31 min - header after Feuer parried Dele Adebola's cross drive to him. Shaun Smith, 61 min - scored after Feuer, under pressure, could not get a positive enough hand on Ashley Westwood's header back into the danger area from a corner.
 Booked: Mitchell Thomas for a foul, and Crewe's Steve Macauley for a foul on Oldfield.
 Comment: Top quality football, but more of it played by Crewe than the Town.

Forthcoming Fixtures

Mon	July	21	Hartlepool	A
Wed	July	23	Darlington	A
Fri	July	25	Cambridge United	A
Wed	July	29	Southampton	H
Sat	Aug	2	Colchester United	A

All midweek games kick-off at 7.45 pm unless otherwise stated. Concessions refers to Juniors and Senior Citizens.

1997/98 Fixtures

August

Sat	9	Blackpool	A
Tue	12	Colchester United (CCC1/1)	A
Mon	18	Southend United	H
Sat	23	Fulham	A
Tues	26	Colchester Utd (CCC1/2)	H
Sat	30	Oldham Athletic	H

September

Tues	2	Millwall	H
Sat	6	Northampton Town	A
Sat	13	AFC Bournemouth	A
Sat	20	Wrexham	H
Sat	27	Bristol City	A

October

Sat	4	Watford	H
Sat	11	Plymouth Argyle	H
Sat	18	Wigan Athletic	A
Tues	21	Carlisle United	A
Sat	25	Brentford	H

November

Sat	1	Wycombe Wanderers	A
Tues	4	Burnley	H
Sat	8	Preston North End	H
Sat	15	FA Cup 1	
Tues	18	Grimsby Town	A
Sat	22	Walsall	H
Sat	29	York City	A

December

Tues	2	Gillingham	H
Sat	6	FA Cup 2	
Sat	13	Chesterfield	A
Sat	20	Bristol Rovers	H
Fri	26	Northampton Town	H

Sun	28	Millwall	A
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January

Sat	3	Southend United (or FA Cup 3)	A
Sat	10	Blackpool	H
Sat	17	Oldham Athletic	A
Sat	24	Fulham	H
Sat	31	AFC Bournemouth	H

February

Tues	3	Preston North End	A
Sat	7	Wrexham	A
Sat	14	Watford	A (noon k.o.)
Sat	21	Bristol City	H
Tues	24	Wigan Athletic	H
Sat	28	Plymouth Argyle	A

March

Sat	7	Wycombe Wanderers	H
Sat	14	Burnley	A
Sat	21	Grimsby Town	H
Sat	28	Walsall	A

April

Sat	4	York City	H
Sat	11	Gillingham	A
Tues	14	Chesterfield	H
Sat	18	Bristol Rovers	A
Sat	25	Brentford	A

May

Sat	2	Carlisle United	H
Sat	16	FA Cup Final	

HATTERS MATTERS

ISSUE 30 — October 1997
38 TWIGDEN COURT, MOUNT PLEASANT ROAD, LUTON, LU3 2RL.
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"Whatever happened to Hatters Matters?" I hear you ask. And rightly so. You have not been getting anything like the service that you either deserve, or pay for. So, belatedly, I am going to try and catch up. This issue is a special to catch up with everything that should have been in the last couple of non-existent issues. Beyond this, I will try and keep to a schedule of sending an issue out at the end of every month.

However, it will not be possible to maintain the same level of information in future as has been provided in the past. This is because the Luton News, which is my main source of information, no longer provides such comprehensive information as it did when it was all compiled by Brian Swain but I will do the best I can. Also, Simon Oxley no longer works for LTFC, so I cannot obtain so much information on reserve and youth team matches.

Transfers/Contracts

Dwight Marshall has signed a new contract to the end of the current season.

Bontcho Guentchev, released at the end of last season, has returned to Bulgaria.

Ben Chenery has joined Cambridge United on a free transfer.

Midfield player Simon Davies has been signed from Manchester United for a fee of around £200,000.

Kim Grant has joined Millwall after a loan spell in a deal reported to be worth around £200,000. The 23 year-old has a European Champions League goal against Galatasaray to his name, but few league appearances.

Gavin McGowan joined Luton on loan at the start of the season, but returned after 2 months.

Kelvin Davis started the season on loan at Hartlepool, but was recalled after Ian Feuer's injury.

Steve Davis has agreed a new three year contract to take effect at the end of the season.

Gary Waddock and Mitchell Thomas signed one year extensions to their contracts which will now run to June 1999.

Richard Harvey, released at the close of last season, has now signed a new one year contract.

Left back Brian Small has joined the club from Bolton on loan. If the deal becomes permanent the fee will be £50,000.

Andy Dibble was signed on a three month contract. No other club was involved as he was a free agent.

Phil Gray has been signed from Dutch club Fortuna Sittard for a fee of £400,000. He left Luton in 1993 for Sunderland in a £800,000 move, then went to French club Nantes in 1996 under the Bosman ruling, before moving to Holland.

21 year-old central defender Alan White was signed for £40,000 from Middlesbrough after a two week trial period.

Stuart Douglas has signed a new two-year contract which keeps him at the club until June 1999.

Another player signed is Colin Omogbehin, who has been given a two month contract after a trial. This short term deal will allow the coaching staff to assess a player recommended by former Town star Paul Elliot.

Injuries

Ian Feuer tore shoulder muscles during the Southend match, but is back in action, playing a reserve match on Oct 27.

Dwight Marshall suffered damaged ankle ligaments against Wrexham, but is already back in action.

Paul Showler came back to fitness from his knee injury, but then an infected ingrowing toenail, and now a hernia op will keep him out of action for another six weeks.

Mitchell Thomas suffered a groin strain in the pre-match warm up for the Millwall match, and needed a hernia operation as a result. In the same match Julian James suffered a twisted ankle, and Graham Alexander limped off with a hamstring injury.

Darren Patterson had an operation to remove a cyst from his ankle. He could be back in training in about a month.

Richard Harvey picked up a calf strain in the warm up for the Fulham match.

Marvin Johnson suffered a knee ligament injury during the Coca Cola first leg match against West Brom.

Steve Davis suffered a back injury while practising free kicks in training before the Bristol City game.

Stuart Douglas has a groin strain will not require an operation.

Gary Waddock missed a couple of matches after suffering a gashed shin and a slight calf strain.

Andrew Fotiadis has recovered from a hernia operation.

Other News

The Town's pre-season results were wins against Hitchin Town (3-0), Hartlepool (1-0), Darlington (4-2) and Colchester (2-1), a draw at Cambridge (1-1) and a 3-0 home defeat to Southampton.

First team debuts have to date been made this season by Nathan Abbey, Simon Davies, Gary Doherty, Liam George, Matthew Spring, Robert Kean, Phil Gray, Alan White, and Brian Small.

Gavin McGowan received a one match ban for his sending off at Northampton.

Just one of a number of players who have had trials at Luton recently was Icelandic midfielder Haraldur Ingolfsson.

Matthew Spring will have to serve a three match ban after his ending off against Plymouth.

Steve Davis will have to serve a three match ban after getting his fifth booking of the season against Brentford. Two of the bookings were in pre-season matches. He will miss the home games against Preston, Torquay and Walsall.

The away match at Grimsby on November 18 will be rearranged as Grimsby are in Coca Cola Cup action on that night. No new date has been arranged yet.

Reserve matches, at least until February, will now be played on Monday evenings at Hitchin Town.

A new book, with Luton Town as its subject will be published on November 8th. "A Hatter goes Mad" by Kristina Howells is a collection of memories by past and present players, officials and supporters.

The only players with more than one booking to date are Paul McLaren with 3 and Gary Waddock with 2. Eight players have one booking each.

Results and Reports

The gaps in the information that follows reflect the change in the presentation of match information in the local press. I will try and fill some of these gaps by paying more attention at the matches!

09/08/97 BLACKPOOL A 0-1

Att: 6,547 (incl 1,800 from Luton)

Ref: SW Mathieson.

Team: Feuer, McGowan, Thomas, Waddock, Steve Davis, Johnson, McLaren, Alexander, Oldfield, Thorpe, Simon Davies (Douglas 52 min). Unused subs: Evers, Harvey
Goal: Jason Lydiate, 11 min - scrambled ball home after Lee Philpott's corner was flicked on at the near post.

Comment: On a day of hot blazing sunshine, the Hatters failed to turn up the tempo after Blackpool's early goal.

12/08/97 COLCHESTER UTD A 1-0

Coca Cola Cup First Round First leg.

Att: 2,840

Team: Feuer, Douglas, Thomas, Waddock, Steve Davis, Johnson, McLaren, Alexander, Oldfield (Harvey 52 min), Thorpe, Simon Davies. Unused subs: Kean, Evers.

Goal: Tony Thorpe, 87 min - well executed finish, after outpacing former team-mate David Greene.

Comment: No comment, I didn't go!

18/08/97 SOUTHEND UNITED H 1-0

Att: 5,140

Team: Feuer, James, Thomas, Waddock, Steve Davis, Johnson, Simon Davies, Alexander, Fotiadis (Douglas 63 min), Thorpe (McLaren 90 min), Marshall. Unused sub: Harvey.

Goal: Stuart Douglas, 76 min - pounced on loose ball after keeper had parried Thorpe's shot.

Comment: A somewhat easy victory for the Town, with Southend unable to fire one shot on target at an injured goalkeeper in the entire second half.

League position: 12th.

23/08/97 FULHAM A 0-0

Att: 8,142

Team: K. Davis, James, Thomas, Waddock, Steve Davis, Johnson, Simon Davies (Harvey 83 min), Alexander (McLaren 10 min), Oldfield, Douglas (McGowan 61 min), Marshall.

Booked: Steve Davis, Dwight Marshall, Paul McLaren and Mitchell Thomas.

Comment: Another hot day, another disappointing match.

League position: 15th.

26/08/97 COLCHESTER UTD H 1-1

Coca Cola Cup First Round second leg.

Att: 2,816

Team: Abbey, James, Thomas, Waddock, Steve Davis, Johnson, Simon Davies (Douglas 73 min), McLaren, Oldfield, Thorpe, Marshall. Unused subs: Showler, Evers.

Goals: Tony Thorpe, 34 min - drew the keeper before coolly lifting the ball over him and into the net. Ian Hathaway, 51 min - volley from half cleared cross that gave debutant keeper Abbey no chance.

Booked: Paul McLaren.

Comment: A performance which did just enough to see Town through to the second round.

30/08/97 OLDHAM ATHLETIC H 1-1

Att: 5,404

Team: K. Davis, James (McGowan 59 min), Thomas, Waddock, Steve Davis, Johnson, Simon Davies (Douglas 46 min), McLaren, Oldfield, Thorpe, Marshall (Showler 74 min). Goals: Stuart Barlow, 53 min - received a well-directed knock down from makeshift striker Hodgson and was given time and space to turn in the six yard box and pick his spot. Tony Thorpe, 60 min - firm header after a move started with his own pass to Oldfield.

Sent off: Shaun Garnett of Oldham, in the 49th minute for a professional foul on Gary Waddock

Comment: Yet another disappointing Town performance, with Oldham's 10 men having no problem holding on.

League position: 12th.

02/09/97 MILLWALL H 0-2

Att: 5,781

Ref: Roger Furnandiz.

Team: K. Davis, James (Evers 9 min), McGowan, Waddock, Steve Davis, Johnson, McLaren, Alexander (Doherty 62 min), Oldfield, Thorpe, Marshall (Douglas xx min).

Goals: Brian Law, 67 min - headed home from Paul Allen's corner. Danny Hockton, 72 min - burst through a static defence to fire home unchallenged.

Comment: A very poor performance characterised by a lack of imagination.

League position: 15th.

09/09/97 NORTHAMPTON TN A 0-1

Att: 7,246 (a record crowd for Sixfields??)

Ref: Rob Harris.

Team: K. Davis, McGowan, Small, Steve Davis, Johnson, Waddock, McLaren, Evers (Doherty 81 min), Oldfield, Douglas, Marshall (Simon Davies 72 min). Unused sub: Peake. Goal: Sean Parrish, 22 seconds - low shot into far corner set up by John Gayle, who shrugged off Evers.

Sent-off: Gavin McGowan, for two bookable offences, both rather wild challenges.

Comment: The Town perhaps deserved an equaliser for what they did after the first minute.

League position: 18th.

13/09/97 AFC BOURNEMOUTH A 1-1

Att: 4,561

Team: K. Davis, McGowan, Small, Steve Davis, Johnson, Waddock, Simon Davies (Evers 68 min), McLaren, Douglas (Doherty 78 min), Oldfield, Marshall. Unused sub: Peake.

Goals: Marshall, 43 min - close range half-volley from McLaren's low cross. John O'Neil, 83 min - low shot into bottom corner.

Booked: Waddock and Steve Davis.

Comment: Town failed to weather second half siege for quite long enough.

League position: 21st.

16/09/97 WEST BROM H 1-1

Coca Cola Cup Second Round, first leg

Att: 3,437

Team: Dibble, Alexander, Steve Davis, Johnson (Simon Davies 69 min), Harvey, Waddock, Evers (George 77 min), McLaren, Oldfield, Douglas, Marshall. Unused sub: Doherty.

Goals: Douglas, 24 min - shot on the turn into bottom corner. Bob Taylor, 34 min - close range header from Dave Smith's cross that Dibble failed to come out for.

20/09/97 WREXHAM H 2-5
 Att: 5,241
 Team: Dibble, McGowan, Small, Steve Davis, Harvey (Peake 67 min), Waddock (Thorpe h/t), McLaren, Oldfield, Gray, Douglas, Marshall (Evers 8 min).
 Goals: Dave Brammer, 10 min - Volley past Dibble. Karl Connolly, 25 min - Steve Davis, 42 min - emphatic header from Harvey's corner. Gray, 48 min - bundled past Wrexham keeper Marriott and slotted home from acute angle. Craig Skinner, 62 min - penalty, after Small had pulled down Dean Spink. Connolly, 63 min - shot home past stationary Dibble after Peake allowed ball to bounce over his head. Connolly, 73 min - fired home from Skinner's through ball to complete hat-trick.
 Booked: Douglas.
 League position: 23rd.

23/09/97 WEST BROM A 2-4
 Att: 7,227
 Team: Dibble, Evers, Steve Davis, White, Harvey, Waddock, McLaren, Simon Davies (George 79 min), Oldfield, Gray, Douglas (Thorpe 46 min). Unused sub: Harvey.
 Goals: Steve Davis, 38 min - 25 yard free kick into top corner. Paul Raven, 41 min - fired into bottom corner after Hatters failed to clear cross from the right. Andy McDermott, 51 min - long range shot deflected past Dibble. Paul Peschisolido, 66 min - after outpacing Steve Davis, the ball ricocheted in off the striker after Davis' last ditch challenge. Thorpe, 73 min - magical 35 yard strike. Peschisolido, 88 min - struck home after the ball slipped out of Dibble's grasp.

27/09/97 BRISTOL CITY A 0-3
 Att: 8,509
 Team: K. Davis, Evers, White, Small, Harvey, Waddock (Kean 65 min), Simon Davies, McLaren, Oldfield, Thorpe, George (Spring h/t). Unused sub: Omogbehin.
 Goals: Michael Bell, 5 min - penalty, after clumsy challenge by White. Torpey, 28 min - header, which looked like being saved by Davis, but White tried to block it and knocked it in as he fell over. Torpey, 32 min - .
 League position: 23rd.

04/10/97 WATFORD H 0-4
 Att: 9,041
 Ref: Terry Heilbron.
 Team: K. Davis, McGowan (James h/t), White, Small, Harvey, Waddock, McLaren, Oldfield, Simon Davies (Douglas h/t), Gray, Thorpe. Unused sub: Spring.
 Goals: Richard Johnson, 5 min - low shot through crowded area, beating the unsighted Davis. David Thomas, 19 min - beat the keeper at the second attempt after hesitation by Davis and small let him in. Peter Kennedy, 27 min - volleyed home after ball had failed to be cleared. Kennedy, 29 min - scored after waltzing through the defence with ease.
 League position: 23rd.

11/10/97 PLYMOUTH ARGYLE H 3-0
 Att: 4,931
 Ref: David Crick, Surrey.
 Team: K. Davis, Alexander, White, James, Small, Waddock, Spring, McLaren, Oldfield, Thorpe (Evers 87 min), Doherty (Simon Davies 73 min). Unused sub: Harvey.
 Goals: Thorpe, 36 min - slotted the ball home after receiving it from Doherty's flick on on a long ball from Davis. Thorpe, 58 min - shot from 8 yards out after Waddock had rolled back an awful Plymouth clearance. Simon Davies, 82 min - Maiden goal, chipping the ball over the advancing keeper, after being released by Thorpe.
 Sent-off: Matthew Spring, on 70 minutes, for a rash 'studs up' challenge. Plymouth boss Mick Jones was also ordered from the dug-out for arguing that Spring should not be sent-off.
 Comment: An excellent full debut for Matthew Spring, spoiled by the sending off.
 League position: 23rd.

18/10/97 WIGAN ATHLETIC H 1-1
 Att: 4,466
 Ref: David Messias
 Team: K. Davis, James, Steve Davis, White, Small, Spring (Simon Davies 80 min), McLaren, Oldfield, Alexander, Gray (Marshall 73 min), Thorpe. Unused sub: Doherty.
 Goals: Oldfield, 68 min - well placed shot just inside far post after Thorpe laid off Oldfield's throw in. Graeme Jones, 72 min - Penalty after Martinez had tumbled on the edge of the area.
 Booked: David Oldfield.
 League position: 22nd.

21/10/97 CARLISLE UNITED A 1-0
 Att: 4,341
 Team: K. Davis, James, White, Steve Davis, Small, Spring (Waddock 66 min), McLaren, Alexander, Oldfield, Gray (Marshall 89 min), Thorpe. Unused sub: Simon Davies.
 Goal: Alan White, 87 min - unchallenged header from 5 yards to meet Graham Alexander's corner.
 League position: 21st.

25/10/97 BRENTFORD H 2-0
 Att: 5,972
 Ref: John Kirkby, Sheffield.
 Team: K. Davis, James (Johnson 81 min), White, Steve Davis, Small, Waddock, McLaren, Alexander, Oldfield, Gray, Thorpe (Marshall 84 min).
 Goals: Alexander, 20 min - chipped in from Gray's head down of Oldfield's cross. Thorpe, 59 min - Alexander's corner flicked on by Oldfield for Thorpe to head in from 5 yards.
 Bookings: Steve Davis and Phil Gray.
 Comment: Workman like performance, enough to see Town out of the relegation places.
 League position: 18th.

Forthcoming Fixtures

Sat	Nov	1	Wycombe Wanderers	A	
Tue	Nov	4	BURNLEY	H	7.45pm
Sat	Nov	8	PRESTON NORTH END	H	
Sat	Nov	15	TORQUAY UNITED	H	FA Cup Rd 1
Sat	Nov	22	WALSALL	H	
Sat	Nov	29	York City	A	
Tue	Dec	2	GILLINGHAM	H	7.45 pm

All ticket for Town fans.

Pay on the day, terracing, adults £8.50, concessions £5.50

Reserves and Youth

Reserves

Mon	Aug	13	OXFORD UNITED	H	1-1
Thu	Aug	21	Queens Park Rangers	A	1-1
Thu	Aug	28	MILLWALL	H	3-1
Wed	Sep	10	Tottenham Hotspur	A	0-3
Wed	Sep	17	CRYSTAL PALACE	H	0-2
Wed	Sep	24	WATFORD	H	3-1
Wed	Oct	15	CHARLTON ATHLETIC	H	4-1
Mon	Oct	20	Chelsea	A	0-0
Mon	Oct	27	Norwich City	A	
Wed	Nov	5	Wimbledon	A	(2pm)
Mon	Nov	10	IPSWICH TOWN	H	(7pm, HT)
Wed	Nov	19	Southampton	A	(7.30pm)
Mon	Nov	24	ARSENAL	H	(7pm, HT)
Thu	Dec	4	Millwall	A	(2pm)

Youth

Sat	Aug	9	WYCOMBE WANDERERS	H	0-1
Sat	Aug	16	Reading	A	6-0
Tue	Aug	19	Ipswich Town (SJFC Prim)	A	1-0
Sat	Aug	23	Swindon Town	A	4-2
Sat	Aug	30	OXFORD UNITED	H	5-1
Fri	Sep	5	Barnet	A	4-2
Tue	Sep	9	CRYSTAL PALACE (SJFC 1)	H	0-1
Sat	Sep	13	Southend (SECLC 1)	A	1-0
Sat	Sep	20	BRIGHTON & HA	H	8-1
Sat	Sep	27	Bristol City	A	2-2
Sat	Oct	4	BRENTFORD	H	0-1
Sat	Oct	11	Southampton	A	3-2
Sat	Oct	18	Arsenal (SECLC 2)	A	2-0
Sat	Oct	25	TOTTENHAM HOTSPUR	H	
Sat	Nov	1	READING	H	
Sat	Nov	15	COLCHESTER UNITED	H	
Sat	Nov	22	SWINDON TOWN (SECLC 3)	H	
Sat	Nov	29	AFC Bournemouth	A	
Sat	Dec	6	BRISTOL ROVERS	H	

Home matches at Kenilworth Road or Hitchin Town (HT) (reserves) and Luton Rugby Club, Newlands Road (youth). SECLC = South East Counties League Cup, SJFC = Southern Junior Floodlit Cup.

The listing above is by way of catching up with everything that has been missed so far this season for both reserve and youth teams. Two reserve games were postponed due to the injury crisis. The reserve side have not had the best of fortunes so far and currently lie 15th in the Combination. This is probably not unconnected with the fact that 27 players were used in the first seven matches. The leading goalscorers are Andrew Barr with 4, and Gary Doherty and Liam George with 2 each.

League form has been much better for the youth team who currently lead the South East Counties League Division Two by three points with 19 from 9 matches. As you will note from the results above there has been a liberal sprinkling of goals — no less than 32 in the league — to make the Town side leading scorers in their league by some distance. The top scorer is Tresor Kandol with 8, followed by Jimmy Cox with 5 and first-teamer (!) Matthew Spring with 4. On 3 each are Emerson Boyce, Andre Scarlett and Clifford Akurang, with Michael McIndoe and Moses Jerry on two.

New Stadium

This is actually dragging on longer now than anybody had ever envisaged. The inspector's report was delayed in being passed to the Department of the Environment and other things due to illness and other public inquiries. But it is known that it is with the D of E and the last I heard it was being checked for legal matters before a decision could be announced. However, with this going on for so long I would not be prepared to suggest that this is actually the case, or that an announcement could be imminent. I believe that there is some sort of time limit, and if there is, it must run out soon. Whatever happens, don't hold your breath waiting for a result.

And Finally.....

I hope that this issue will go some way to making up for the absence of HM in recent months. I will now endeavour to keep up to date in the future, as far as the information available allows. As far as subscriptions are concerned, all renewals that would have been due will be deferred, probably until into the New Year, as the financial situation is still reasonably healthy. When it becomes necessary to call for renewals, all subscriptions will be extended by the same period, so that nobody loses out. Of course, the alternative view is that the flow of news will deteriorate further and make trying to compile HM a total waste of time. I do not envisage this happening, but as I have more demands on my time than in the past, I can expend less effort on chasing up the missing information. I hope you will all understand.