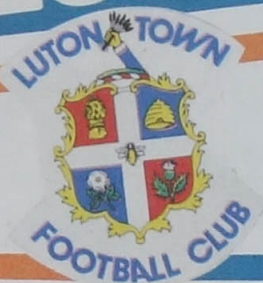


LUTON TOWN v ARSENAL



**LITTLEWOODS CUP FINAL
WEMBLEY 1988**



50p



SAME AGAIN PLEASE MICK!

IT'S A GOAL! Mick Harford dives, defenders scramble in vain, and the moment most Luton Town fans have dreamed about all their lives has become a reality: a Hatters' goal at Wembley.

It was the first since Dave Pacey's against Nottingham Forest in the FA Cup final of 1959, but the dreams became nightmares both times.

Harford's header put the Town ahead against Reading in the Simod Cup final last month, but the Second Division side struck back four times to take the trophy.

"The most humiliating day of my life," was the summing up of Ray Harford, on his first trip as a manager to Wembley. "We owe it to everyone, including the supporters, to do a lot better next time."

Luton go back to the world's most famous soccer arena on Sunday, to play Arsenal in the Littlewoods Cup final. And in this souvenir, we salute everyone who has helped to make it possible.

And we look forward to more goals like this one, and a Luton Town victory.

COME ON YOU HATTERS!

Picture by Sharron Day

This man is wanted all over the Home Counties . . .



0582 22666



0582 22666



0582 22666

Because of the popularity of Window Craft and their genuine attitude towards their customers Ray Harvey procured record sales for his company over the last three weeks. This small, personal, old fashioned type business containing twelve qualified tradesmen get all there work from recommendation. Ray Harvey apologises for any possible delivery delays he quotes "Everything which is good is worth waiting for, all customers should expect perfection."

WINDOW CRAFT
Contact: Ray Harvey

. . . For Professional advice in Double Glazing

Luton News would like to thank Ray Harvey for the use of these colour photographs

The WEMBLEY WAY!



The Final Preparations . . .
The Final build-up . . .
The Final action . . . on

**BBC RADIO
BEDFORDSHIRE**

Daily news, interviews and features.
The very best local coverage of the
Littlewoods Cup Final from
John Smith and the Sportsound team

**630 kHz - 103.8
and 95.5 FM stereo**

INSIDE

- The road to Wembley.....page 3
- The managers.....page 4
- Confident David Evans.....page 4
- Syd Owen today.....page 5
- David Pacey's 1959 goal.....page 6
- Ray Harford interview.....page 7
- Billy Bingham's special interest.....page 8
- Unlucky Ian Allinson.....page 9
- Previous cup tie with Arsenal.....page 10
- Luton's players, in colour.....pages 11, 12, 13, 14, 23 and 24
- Dramatic recall for Dibble.....page 15
- Ricky Hill's fitness fight.....page 15
- The road to Wembley.....page 16
- David Pleat interview.....page 17
- The Wembley veterans.....page 18 and 19
- John Moore interview.....page 21
- Frank King interview.....page 22

Our team

THE editorial team for this special supplement was John Buckledee (Editor), Richard Ingham (deputy editor), Brian Swain (sports editor) and Eric Norris (deputy sports editor).

Photographers included Sharron Day, Josh Levy, Mike Pierce and George Gurney.

The advertisement team was Paul Gibson (manager), John Cook, Sue Clark, Michael Richardson, David Artis, Jane Pummell and Denise Coates.

Artists were Ken Munslow and Pauline Groom.

The Hatters' 30,000 army



COME on you Hatters! An army of 30,000 Luton Town fans will be on the road to the Littlewoods Cup Final at Wembley on Sunday. It will be the biggest following to any

Hatters match since 1959 and will dwarf the crowd pictured here who travelled to White Hart Lane for the recent FA Cup semi-final. This cheerful picture of the Hatters fans was taken by our photographer Sharron Day.



By Pauline Wolsey, Mayor of Luton

Olé, Olé, Olé
Date: August 15, 1987.
Place: Baseball Ground, Derby
Event: Kick-off for the first match of the 1987/1988 Football Season.

Who, then, would have thought that Luton Town Football Club would reach Wembley on three occasions and would have been only one match away from a fourth appearance. I feel that their success in other competitions is detracting from the thrill of reaching Wembley for the Littlewoods Cup Final on Sunday.

Regardless of whether people are regular supporters, general football fans or not really interested, I am sure that they have all been caught up in the euphoria of Luton's success in the Littlewoods Cup competition.

On behalf of the people of Luton I would like to wish Ray Harford, Steve Foster and all the lads in the team every success and just that extra bit of luck that will mean the cup coming to Luton.

And finally let's just say — COME ON YOU HATTERS.



By David Evans, Luton Town Chairman

WE are re-writing the history books as we approach the Littlewoods Cup Final, having already played in the Simod Cup Final and the Mercantile Centenary Festival.

For me, and I believe most fans, the moment the final whistle went against Oxford in the second leg of the semi-final was something that few of us will ever forget. This was the moment when the club — and that means all those connected with it both in days gone by and now — won back the pride we lost in 1959 when we so sadly were defeated 2-1 by Nottingham Forest in the FA Cup Final.

I believe that the Club suffered that day and has suffered ever since, but when we have beaten Arsenal

and brought the cup home Luton will have arrived on the soccer scene as never before in its 103 years and will become increasingly an influence on the game.

Luton Town FC means something different to everyone, I suppose, but to me it is all about a family club, small in numbers, pulling together via the fans, stewards, players, management, backroom staff, Directors, Vice-Presidents, Chairman and President.

Most of all it means the challenge of beating the odds, if you like climbing Mount Everest every day, and as I have said before everyone connected with Luton Town has to be a very "special person".

With the support of us all we can do it and we will.

LUTON TOWN



Founded: 1885, one year before Arsenal, and turned professional 1890, also 12 months ahead of the Gunners.

Ground: Kenilworth Road, capacity 14,700.

Record win: 12-0 v Bristol Rovers, Easter, 1936, Div III (S).

Record loss: 0-9 v Small Heath (now Birmingham City), 1898, Div II.

Record transfers: £400,000 received from Liverpool for Paul Walsh, May 1984. £275,000 paid to Birmingham City for Mick Harford, December 1984.

Football League record: Elected Div

II 1897; failed re-election 1900; elected Div II 1920; Div III (S) 1921; Div II 1937-55; Div I 1955-60; Div II 1960-63; Div III 1963-1965; Div IV 1965-1968; Div III 1968-1970; Div II 1970-1974; Div I 1974/1975; Div II 1975-1982; Div I since then.

Football Honours: Div III(S) champions 1937; Div IV champions 1968; Div II champions 1982.

League Cup best season before now: fifth round, 1979.

FA Cup best season before now: Runners-up 1959.

Best First Division season: 7th last year.

THE UPS AND DOWNS ON ROAD TO WEMBLEY

A SEPTEMBER evening in Wigan was the unlikely starting point for Luton Town's journey to Wembley '88.

Their Littlewoods Cup campaign kicked off in the homely surrounds of Springfield Park, in the heart of industrial Lancashire, in the second round.

Roared on by 5,000 fans, their best attendance of the season, the Third Division side had enough of the play to feel disappointed that they didn't get a draw at least.

But while they fluffed their chances, the Town's newest recruit, Micky Weir, showed real First Division class with an expert left foot drive from the edge of the penalty area in the 18th minute.

The game was his full debut after a £200,000 move from Hibs of Edinburgh, but the little winger was to pull out and go back home three months later, complaining that he couldn't settle in the South of England and was unhappy at Kenilworth Road.

In the second leg Wigan were seen off 4-2, with Mick Harford scoring a hat-trick and Darron McDonough the other marksman.

The Wigan tie also saw Steve Foster's first goal of the season . . . knocked past Les Sealey into the wrong net.

The third round draw was widely welcomed when the Town were given home advantage over FA Cup holders Coventry City.

But the Police raised objections to having Coventry fans in town, and the club was faced with having to give up home advantage, or bow out of the tournament for the second consecutive season by conceding the match. Plans to switch the game to Fulham were scrapped when it was discovered that Scotland Yard's policing bill at Craven Cottage would be more than the sum total of receipts from the turnstiles.

Eventually Leicester City came to the rescue, and the game was played at Filbert Street, 20 miles from Coventry and 70 from Luton.

On a night when the rain bucketed down the Town produced slick soccer to overwhelm the Sky Blues more emphatically than the 3-1 result would suggest. Harford scored twice, to take his goals total for the season into double figures. Weir was the other scorer for the Town in a flowing passing performance which hit the heights of excellence.

In the fourth round there was a potentially tricky visit to Ipswich in November. At the time they were Second Division promotion prospects and unbeaten at home all season.

This time the Town had a real battle. Brian Stein scored a brilliant solo opener after only four minutes from a pass by his brother Mark.

Portman Road reverberated to a thrilling cup-tie, with over 15,000 watching spellbound as the Second Division side fought to draw level.

But Foster and Donaghy were immovable in central defence, with Tim Breacker and Richard Harvey equally determined. Forwards and midfielders joined an 86-minute rearguard action, and although Ipswich had twice as many goal attempts as the Town, they could not get past Sealey.

Some of us came home that night wondering if perhaps after a defiant performance like that, winning when they might easily have lost, the Town were at long last destined for another long-awaited Wembley appearance. And the feeling grew when the fifth round draw was made: at home to Bradford City, another Second Division side.

Ricky Hill, David Preece and Meka Nwajobi had all been sidelined by serious injuries, but the young men who came in grabbed their chances.

Foster got the breakthrough in the 55th minute with a deflected shot to ease the tension that was beginning to build up. Harford finished it with a header after Danny Wilson's drive had been parried to send most of the 11,022 fans home happy.

Not until the semi-final were we faced with prospect of meeting a really top team. "Please God make it Oxford," was the prayer, and it was answered, with

● PERFECTION: Brian Stein is hidden by defenders, but his header was just superb to put Luton ahead in the 33rd minute of the semi-final against Oxford.



By BRIAN SWAIN

SPORTS EDITOR Brian Swain has been a Luton Town supporter all his life. As a boy he joined the St John Ambulance Brigade so that he could get into Kenilworth Road for nothing. A journalist since leaving school, he has been on the Kenilworth Road beat for the Luton News and Dunstable Gazette for 15 years.

He has also been Chiltern Radio's Luton match reporter since the station began broadcasting in October 1981, and he has not missed a Luton Town game, home or away, since succeeding the late Eric Pugh as Sports Editor.

The Littlewoods Cup Final will be the 741st consecutive match he has covered for us, and the Wembley trip will be a double delight for Swain — in 1959 as a squaddie on National Service he was one of the Town fans unable to get an FA Cup Final ticket.

holders Arsenal paired with Everton in the other semi-final.

On a bitterly cold night at the Manor Ground the first leg was notable for three penalty decisions. Dean Saunders won two, much to the Town's disgust, with accusations flying that he had conned the ref in falling over Mal Donaghy. The third decision, with Sealey taking Saunders's feet in an attempt to save, looked the best penalty of the lot, but Keith Hackett waved that one aside.

A few days earlier the Town had beaten Oxford 7-4 in a league game at Kenilworth Road and another win looked likely when Brian Stein curled in a superb 20-yard drive in the 40th minute.

But Saunders equalised from his first penalty, then saw his second saved by Sealey and in the end the draw was the least the Town deserved.

And the second leg, on a Sunday afternoon at Kenilworth Road, set off the most exuberant celebrations we have seen for a long time.

Maurice Evans persisted with Oxford's sweeper system, even after the Town strolled into a 2-0 interval lead with a header by Brian Stein and a delightful free kick by Ashley Grimes.

Oxford were disappointing opposition, never looked like fighting back, and bowed out, with Mr Evans resigning as manager a few weeks later.

Not too many of us had time to think about his problems on that Sunday afternoon: the thrill of knowing Luton Town were at Wembley again was intoxicating, even without the celebratory champagne.

ARSENAL



Founded: 1886. Ground: Highbury, capacity 57,000. Record win: 12-0 v Loughborough, Div II, 1900.

Record loss: 0-8 v Loughborough, Div II, 1896.

Record transfers: £1.25m paid to QPR for Clive Allen, June 1980; £1.25m received from Crystal Palace . . . for Clive Allen, August 1980.

Football League record: Elected Div II 1893; Div I 1904-1913; Div II 1913-1919; Div I ever since.

Football Honours: Champions 1931, 1933, 1934, 1935, 1938, 1948, 1953, and 1971 when they did the double. FA Cup winners in 1930, 1936, 1950, 1971, and 1979. Losing finalists five times.

League Cup (now the Littlewoods Cup) winners 1987, runners-up 1968 and 1969.

European Honours: Fairs Cup winners (now UEFA Cup) 1971, in one of eight seasons in European competitions.



The time is right.



GOOD LUCK LUTON AT WEMBLEY

SKF

SKF (U.K.) Limited, Luton

OUR BACK HAS EXTRA FEET.



VAUXHALL. ONCE DRIVEN, FOREVER SMITTEN.

VAUXHALL IS BACKED BY THE WORLDWIDE RESOURCES OF GENERAL MOTORS. THE VAUXHALL BELMONT HAS A BOOT CAPACITY OF 19.4 CUBIC FEET, WHICH IS MORE THAN ANY OF ITS MAJOR RIVALS.

Town manager played for six clubs



• RAY HARFORD

RAY HARFORD and George Graham both served long "apprenticeships" as players before moving into football management.

Harford, 42, jokes that he would have been a good central defender if he hadn't been so slow. He played for six clubs, all in the lower divisions.

Born in Yorkshire but brought up in the East End of London, he began as a boy with Charlton. But he made only three league appearances for them before a 55-game two-year spell with Exeter.

Three years with Lincoln followed. He made 161 appearances, before rapid moves to Mansfield and Port Vale.

It was at Colchester, where he arrived in 1972, that he began combining coaching with playing, moving on to full-time coaching at Layer Road after 107 appearances. His total league career was 353 games.

As a coach he moved to Fulham, and was promoted to manager there to succeed Malcolm Macdonald four years ago.

Mr Harford can scarcely believe the difference between that job and the one he has now. Ernie Clay was not just a powerful chairman of a club that was beset with all kinds of problems. He got involved in the day-to-day business to a degree which restricted his manager's ability to do the job his way.

So, two years ago, when newly-appointed Town boss John Moore offered Mr Harford the job of coach at Kenilworth Road it was accepted gladly.

And 12 months later the football idealist, who wanted more enterprise and attack than his former Luton boss, was given his chance when Mr Moore left.

The timing was more fortunate than anyone realised at the time: Wimbledon, who had just lost Dave Bassett wanted Mr Harford, and if Mr Moore had not resigned the Town might well have lost their coach, instead of gaining a manager.

Mr Graham is 43, and enjoyed a loftier playing career than his Luton counterpart, with his best years at Arsenal, for whom he made 219 First Division appearances.

A cool and composed striker, he also won a dozen caps for Scotland in a 15-year playing career.

He started as an apprentice at Aston Villa, was in Chelsea's League Cup-winning side of 1965 and helped Arsenal to their 1971 League and Cup double triumph.

He then had two years with Manchester United and two at Portsmouth.

At Crystal Palace he became a coach after his playing career ended, moving into management with Millwall. He was the heartbroken boss of Millwall on the night of the riot at Luton.

A little over 12 months later, after the Town had beaten Arsenal in a cup-tie to hasten the end of Don Howe's career as manager at Highbury, Graham was hired as replacement. And in his first season he won the Littlewoods Cup, the trophy the Town now want to prise from his grasp.



• GEORGE GRAHAM

Perfect birthday present for a confident chairman

BY BRIAN SWAIN

LUTON TOWN will win the Littlewoods Cup at Wembley on Sunday.

That is the confident prediction of club chairman David Evans, a millionaire hungry for success for Luton Town.

The first major trophy in their 103-year history is the ambition that has driven Mr Evans through a harrowing career as chairman of a club that was sinking fast until he took over.

He will be 53 on Saturday, and for a man who has just about everything the perfect birthday present will be the priceless sight of Steve Foster leading the lap of honour on Sunday afternoon.

And the moment will be all the sweeter after the cup, funded mainly by Liverpool money, is presented by League President Phil Carter. He is not quite the biggest admirer of Luton Town, or of its chairman.

Outrageous

Mr Evans, blunt to the point of being outrageous at times, traces this season's record-breaking success to hard work done by a small army of people over the last four years.

It included times when he was hated in Luton when he was convinced that the only viable future for the club was a move to Milton Keynes.

That provoked a bitter battle with fans, but today he sees the whole sorry experience as part of the strength of Luton Town.

When the fight was over, he says, everyone got together

and once club and supporters were all kicking towards the same goal success became a realistic target.

As a young inside forward he had a brief professional career with Aston Villa, and won six England youth caps. He was also a more-than-useful cricketer, and captained and then managed two Club Cricket Conference tours to Australia.

He made a fortune by starting an office cleaning business and developing it into Brengreen Holdings, and pioneered the privatisation of council street cleaning and refuse disposal services.

He cashed in by retiring, and is now Conservative MP for Hatfield and Welwyn, enjoying mutual admiration and respect with Margaret Thatcher.

His punishing schedule on politics, football and charity work keeps him busier now than he ever was when he was scrubbing office floors at dawn to get his company established.

The interview for this article was given in a car racing from one appointment to the next.

Appointed

He had been a director for eight years when he took over as chairman in November 1984 from Denis Mortimer.

Luton Town were bottom but one of the First Division, and racked by problems. The bank was worried about the overdraft. The county council was causing problems over a new road scheme and the town council was ready to fight the Milton Keynes move. And the fans were disillusioned with a board that wanted to make the 20-mile move into Buckinghamshire.

Yet Mr Evans now recalls: "There was nothing radically wrong with the club that could not be put right. There never has been since I joined the board."

"It was like a firework waiting for someone to come along and light the blue touchpaper. I didn't seek to be the man to do it as the new chairman, but Denis Mortimer, who had done a terrific job, was feeling the pressure. No wonder, after nine years in the job."

"I realised that it was time to grasp the nettle," said Mr Evans. "We had to go for it or stay where we had been for most of the previous 90-odd years, down in the lower divisions."

Fresh funds

The then manager, David Pleat, who thought relegation was almost certain, was given fresh funds as the result of the election of Mr Evans as chairman. Terry Bailey, a lifelong supporter, joined the board and dug deeply into his pockets, and later Mr Evans brought in more financial backers, Mustafa Aleyan, Brian Cole and Mike Watson-Challis.

Roger Smith, the quiet man of the board, and Ed Pearson, whose enthusiasm was rekindled by the fresh winds that blew through Kenilworth Road under the new chairman, joined in and the depths of the First Division became the springboard to the Wembley heights.

The directors invested over £1.5 million. Steve Foster, Peter Nicholas and Mick Harford were recruited, the Milton Keynes plan was scrapped and football in Luton was suddenly a success story again.

"I think we put confidence back into the club, at all



• DAVID EVANS — driving force at Luton Town.

levels," said Mr Evans. "In terms of management, for instance, we showed that we would back people who were willing to work for a chance."

"We promoted John Moore when David Pleat left, and then Ray Harford. And that appointment of Ray Harford gave us probably the best manager Luton have had since I have been on the board. The record says so, and I think his decision to appoint Steve Foster as player-coach has also helped."

"The feeling of stability and confidence goes right through everyone in the club, from the very young players, through the league squad, and through the off-site staff as well."

"We have supporters who love the club and they're with us now, and there is a sort of togetherness that most clubs never achieve."

"What has happened to Luton Town in the past few years shows what can be achieved if you stop confrontation, speak openly and honestly, and all kick in the same direction."

The chairman had been to Wembley only once in his life, as a spectator, before last month's trip for the Simod Cup final.

"I can't describe the emotion I felt seeing Luton Town walk out at Wembley," he said. "I felt so pleased for everyone in the club."

"We have a good team, with a blend of youth and experience, and we will win on Sunday. All I ask the fans is that they get right behind the team, as they have done all season, and encourage the players."

"And keep cheering if things don't seem to be going well at times — don't worry about it... we will win."

WILL THE HATTERS OUT-SHOOT THE GUNNERS?

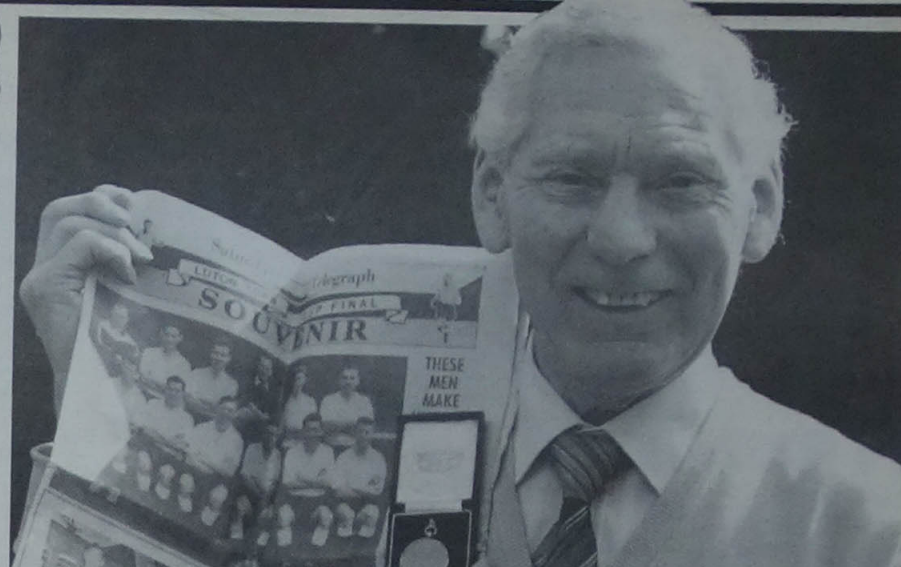
Read Emyln Hughes' prediction in this week's special Littlewoods Cup Final preview issue (23 April)



Also: Don't miss the 30th April issue. For our full colour action report.



• SYD OWEN exchanges club pennants with Forest skipper Jack Birkitt before the game at Wembley, watched by referee J. Clough of Lancashire.



• SYD TODAY: Owen, with his 1959 cup runner-up medal, still gets pleasure from leafing through the previous Wembley souvenir edition produced by this paper.

STRATEGIC ADVICE FROM SYD

THE PREVIOUS captain to lead Luton Town out at Wembley, Syd Owen, is now living in retirement in Leeds. He often brightens his day by digging out his precious collection of newspaper cuttings and reliving the Town's march to Wembley in 1959.

The tall centre-half who was the king-pin of Luton's defence in the fifties spent much of his career wading through the Kenilworth Road mud, but had some nice things to say about the value of the synthetic pitch.

"I don't think I would like to play a competitive match on it myself," he said. "But that kind of surface is ideal for the development of young players. It helps them to develop their skills and technique because you get an even bounce and run of the ball."

"I have watched Luton on TV and have noticed that one thing they have to do on that surface is use the full area of the pitch."

"The right full-back crosses to the far post and big Mick Harford is there to head the ball in the back of the net."

"The condensed version of the game tends to happen mostly on grass surfaces and ruins the game as a spectacle," he said.

Syd Owen played the last game of his playing career in the FA Cup Final against Nottingham Forest at Wembley.

He took over the vacant manager's chair at Kenilworth Road the following season but discovered he was not cut out for the job and resigned to join Leeds United as a coach at the end of the 1959-60 season when Luton were relegated.

"It was a mistake to become manager I feel in hindsight," he said. "Coaching is what I was cut out for and is what I most enjoyed doing."

Luton's slide down to the Fourth Division basement began the season after their Wembley appearance.

"We all got old together," he said.

"And when that happens it is always a difficult situation for any manager to be in. He has to find men of the same calibre and character and that is not easy."

He would much rather remember the happier times at Kenilworth Road.

"I signed for Luton on a transfer from Birmingham City in 1945-46 for the princely fee of £1,500."

"Except for that one year at Birmingham I spent all my playing career at Luton. Luton was a most enjoyable club to be associated with. There was a very friendly and very homely atmosphere."

"The players were a marvellous bunch. There was a great atmosphere and everybody looked forward to going to the ground for training. It was responsible for the kind of team work we developed at Luton over a number of years."

"It was a great occasion for me to go to Wembley for my last game, and I am only sorry that we didn't seal it with a victory."

His advice to Luton's present skipper, Steve Foster, is: "Enjoy what will be a great day. But the approach to the game is vitally important. The temperament of the players when you go out at Wembley has a vital bearing on how they will do. We froze, and you have to make sure that doesn't happen."

Vital approach to the match

ERIC NORRIS meets Syd Owen, 1959 Player of the Year, who captained Luton Town at Wembley in 1959.

He remembers Luton encountered a similar problem on the road to Wembley when they drew 1-1 at Leicester.

"We froze that day and didn't do ourselves justice, and we were lucky to get away with it," he said.

"I told the players they would have to have a better approach in the replay at Kenilworth Road and their attitude in that game was completely different. We won 4-1 and Allan Brown scored a hat-trick."

One of the players Syd Owen views with special interest when Luton are on tele is Ashley Grimes. He was a young prospect at Old Trafford when Syd ended his soccer career there as a coach for the three years of Dave Sexton's reign as manager.

"I like to follow Ashley's career closely. That was a tremendous goal he scored in the semi-final against Oxford."

"The wife and I were sitting in our armchairs watching the game on tele. When the free kick was given I said to her 'Ashley is going to take this with his left foot and try to curl it'. I always try to predict what they are going to do at set situations."

He thinks the Town will make it a very entertaining final if they open the game up by attacking down the flanks.

"One season I kept a record of all the goals scored by the club's three teams. I traced all the goals back to see how they developed and how they came."

"Over the season the highest percentage of goals came from play up the flanks and balls being crossed to the back post and either headed in or headed back from the back post for somebody else to score. They mostly came from the ability of players to get down the flanks."

"Teams play without wingers now because they haven't got players with that ability."

"Billy Bingham used to practice for hours at Luton. After training sessions he used to come back to the ground in the afternoon."

"We would feed balls to him from deep positions and have a defender go into him with a heavy shoulder-to-shoulder charge. Billy practiced falling and rolling over in a certain way so that he could regain his feet quickly and get control of the ball again."

Another party-piece the old Town side used to practice in the fifties was to put little targets on the pitch and get goalkeeper Ron Bayham to put his drop-kicks on the target area.

Syd is not sure that the 1959 side would have measured up to football today.

"The game is a lot more highly competitive now. Players are physically stronger these days. When I think back to the physique of my Luton team with players like Tony Gregory, John Groves and George Cummins, they would only rate as feather-weights against today's players in boxing terms."

Syd still gets the odd phone call from League clubs asking his opinion on young players, and enjoys watching schoolboy football on the local parks.

He enjoys visits from his 11-years-old grandson Christopher.

"He always brings his sports gear in the car and we have cricket and football sessions on the lawn every time he comes. I like to take him to watch the young Leeds under 11 side on Saturday mornings."

CONGRATULATIONS TO LUTON TOWN F.C. ON REACHING WEMBLEY FROM THE LUTON ARNDALE CENTRE
Shopping For All The Family Under One Roof

LATE NIGHT THURSDAY EASY PARKING



QUALITY USED COMMERCIALS from MARTIN SMITH MOTORS

CONGRATULATIONS LUTON TOWN F.C. ON REACHING WEMBLEY — AND BEST WISHES FOR THE FINAL!

USED COMMERCIALS BOUGHT FOR CASH
199 LEAGRAVE ROAD, LUTON
TEL: 574455 & 505854

OPEN Mon-Fri 9.30-6.00 Sat 9.30-4.00

GOAL! Dave's magic Wembley moment



• IN THE NET: The greatest moment in the life of Dave Pacey, fifth from the left, as he cracks home his Wembley goal.

Party-time at the Pacey's with a treasured video



• Dave Pacey at home last week with his Wembley souvenirs . . . a unique FA Cup video and a copy of Luton's old football paper, the Green 'Un, with a headline which said it all: 'Hard Luck Boys'.

LUTON Skipper Steve Foster's belief that Luton Town players are unjustly ignored when England teams are selected are fully supported by Dave Pacey — the man who scored the Town's goal in the 1959 Cup Final against Nottingham Forest.

"I go along with Foster when he says that if you play for Luton Town you don't play in the England side — and it is nothing new," said Dave.

Pacey's old skipper, Syd Owen, who earned only three England caps, was a fine example of how Luton players have been "snubbed" by the men who pick the England team, he said.

Superior

"Owen was the finest centre-half of his time and was far superior to Billy Wright of Wolves who was picked match after match by England.

"If you asked the great centre-forwards of the time like Nat Lofthouse of Bolton, Bobby Smith of Spurs or Ronnie Allen of West Brom they would all have said they would rather play against Wright than Owen.

"Syd didn't look like a footballer. He used to walk out on to the field like an old man, but there was no centre-half to touch him. The only thing wrong about him apparently was that he played for Luton Town."

Pacey, who was born and bred in Luton, still lives in the town at Calverton Road and works at Electrolux.

Limbury

Relaxing over a pint in the Black Swan at Limbury — the local where he ended his football career aged 38 playing for the pub team in the Luton and South Beds League — quietly spoken Pacey relived the magic of scoring a goal in a Wembley Cup Final.

"It was the greatest moment of my life, and I can understand what makes present-day players go wild with delight when they score goals," he said.

"There was no punching the air, or anything like that, when you scored in our day. But when I scored at Wembley I wanted to do something like that, but I just stood there mesmerised and didn't know what to do. There is no feeling like scoring a Cup Final goal — it was orgasmic."

The goal came in the 62nd minute with Forest already two goals up but down to ten men after losing Roy Dwight with a broken leg.

BY ERIC NORRIS

"It came from a short corner to Ken Hawkes who crossed the ball. It was side-stepped by a couple of Luton players and I was on the end of it. I just turned and hit it with my left foot. It was a wonderful sensation to see it in the back of the net," he said.

The powerful former wing-half still enjoys that great moment in the comfort of his armchair. Dave has probably the only video of the 1959 Cup Final in existence.

"My wife paid a lot of money to have it made for me," he said. "They had to join all the old reels of film together to make it.

"I have had some good nights with some of the old players. They come round to watch it and we lay on a buffet and drinks and make a nice party of it.

The first

"I hope lots of the Luton lads enjoy the same lovely feeling. But whatever goals they score I can still say I am the first Luton man to score in a Wembley Cup Final."

An unforgettable achievement, but why does he think Luton lost? "From the semi-final onwards we were all on a high all the time, and when we got there I think we were just about fed up with it. If we had had a couple of days away it would have been different.

"But going to Wembley has got to be the highlight of every player's career. Ask any of them and I think they would all rather play in a cup final than play for their country. There is nothing like it."

One memory of 1959 which still brings a tear to Dave's eyes is the fantastic welcome home the fans gave the Wembley team on the Sunday.

Welcome

"We didn't know what was going on as we drove back from London," he said. "A coach with an open top met us at Stockwood Park and we were told to stand on top.

"But it wasn't until we reached Market Hill that the welcome hit us. There were thousands of people lining the streets and it really touched you there," he said putting his hand over his heart.

"I will warn Steve Foster and the lads to arm themselves with Kleenex tissues for the homecoming because they will need them."

**'I stood mesmerised . . .
a wonderful sensation'**

MANAGER RAY AIMS TO ERASE A BAD MEMORY

'We did not do ourselves justice . . . we're lucky to have the chance to put things right so quickly'

BY BRIAN SWAIN

MANAGER Ray Harford has made football history in his first season as a Division One boss — and he can still hardly believe it.

But the feet are firmly on the ground, and the eyes often cast way beyond the horizon of the twin towers when he talks about what has happened in the past six months.

"No-one could have forecast that we would have reached Wembley three times, and nearly four," he said.

"When I took the job last summer I mentioned that reaching Wembley was one of my ambitions for Luton. But it took a long time to realise that at one stage we might make it four times.

"The silly thing is that in some ways the players might have overdone it. If you go to Wembley three times and win nothing your season will be seen by some as a failure.

"The fact that dozens of clubs would love to go just once, even to lose, is something you tend to forget."

No promises

Mr Harford makes no rash promises about the result on Sunday, but says: "We know what we want to do. And we know what our supporters want.

"I won't forget the humiliation I felt at Wembley in the Simod final if I live to be a hundred. That was the worst football day of my life.

"Players feel the same, and what should have been a lovely occasion turned into an awful day. It wasn't just losing — it was the way we were turned over.

"I thought we might redeem ourselves in the FA Cup semi-final against Wimbledon, but it wasn't to be. Wimbledon played well, and although we were a lot better than we had been at Reading we were second best on the day.

"After two disappointments, we know we have got to get things right for the Littlewoods final. To be blunt, we never know when we might get another chance. Or even if.

'I felt sick'

"Going to Wembley is very nice — but it's not so hot if you come away as losers. I can't describe how sick I felt when Reading had beaten us.

"We all knew that we hadn't done ourselves justice, and I think we're very lucky to have the chance to put things right so quickly."

Until the Simod Cup final disaster day, Harford's only experience of Wembley had been to take part in a charity match as part of the pre-match entertainment at a Freight Rover final.

He talks a good game, and claims that a 25-yarder he netted, watched by a comparative handful of people, was probably the best goal Wembley has ever seen. But the

smile vanishes when he starts to look at Luton Town's chances of doing something similar against Arsenal.

"Some of our results in the past month or so were dreadful," he said. "In the games either side of the Simod final we were done 4-0 at Coventry and Newcastle, but won 4-1 at home to Portsmouth.

"They suggest that something needs to be put right. But the cup-tie record in general is pretty good. I know some people want big changes, but the run-up to a Wembley final is no time to panic.

"To be fair we have a squad of 13 or 14 who have done Luton proud this season, and good players don't become bad ones overnight.

"And have a look at Arsenal's results since they qualified for the Littlewoods Cup final. They won at home to Spurs and to Charlton, but then hit a bad patch, including a home defeat against Nottingham Forest in the FA Cup quarter-finals.

Arsenal's problems

"George Graham has got a bigger squad than we have, but he has had problems in finding the right team.

"And his men won't be hungrier for success than ours. Arsenal might have more Wembley experience than we have, but I think the fact that we have been there in one final and lost will stand us in good stead.

"A few of our players will be looking at Sunday's prospects and thinking it might be their last chance to get a winner's medal at Wembley.

"A lot will depend on attitude and preparation, and that is where I will have to earn my money. When we were on a good run in mid-season my job was simple.

"It was like setting the team going, and leaving it to tick over in automatic. It's when you lose a few games that players suddenly start to ask what the manager is going to do about it.

"The objective is to ensure that we have the right attitude, and to be honest it was right in the cup runs. But the feeling that we wouldn't get beaten in cup-ties took a knock against Reading and Wimbledon.

"Now we have to recapture it, and learn from an experience we didn't enjoy.

"And we also have to make sure that supporters and everyone else connected with the club have a day to enjoy on Sunday as well. Me, I'm a bad loser. I'll only enjoy it if we win. And we know we can if we get our game right."

TWIN TRACKS TO THE FINAL

LUTON TOWN

Round 2, 1st leg Wigan (A) 1-0

(Weir)

Round 2, 2nd leg Wigan (H) 4-2

(Harford 3, McDonough)

Round 3 Coventry (H)* 3-1

(Harford 2, Weir)

Round 4 Ipswich (A) 1-0

(B. Stein)

Round 5 Bradford (H) 2-0

(Foster, Harford)

Semi (1) Oxford (A) 1-1

(B. Stein)

Semi (2) Oxford (H) 2-0

*At Leicester (B. Stein, Grimes)

ARSENAL

Doncaster (A) 3-0

(Groves, Smith, Williams)

Doncaster (H) 1-0

(Rocastle)

Bournemouth (H) 3-0

(Thomas, Pen, Smith, Richardson)

Stoke (H) 3-0

(O'Leary, Rocastle, Richardson)

Sheffield Wednesday (A) 1-0

(Winterburn)

Everton (H) 1-0

(Groves)

Everton (H) 3-1

(Thomas, Rocastle, Smith)



• RAY HARFORD, pictured at Kenilworth Road when he took over as manager last summer.



YOUR BEDROOM AND OUR FURNITURE

A Great Team

**Congratulations to Luton Town
and every success at Wembley**

Wallspan

Showrooms throughout the U.K. phone for your nearest

Wallspan Bedrooms, Industrial Estate, Flitwick, Beds. Tel: (0525) 716161

EDITQUEST LTD
ELECTRICAL CONTRACTORS
National Inspection Council for Electrical Installation Contracting
APPROVED CONTRACTOR
Congratulations to LUTON TOWN

**Richardson & Bottoms
Construction Limited**

Congratulations to the HATTERS

105-109 Biscot Road
Luton Bedfordshire LU3 1AN

A fan who'll travel from Botswana

LUTON Town's fans are spread right around the globe. Among the 30,000 supporters at Wembley on Sunday the one who is thought to have travelled furthest for the game is exiled Lutonian Roger Davies.

He works in Botswana and has organised his holiday dates with a 6,000-mile Wembley trip in mind. He has a three-week holiday and is due to arrive at Gatwick at 6.20 on Sunday morning.

...and one who can't make it

One fan who will be unable to cheer on his favourite team will settle for watching the game on TV ... in prison.

He wrote to our sports desk asking for a souvenir or two to decorate his cell in Stafford Gaol.

"It would be great to put pictures of Luton on my cell wall because there are lots of Everton and Liverpool supporters in here," he explained.

On wages of £1.47 a week he added that he could not afford to spend a lot on his souvenirs. Luton Town chipped in with a parcel of goodies, a selection of actions shots in on its way from Luton News, and for good measure a complimentary copy of this souvenir will also be sent.

The great pleasure of his letter was that it was one of the few our sports editor has received which did not ask for a cup final ticket!

Irish manager has a special interest



BY ERIC NORRIS

BILLY BINGHAM, the Irish wizard whose goal in the semi-final replay against Norwich City at St. Andrews took Luton Town to Wembley for the first time in the club's history in 1959, will be taking a close interest in two of the present Luton team when he returns as a spectator for the Littlewoods Cup final.

As manager of the Northern Ireland team Billy has helped defender Mal Donaghy become Luton's most-capped player, and also has Danny Wilson in the current national team.

And he told me this week that he is taking more than a passing interest in the progress of a third Luton Town player.

"Mal Donaghy has been a good servant to Ireland and Danny Wilson scored in our last game and is coming on well," he said.

"I also hear that you have another young Irish lad coming along at Luton, Kingsley Black. I have been hearing some good things about him."

The 1959 final against Nottingham Forest was Billy Bingham's only trip to Wembley with a club side in his distinguished career with Sunderland, Luton Town and Everton.

But it ended in bitter disappointment: "I equalled a record set by Stan Mortensen of Blackpool by scoring for Luton in every round up to the final."

"I needed to score at Wembley to set a new record — but for most of the game I felt like a spectator, not a player," he said.

Bingham, who now lives in Southport, scored 27 goals in 87 league appearances for the Town between 1958 and 1960 after joining them from the "Bank of England" club Sunderland for £15,000.

When the Town were relegated in 1960 the chirpy little winger moved on to Everton in a deal which brought Alec Ashworth and John Bramwell to Luton.

He still believes the 5-1 Division One victory by the Town over Nottingham Forest at Kenilworth Road, three weeks before the final cost them the cup.

"We absolutely pulverised them that night," he said. "That was the worst thing that ever happened. When we got to Wembley everyone was optimistic and a little too confident. We went out with a sloppy attitude, and thought we were going to win."

"But it all went wrong. I was up against Scottish international Joe McDonald and I couldn't get going. I never got into the game."

"It was my only FA Cup Final, but I also played in an Irish Final, took a team to the Greek Cup Final, and also a team to the final in Saudi Arabia."

"When I was at Luton I think I was at my peak professionally. I had a very good scoring record there."

"Luton's present side are a credit to the town. They are playing good football, and have been for the last five or six years with managers like David Pleat and Ray Harford following the same type of football."

He advised the Town to go out against Arsenal at Wembley believing they can beat them. "I am a great believer that you should feel you can win every game whether it be Arsenal, Benfica or Real Madrid," he said.

"They must not think about names or reputations in the Arsenal side. They must not worry about that, but go out to play their 100 per cent best, saying they won't concede any goals and will score at the other end."

"And I will be cheering them on."

● Billy Bingham, Luton's winger, meets the Duke of Edinburgh at Wembley in 1959. On the right is Allan Brown.

Disastrous Wembley memories

NOW living in retirement in Lytham St. Anne's, Luton Town's inside-left in the 1959 Cup Final, Allan Brown, has only unhappy memories of Wembley.

Injuries caused him to miss two Cup Finals with Blackpool against Newcastle in 1951 and against Bolton Wanderers in 1953. And when he finally made it with Luton Town he suffered the agony of defeat.

"It was a disaster — we just didn't play. It was like a practice match the way we approached it," he said.

Memorable goal

But 1959 did provide him with the most memorable goal of his career: It was the goal that knocked his old club Blackpool out in the sixth round replay at Kenilworth Road to put the town into the semi-finals for the first time in their history.

"It was a goal I will never forget," he said. "Not only did it knock my old team out, but I also slipped the ball past George Farm who was my team-mate in the Scottish team."

Brown returned to take Luton to the Fourth Division title as manager in 1967/68 and end the slide to soccer's basement which began after the 1959 Cup Final.

Scots recruits

Then his career turned full-circle because after a spell in Kuwait he returned to Blackpool as manager, via Southport, and bowed out of football in 1982.

Now 61, he enjoys his second sporting love, golf, and can be seen every day on the Old Lytham course.

He recruited so many Scots as the Town manager that Luton were dubbed "The White Heather Club", and he still enjoys that joke.

Opportunity knocked for home-sick star

THE PLAYER who gave the Town their first shove towards the Littlewoods Cup final — and for the FA Cup as well — will be nearly 400 miles away from Wembley on Sunday.

For 21-year-old Micky Weir (right) was the man who turned his back on Luton Town after being homesick for Scotland.

Manager Ray Harford, who expected the little winger to become a real crowd-pleaser, confessed: "At the time he wanted to go back home I told him I thought he was missing a chance to play at Wembley. Even that didn't have any effect on his feelings, so I knew we couldn't keep him."

The Town paid Hibernian of Edinburgh £200,000 for Weir, and he made his full debut in the first Littlewoods Cup match of the

season, scoring the only goal of the game to notch a crucial away win at Wigan.

But the Town were going through an experimental period in terms of tactics, and eventually the players came to the conclusion that they preferred the old Luton style, with two forward attackers and Brian Stein as the third playing just behind them. And that made it difficult to accommodate an attacking winger who showed little liking for more mundane and defensive work in midfield.

Goals

Weir made six First Division appearances without scoring but played in three Littlewoods Cup games and scored twice, the second being a vital goal against Coventry at Leicester. And in his final match for the Town he scored

the first FA Cup goal of the season, in the 2-1 victory at Hartlepool.

But he had endured a wretched Christmas, out of the squad through flu, living on his own in a new home where he had no friends, and pined for his homeland.

Other players found him moody and introspective and a few days after the cup-tie at Hartlepool the Town accepted the offer from Hibs of their money back for the man who started them on the road to Wembley but didn't want to finish it.

Harford's disappointment was tempered a few days later when Weir's name appeared over a tabloid Press article slugging off Luton Town and its players for not giving him a better welcome.

UNLUCKY IAN MISSES THE BIG ONE—AGAIN



● Ian Allison — a dream shattered again.

Cup-tied star's Wembley woe

A CRUEL coincidence shattered one man's Wembley dream at Kenilworth Road, for the second time in 12 months.

A year ago Ian Allison was an Arsenal player, and a semi-final goal helped to shoot his beloved Gunners into the Littlewoods Cup final against Liverpool. But three days before the big match manager George Graham told him he was being dropped from the squad, and replaced by 21-year-old Perry Groves as sub.

A year later Ian finds himself cup-tied as his new team prepares to face his old one, having played for Stoke City before his transfer to Kenilworth Road last October. So he misses out again.

Upset

"I was very upset to be left out last year," he said. "I've been an Arsenal fan all my life and to play for them at Wembley would have been something very special. But I can't argue with George Graham's judgement — Groves was sent on in the final and made the winning goal for Charlie Nicholas against Liverpool."

Now 30, Ian first met Town manager Ray Harford 14 years ago. As a teenage hopeful, Ian made his league debut for Colchester in a side which included Harford at centre-half. The defender then became coach, and helped Ian make his mark in a career which took him to Highbury for "four fabulous years".

Fan

Said Ian: "My mum and dad came from Islington, so I was an Arsenal fan from being a small boy. I still have a lot of friends among the Arsenal players, but on Sunday I shall be cheering for Luton — I hope they win, and I think they can. "I was in the Simod Cup final last month, but that doesn't compare to the big occasion and the FA Cup final is the big one. "That's the one every footballer really sees as the best of the lot."

No defeats for the finalists

SUNDAY'S Wembley crunch is between the only two clubs in the country who have never lost a Littlewoods Cup tie.

The Town were pulled out of the tournament last year, its first, in a row over the refusal to let in visiting supporters from Cardiff City.

Arsenal, meanwhile, won the cup, although they did suffer one defeat on the way — in the first leg of the semi-final against Spurs at Highbury. After losing 1-0 they beat Spurs 2-1 in the second leg at White Hart Lane, and then repeated it on the same ground in the replay. The final against Liverpool was their ninth match in the campaign.

This season Arsenal have reeled off seven straight wins to earn the right to defend the trophy at Wembley. The Town won six of their seven, but drew the first leg of the semi-final at Oxford.

Harford number nine in hot-seat



RAY HARFORD is Luton Town's ninth manager since their first Wembley appearance.

They were managerless in May 1959 for the FA Cup Final — Dally Duncan had gone to Blackburn and the job was being kept open for skipper Syd Owen after he played his final match, at Wembley.

Owen lasted barely a year as the Town were relegated from the First Division. Sam Bartram, a famous goalkeeper, held the job for two years, followed by Bill Harvey for a similar term.

Revival

Allan Brown, who had played in the 1959 Cup Final side, began the revival after taking over the Town in 1966, when they were in the Fourth Division relegation zone.

He led the Town to the Fourth Division championship in 1968, applied unsuccessfully for the manager's job at Leicester and got the sack.

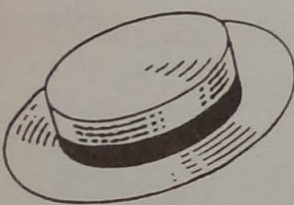
Alec Stock led the Town out of Division Three, in a four-year reign, followed by the late Harry Haslam, who won promotion back to the First Division in 1974 and to relegation 12 months later.

He stayed six years in the job, and David Pleat held the post for eight years before going to Spurs. John Moore had one season, before resigning last summer to make way for Ray Harford.

Mighty Mick is chart topper!

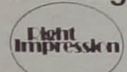
SIX OF the best by Mick Harford (above) spearheaded the drive to Wembley — he led the Littlewood cup-tie scoring charts with half a dozen goals. Brian Stein scored three, Micky Weir two and Darron McDonough, Steve Foster and Ashley Grimes one each.

Congratulations to The Hatters . . .



Congratulations from Luton's number one Hat Company, to the number one Football Club

W. Wright & Son Ltd



HAT MANUFACTURERS
ESTABLISHED 1890

MAD HATTER
PEIRSON BROS. (LUTON) LTD.
HAT MANUFACTURERS
HOME & EXPORT
3, INKERMANS STREET,
LUTON, BEDS.
LU1 1JB
Telephone: Luton 322112
Telex: 825623 CHAZCOM G

CONGRATULATIONS ON REACHING THE FINAL

SNOXELLS HEADWEAR
22 Clarendon Rd, Luton 24704

Congratulations on reaching the Littlewoods Cup Final

... From the Hatters!

H. Briars & Sons
STRAW AND FELT HAT MANUFACTURERS
75 MAY STREET
LUTON, BEDS.
TELEPHONE LUTON 25911

CONGRATULATIONS LUTON TOWN FC AND GOOD LUCK IN THE FINAL!



LUTON TOWN FC
0898 700 273



SOCCERLINE
News every day from Kenilworth Road, presented by BRIAN SWAIN, Sports Editor of the Luton News.

Calls charged at 38p per minute peak time, 25p off-peak, including VAT. An Airport Datalink Ltd service.



Fuels. Lubricants. Service.

We're your link with the world of Esso fuels and lubricants for business. Call us.

Flitwick Oil
Steppingley Road,
Flitwick, Bedford.
Telephone Sales Office:
Flitwick (0525) 717712.
We deliver

CONGRATULATIONS AND GOOD LUCK TO THE HATTERS ON A FANTASTIC ACHIEVEMENT!

FRESHBAKE FARM FOODS

Chef Foods Limited,
Focus 31, Mark Road,
Hemel Hempstead, Herts. HP2 7BW
Tel: 0442 61116 Telex: 825552
Fax: 0442 212302.

Luton Tn 3 Arsenal 0



LOCAL HERO: Sub Ashley Grimes carries off Mark Stein in triumph at Kenilworth Road. The little striker had come in for his brother, made a goal and scored one, and Luton had beaten mighty Arsenal.



OVER THE TOP: Arsenal escape as a header by Steve Foster clears the bar with goalkeeper John Lukic beaten. The Arsenal No. 7, covering the post, is Ian Allison, now a Luton Town player.

THE LAST time Luton Town and Arsenal met in cup competition the Town were winners and the Arsenal boss was on his way out of office.

It happened in the FA Cup fifth round just over two years ago.

At Kenilworth Road the score was 2-2, with Ricky Hill and Mick Harford the Town's scorers and Ian Allison and David Rocastle getting the Arsenal goals.

A fortnight earlier Arsenal had beaten the Town 2-1 in a league match at Highbury, and were favourites to do it again in the cup replay.

But on a bitter winter's night, on a pitch that was part ice, part grass, the Town put up a marvellous defensive display to earn a replay. It was 0-0 after extra time.

The Town won the toss for the right to stage the second replay at Kenilworth Road, and Arsenal were shot

out of the cup 3-0, with Steve Foster and Mark Stein's goals sandwiching an own goal by David O'Leary.

Arsenal's directors were not amused, and within a fortnight manager Don Howe had resigned after discovering that Terry Venables, then in Spain, was being lined up for his job. But George Graham got it.

The Town had little time to celebrate the victory. Three days afterwards they were held 2-2 at home by

Everton in the quarter finals, and then lost the replay 1-0 at Goodison Park.

There was an ironic postscript to the Don Howe story earlier this month. He is now coach at Wimbledon, and they are going to Wembley for the first time in their history in the FA Cup final on May 14 . . . because they beat Luton Town in the semi-final at White Hart Lane.



BEST FOOT FORWARD: Mick Harford puts Arsenal under pressure as the Town seek a second goal after Steve Foster had volleyed in the first. This effort was blocked, but on the right is the moment when it became 2-0, in the 52nd minute. Mark Stein shoots, Lukic parries and David O'Leary, on the right, knocks the rebound into his own net.

The striker, whose elder brother Brian was out through injury, not only made this goal, but went on to get the first of his career in the 79th minute to finish off the Arsenal.



FAIRYTALE: Mark Stein makes Town dreams come true with a left-foot drive to make it 3-0 and set up a quarter-final tie with Everton, which the Town lost in a replay at Goodison Park.

Meet the men who play for Luton

STEVE FOSTER — CAPTAIN AND A CREDIT



ONE OF the most inspired transfers Luton Town ever completed was that of Steve Foster.

Some heads were scratched when it was known in the late autumn of 1984 that a cheque for £70,000 was about to be given to Aston Villa for a dominating centre-half whose reputation turned out to be less than fair to the man.

He started as a young striker with his home town club Portsmouth, made his name as a stopper with Brighton and won three England caps. But he ruffled FA feathers in May, 1983, when he took High Court action to try to overturn a suspension which kept him out of Brighton's FA Cup final side against Manchester United.

Villa's loss

He missed the game — Tony Grealish ran out for Brighton wearing the symbolic headband — and returned for the replay, in which Brighton were smashed 4-0.

At Villa Park Graham Turner and Foster failed to get on, with the result that Villa were happy to take a £130,000 loss on the price they had paid less than a year previously. It turned out to be Luton's gain as Foster, immediately appointed captain, led the 1985 cup run to the semi-finals, then helped stave off the threat of relegation which had been very real before he arrived along with Mick Harford and Peter Nicholas.

Twins on the way

For the record, big Fozzie is not the tearaway character we had been led to expect, and at 30 is now looking to the future. He has a young son and wife Joanne is expecting twins.

And the skipper is also moving into the other side of football, having been appointed player-coach last summer. Ray Harford's feelings of appreciation would fill the page — and so would those of a Sports Editor who is sure that Luton Town would have slumped back into the Second Division had not a new chairman come in and made the money available to buy, among others, a skipper who is a credit to football.



• Steve Foster . . . a skipper who is a credit to the sport.

Mick, and a final ambition achieved

• Mick Harford . . . the target for envious managers but his decision to stay with the Hatters has paid dividends all round.

MICK HARFORD'S Cup final ambitions paid dividends for both sides when Mick and Luton Town were negotiating over his new contract in November.

At 29, and on the fringe of England recognition, he was a target for envious rival managers. George Graham of Arsenal and John Lyall of West Ham were both ready to swoop for a striker who has developed all the attributes of a top class centre-forward.

Superb in the air, able to bullet in headers with the power many would welcome in their feet, he has natural skill and ball control as well.

Injuries, including a knee problem which took over a year to sort out completely, occasionally robbed the Town of his services, yet his attitude when he was out of the side helped to keep him at Kenilworth Road.

By the time his contract negotiations were under way the Town were one game away from the Littlewoods Cup semi-finals.

And he showed remarkable foresight when he explained why he had decided to stay at Luton. If he were to move, he said, it would be only to a club who might win something big, or to chase his personal ambition of winning an England cap.

Persuaded

David Evans persuaded Mick on both counts, the new contract was signed, and one of the two personal ambitions has been achieved, with Mick making his full England debut, after one B-team appearance, in Israel in February.

Born at Sunderland, Harford had a switchback career with Lincoln, Newcastle, Bristol City and Birmingham before he was bought for £250,000 from Birmingham in December 1984. He was one of the trio recruited in quick time to stave off the relegation threat then facing the Town.

Harford's response to the challenge has lasted ever since. He scored a point-saver on his debut at Leicester and has averaged a goal every other game ever since.

The biggest question-mark has been over Mick's fiery character, with aggression sometimes taken too far. But he says he is now realising the futility of that. He became a father for the first time last year, says he is becoming domesticated and now realises that temper flashes on the field are pointless. He has been sent off twice this season, harshly at Derby and deservedly at Everton, and admits: "They were down to my own stupidity. I've tried to learn my lesson."

OUTSTANDING PROSPECT. QUICK OFF THE MARK. GOOD AT PASSING. REASONABLE TRANSFER FEE.



VAUXHALL. ONCE DRIVEN, FOREVER SMITTEN.

VAUXHALL IS BACKED BY THE WORLDWIDE RESOURCES OF GENERAL MOTORS. CAR SHOWN ASTRA GTE 2.0i.

LUTON TOWN FC
0898 700 273

SOCCERLINE
News every day from Kenilworth Road, presented by BRIAN SWAIN, Sports Editor of the Luton News.
Calls charged at 38p per minute peak time, 25p off-peak, including VAT. An Airport Dateline Ltd service.

V.G. GREEN & SONS Ltd
Building Contractors
Amphill Road,
Shefford, Beds
Telephone: 0462-813232

WELL DONE & GOOD LUCK LUTON TOWN!

LUTON TOWN FC, LITTLEWOODS CUP FINALISTS



LUTON
TOWN
DRESSING
ROOM

11
EXTRA
PINTS
PLEASE



Unigate

Bringing
out the best

Please
give
blood

It won't
hurt but
it could help
save a life

LUTON BLOOD
DONOR CENTRE

ST GEORGES SQUARE,
BRIDGE STREET,
LUTON

Open Monday-Friday
8.30 am-4.15 pm
Plus Saturday morning
9.00am-12.15pm

Telephone Luton
414852

for an appointment or
JUST CALL IN

'Hats Off' and
Success to
Luton Town F.C.



LAING
MANAGEMENT DIVISION
Managing for Excellence

Management House Alma Street Luton Bedfordshire LU1 2PL
Telephone: 0582 424344 Telex: 058741 Facsimile: 0582 21311



"All the best
for the
Big Day!"

From everyone at

sappsworth
J. SAPPSWORTH LTD.
GLAZING AND DECORATING LTD.

For all your Glass and Glazing requirements please contact
92-94 Marsh Road, Luton
Tel: 573025/597505

WEMBLEY BOUND: Manager Ray Harford and the 21 players from whom Sunday's team will be selected pose for our photographer. Back row, left to right: Kingsley Black, Gary Cobb, Tim Breacker, David Oldfield, Marvin Johnson, Andy Dibble, Mick Harford, Les Sealey, Darron McDonough, Mal Donaghy, Richard Harvey, Rob Johnson and Mark Stein. Front row: Danny Wilson, Meka Nwajobi, Ashley Grimes, Brian Stein, Ray Harford, Steve Foster, Ian Allinson, Ricky Hill and David Preece.

IF AT FIRST . . .

WEMBLEY WIZARDS . . . or the "nearly men"? The question will be answered on Sunday when Luton Town's record-breaking season of nine months' hard work will be encapsulated into a couple of hours.

If the unthinkable happens, and Arsenal retain the Littlewoods Cup, a remarkable achievement will be buried by disappointment.

"It would be awful to get to Wembley three times and win nothing," said manager Ray Harford. And the fans agree with him.

THE LAST CHANCE

And that is one reason why Luton Town will be on their toes: it's their last chance this season to win a big trophy. And for some of their players it might be the last chance they will ever get.

They flopped in the Simod Cup final, against Reading. They failed to scoop the big prize in the Mercantile Credit Festival last week.

And if they are runners-up again on Sunday, it will be counted another failure — no-one remembers the losers in football.

The daft thing is that win or lose, Luton Town have set a record that even all-powerful Liverpool could not equal: three Wembley appearances in one season, plus a place in the FA Cup semi-final.

But the players will find that no consolation at all if they don't win the first major trophy in the club's 103-year history.

Yet this season's achievements, by a club living hand-to-mouth on tiny attendances, and under fire for its ar-

tificial pitch and ban on away fans, have been stupendous. Who else could storm down the cup trails so successfully after losing three top players through injury? Who else could win at Goodison Park against Everton — and against their full squad at that — in the Simod Cup? And who else could be hungrier for success? Or more deserving?

I believe Luton Town will raise themselves for one big effort and see off Arsenal, the team that likes to stifle the opposition and nick results like a pickpocket in a dark street.

It's an emotional belief as well. How I want to see Steve Foster repaid for his contribution to Luton Town. A Wembley loser with Brighton in 1983, he for one deserves the thrill of being a Wembley winner.

Ashley Grimes, also 30, was there with Manchester United without getting into the team. Brian Stein, another 30-year-old, was disappointed by Bobby Robson by being selected once for England, subbed, and then forgotten.

TEN-YEAR LOYALTY

Mal Donaghy would surely have won a cupboardful of trophies if he had taken the money and moved elsewhere instead of staying loyal to Luton Town for ten years.

Les Sealey and Andy Dibble both deserve medals for meritorious service, one for being in the front line and the other for plugging away quietly to win back his place in the squad.

You can go through the lot and find reasons why Luton Town's men will want to grab the chance of a lifetime at Wembley. To get there once is a dream. Three times is nearly unbelievable. I don't think it will turn into a nightmare this time. — BRIAN SWAIN.



JOIN THE HATTERS
ON THE BIG DAY

Full coverage begins at

1.05 as the 'Sportsound

Team' introduce the

players, trace the

journey to Wembley and

provide full coverage

from inside the stadium.

THE LITTLEWOOD CUP

FINAL ON —

BBGRADIO
BEDFORDSHIRE

630kHz-103.8
and 95.5FM stereo

BEDFORDSHIRE'S
LARGEST
HOUSE BUILDERS
WISH LUTON TOWN
EVERY SUCCESS
AT WEMBLEY



Current Connolly Developments

BEDS Amptill Bedford Leighton Buzzard Luton BUCKS Aylesbury	CAMBS Brampton Cambridge Hemingford Grey St Ives HERTS Hemel Hempstead
---	--



CONNOLLY HOMES
HOME IS TO BE HAPPY

Meet the men who play for Luton

The Stein brothers: a lethal double act

£2,000 signing!



• Brian Stein.

BRIAN STEIN: Wembley, in a testimonial season, is the reward Brian well deserves at 30 after astonishing service to Luton Town, his only pro club.

He was already 20, and happy with part-time soccer at Edgware Town and a job as a health authority clerk when then manager Harry Haslam signed Brian for the ludicrously small fee of £2,000.

It turned out to be Mr Haslam's last transfer purchase, and even when "Happy Harry" left in January 1978 no-one appreciated the shrewd investment he had made for the Town. Within three weeks of his arrival, Stein made his debut in a Football League Cup replay against Manchester City. He was in the Town's Second Division side a few weeks later, and scored three times in 10 appearances.

Steel and muscle

By 1982 he had added steel and muscle to his natural ability and was a major factor in the Second Division championship triumph as leading scorer with 21 goals. A persistent foot injury tested his character through long enforced absences, particularly in the Town's first season back in Division One. His goals were much missed, but few Town fans will ever forget the memorable day he ended a three-month injury lay-off by turning out, still in pain, at the great showdown match, at Maine Road, Manchester, in May 1983.

The Town had to win to avoid relegation and send Manchester City down in-

stead. City had to draw to save themselves and condemn the Town.

And Brian Stein, playing after a pain-killing injection, laid on the cross that enabled Raddy Antic to score the goal that will still be remembered as the most important in the Town's history.

England recognition, after appearances as an under-21 international, was overdue when Bobby Robson picked Stein and Paul Walsh to play against France in Paris four years ago.

Worst blow

That experience was the worst footballing blow the consistent striker had ever suffered. No-one realised at the time that France was the best team around — they won the European Championships under Michel Platini a few months later — and Walsh and Stein failed to hit form. England lost 2-0, Stein was subbed midway through the second half and Robson unaccountably scrubbed the name of Stein from his plans.

But none of his three Luton managers has ever thought of scrubbing him from the Kenilworth Road team-sheet, and he has become one of the most adept sharpshooters in football in the specialised role "in the hole", as the man picking up bits and pieces between midfield and attackers.

Wembley could hardly be a more fitting stage for Stein to show the world why he has been such a crowd-pleaser through more than 400 games for Luton Town.



MARK STEIN: Younger brother of Brian — he was 22 in January — and at 5ft 3ins, seven inches shorter than Brian, Mark has made a real impact this season after being on the fringe for so long.

He was signed on schoolboy forms, and came up through the youth team before breaking into the First Division side for occasional appearances that began in April 1984.

By the end of last season he had made only 29 full appearances, having seen the emergence of rivals like Mick Harford, Mike Newell, Meka Nwajobi and Micky Weir.

But as the foil alongside Harford, Mark is now enjoying his best run in the team. A Wembley medal might be the spur to persuade him to stay at Kenilworth Road when new-contract negotiations are due at the end of the season.



MEKA NWAJOBI: Twinkles is one of the cliché words to describe some footballers. But it fits Nigerian international Meka Nwajobi, who is as light on his feet as a ballroom dancer. It's his major hobby.

He was a late arrival in professional football, despite attracting big clubs when he was a schoolboy in London.

At 17, he decided to go through university before risking the precarious living that football offered. He qualified as a pharmacist at the University of Wales and toured the USA with a British Universities team on a trip that might have changed his life.

In London he had played a few games for Millwall reserves, and in the States Tampa Bay rowdies saw him with the universities team and tried to sign him. Meka preferred to return to Britain, take up his career, and play football as a part-timer with Dulwich Hamlet.

Spurs were one of the clubs who sent scouts to see him as stories of his exceptional attacking skill emerged. David Pleat got in first, paid a nominal fee, and at 24 Meka — Chukwuemeka to give him the full name that baffled most Luton tongues — took the plunge.

He played in three reserves games, scored in two of them, and made his First Division debut against Nottingham Forest in January 1984. The Town lost 3-2, but Meka scored the first and made the second for Paul Walsh.

It took him a year to establish a regular place in the league side, and a broken toe set him back just when he seemed to be hitting consistent form.

This season he was one of several attackers fighting for places as the Town looked for the right balance and combination, but in December he broke his ankle in the league game against Norwich.

He joined Ricky Hill and David Preece as one of the forgotten men in the treatment room — and like them battled back to fitness just in time to press claims for a Littlewoods Cup Final shirt.



ANDY DIBBLE: The goalkeeper who made a dramatic return to the limelight in the FA Cup semi-final. Story . . . facing page.



RICKY HILL: A Kenilworth Road favourite who broke his leg on Boxing Day. Story . . . facing page.

Preece's lonely fight for fitness



• David Preece

DAVID PREECE: If he is involved in this week's Wembley preparations it will be the best tonic an injured player ever received.

For in nearly four years at Kenilworth Road he has made only 86 league appearances — yet he has never been dropped.

Injuries have bedevilled the progress of a 5ft 5in dynamo of a player, the latest a serious ankle ligament problem sustained in the Littlewoods Cup victory at Wigan.

But having kicked off the cup campaign, he is in with a chance of being there at the final whistle as well, after six lonely months of solo work to get fit.

Now 24, he is a left-sided midfielder with the ability to operate wide in attack as well. David Pleat paid dearly for tracking him when he was making an impact at Walsall, his local club.

The Luton boss made more than 30 scouting trips before Walsall were persuaded to accept £150,000 for the busy little midfielder. And Mr Pleat got done for speeding on the motorway on the way home.

Instant hero

Preece was one of the men brought in to save the Town's First Division lives. They were bottom but one in the table when he was signed, to be followed a month later by Mick Harford, Steve Foster and Peter Nicholas.

He became an instant hero by scoring the goal that beat Aston Villa on his debut, but it has been a recurring battle against a succession of injuries ever since.

This season's six-month lay-off, however, had one extra inducement to a player who had to work on his own to regain fitness after an operation: the thought of Wembley. Long before the Town won the semi-final against Oxford Preece admitted his personal ambition: to be competing for a place in the side to play in the final.

More players on pages 23 & 24

LUTON TOWN FC
0898 700 273

SOCCERLINE
News every day from Kenilworth Road, presented by BRIAN SWAIN, Sports Editor of the Luton News.

Calls charged at 38p per minute peak time, 25p off peak, including VAT. An Airport Dateline Ltd service.

DRAMATIC RECALL FOR GOALKEEPER DIBBLE

NO-ONE was happier, nor more surprised, to be involved in the town's Wembley build-up than goalkeeper Andy Dibble.

He was Kenilworth Road's forgotten man, surplus to requirements and kicking his heels, expecting to end his contract and leave in the summer. But injury to Les Sealey changed his life.

Twenty-four hours before the Town played Wimbledon in the FA Cup semi-final Dibble was called out of the reserve squad shadows into the Wembley limelight. Sealey had been injured in a First Division game three days earlier, and was ruled out of the White Hart Lane match.

Crucial

And Dibble, who will be 23 next month, was pitchforked back into the side, at the start of one of the Town's crucial periods. "I couldn't believe it had happened," he said. "It didn't really sink in until I walked on to the pitch at White Hart Lane."

It was a lucky break that was overdue for a goalkeeper the Town had chased hard four years ago. And although Wimbledon won the FA Cup semi-final, Dibble had an outstanding game.

Born in Cwmbran, he had already been capped by Wales at under-21 level when the Town beat competition from several other clubs, including Watford, to sign him in June 1984.

Cardiff City valued him at £300,000, but a tribunal halved the fee. He ousted Jake Findlay, but sustained a knee injury at Old Trafford after playing only 13 games. Sealey stepped in, was in turn ousted through injury early in the 1985/86 season, then got back in once more when yet another injury struck down the young Welshman.

Permanent reserve football left Dibble frustrated as Sealey became the regular first choice, but his transfer request was turned down.

And 18 months ago yet another injury, this time a serious rupture of a knee ligament, put him out of soccer for six months.

A year ago he was playing, on loan, for Huddersfield, in the Second Division, with his career apparently in a backwater.

Jungle

In two years he played just one league game and one Simod Cup match for the Town, until the dramatic recall for the FA Cup semi-final. He had made only 21 league appearances in the whole of his time at Kenilworth Road.

"Of course I felt sorry for Les when he couldn't play against Wimbledon," said Andy. "But like the manager says, it's the law of the jungle when a team has to be picked."

The funny thing is that really I have enjoyed being a Luton player, despite all the bad luck I had with injuries.



• Andy Dibble ready for action during the FA Cup semi-final against Wimbledon.

A broken left leg, but now Ricky Hill battles back



• Ricky Hill.

WEMBLEY DREAMS seemed impossible for midfielder Ricky Hill when his season had to endure the nightmare of a broken leg as an unwelcome Christmas present.

One of the all-time great crowd-pleasers at Kenilworth Road, Hill seemed destined to be left on the sidelines throughout the town's march to the twin towers.

He will be 29 in a fortnight's time, and the Town were robbed of his gifted brain and feet when he broke his left leg at Goodison Park, Everton, on Boxing Day.

And after being a consistent member of the Town side for 11 years, another cup disappointment seemed inevitable.

Brilliant in the ability to create openings for colleagues and to throw the opposition off balance, Hill's only possible shortcoming was that he didn't score more goals. But he was the man on target at Villa Park three years ago, in an FA Cup semi-final in which Luton were robbed of the win they deserved . . . by Everton.

Debut

The Luton News Sports Editor recalls seeing Hill on his debut for the Town in a reserve match in November 1975. The 16-year-old boy was a revelation, but the match report gave no clue. "Keep quiet for a week or two," pleaded Harry Haslam, then the Town manager. "We haven't signed him yet, but we're going to. I think he will be a good 'un'."

The judgement was spot on. A few months later Hill made his league debut in the Second Division, going on as sub against Bristol Rovers, and whacking in a spectacular goal. And he was never dropped after that.

By the time Peter Reid's tackle at Everton interrupted a marvellous career Hill had played exactly 400 league games for the Town.

He has won three England caps, and huge respect among his fellow professionals. And when his contract came up for renewal last summer, chairman David Evans

was happy to award the best deal the Town have ever offered to a player to keep him at Kenilworth Road.

The broken leg was expected to keep Hill out of football for the rest of the season, but having been to Wembley once as an England player he fought his way back into contention for a recall just in time to challenge for another trip to the world's most famous stadium.

NEW HAIR LOSS OR BALDNESS

HAIR LOSS OR BALDNESS

INTER HAIR actually injects simulated HAIR INTO YOUR SCALP in such a way that even under close examination it is difficult to distinguish it from your own natural growth.

Baldness can be eliminated quickly or if you wish a gradual change of appearance this can be achieved by extending the treatment over a number of months.

INTER HAIR will be of interest to all men and women who are concerned about "hair loss" AND those who have previously had a hair transplant or use other replacement methods and only wish to gain the appearance of a "natural hair line".

FREE ADVICE

Hair Treatment Clinic
33A Cullingdon Street, Luton,
Beds, LU1 1RT. Tel: 0582 26875
CLINICS THROUGHOUT U.K. EST. APRIL 1984

LUTON TOWN FC
0898 700 273

SOCCERLINE
News every day from Kenilworth Road, presented by BRIAN SWAIN, Sports Editor of the Luton News.

Calls charged at 38p per minute peak time, 25p off peak, including VAT. An Airport Dateline Ltd service.

The Carpenters Arms
Harlington

PETE & HAYDEN
of the Carpenters Arms
WISH LUTON TOWN

EVERY SUCCESS AT WEMBLEY
Tel: Toddington 2384

The road to Wembley



● An airborne Mick Harford in action against Oxford in February. Luton won 1-1, 2-0.



● Mick Harford puts his best foot forward against Greg Downes in the "home" match with Coventry, played on a wet night at Leicester. The Town won 3-1 with Harford scoring twice and missing a last-minute penalty which would have given him his second Littlewoods Cup hat-trick of the season.

CONGRATULATIONS LUTON TOWN

We're with you all the way

LUDLOWS OF LUTON

Automotive Engineering, Welding and Industrial Trades Suppliers

'Industrial Paint Div.'
Thistle Road,
Luton, Beds.
(0582) 29883

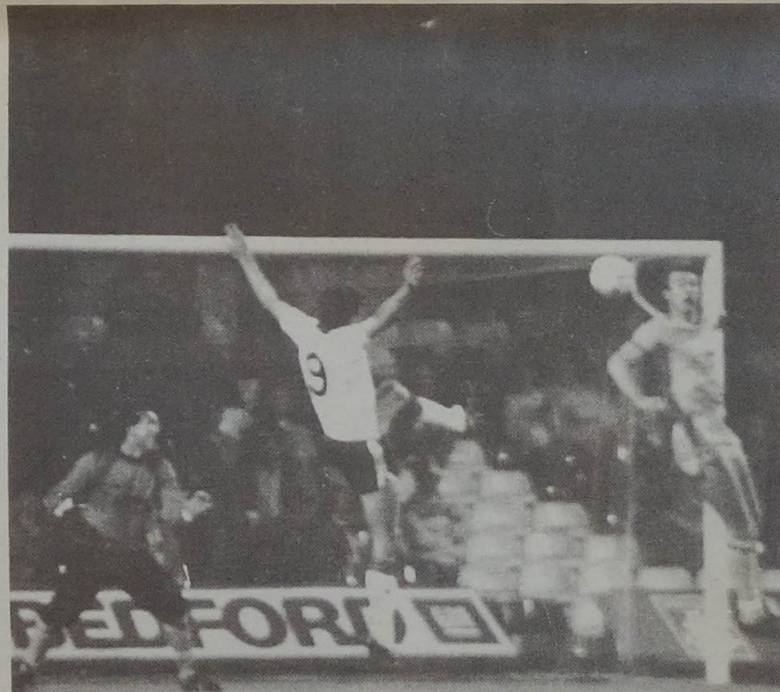


● Brian Stein veers round goalkeeper Jon Hallworth to score at Ipswich in November. Luton won 1-0.

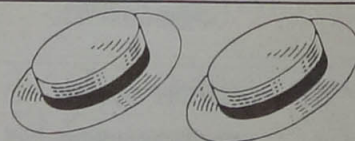


● Steve Foster, of Luton and Ron Futcher, of Bradford, in aerial combat in January. Luton won 2-0.

The Top Hatters



● Another Harford goal: one of Mick's hat-trick in the home game with Wigan as the Town won 4-2 at Kenilworth Road to add to their 1-0 success in Lancashire at the very start of the Littlewoods Cup trail.



WELL DONE YOU HATTERS!
FROM ONE QUALITY OUTFIT
TO ANOTHER!

JOHN POPE & SON
LIMITED
Men's Tailors • Outfitters
140 DUNSTABLE ROAD, LUTON
TEL: (0582) 30820

DAVID PLEAT — STILL A LUTON TOWN FAN

IF HE IS not there in body, Leicester City manager David Pleat will be at Wembley in spirit — and right behind Luton Town.

For he is the manager who left Kenilworth Road amid much controversy and bitterness in the summer of 1986 because he wanted to fulfil his ambition to be in charge of a big club.

He went to Spurs and took them to Wembley last year, at the end of his first season as manager at White Hart Lane. Tottenham were shock losers in the FA Cup Final to Coventry City, and by October Mr Pleat had resigned.

At Second Division Leicester he is embarking on a job similar to the one he began in Luton just over ten years ago.

When Harry Haslam resigned as manager of Luton Town in January 1978 David Pleat was a name few recognised. Until a few weeks before he had been youth and reserve team coach, in his second Luton Town career.

As a winger he was good enough to play for England at schoolboy and youth level, and was signed up by Nottingham Forest, the club he had always supported.

But at 19 he was discarded, and sold to Fourth Division Luton for £8,000. His trademark was a very quick short-step run, and the hurly-burly of Fourth Division soccer was not the place for ball-players to flourish.

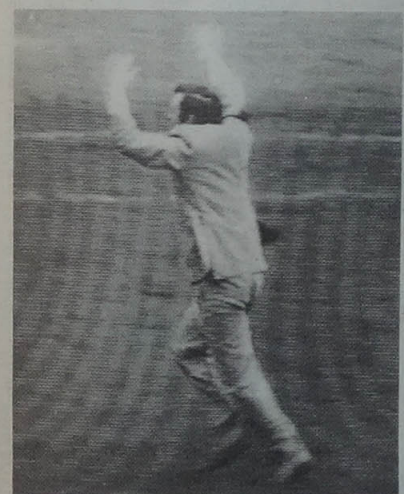
A back injury did nothing to help his playing career, and he turned to management, at Nuneaton Borough, after brief spells with Shrewsbury, Exeter and Peterborough. He was still only 30 when Mr Haslam brought him to Luton in 1975 to take over coaching of the Town's youngsters.

In January 1978 he became manager, and he assembled a cut-price team which eventually became the 1982 winners of the Second Division championship.

And if the name of David Pleat was beginning to be better known and respected in football at that time, he shot to prominence in the following season.

Luton Town stormed through the First Division with a riotous mixture of delight and despair. They were capable of scoring five in a match more than once — or conceding the same number.

There was a 4-4 draw at Stoke, and a memorable 3-3 at Liverpool when they used three goalkeepers. But by the last match of the season relegation was on the cards.



● The Pleat moment remembered by millions — his dance of delight as Luton avoid relegation by a last-minute goal against Manchester City in 1983.

Nothing less than an away victory at Manchester City could save them. And in the closing minutes of the season Raddy Antic, one of the Pleat bargain buys, rattled in the goal that condemned City to the drop, reduced grown men to tears on the Luton terrace, and set David Pleat dancing across the pitch in sheer joy. Television captured the moment, football rejoiced with Luton Town, and the foundation was laid for future success.

The big disappointment was in the FA Cup semi-final at Villa Park three years ago. Ricky Hill, another Pleat signing, put the Town ahead against Everton, only for the Town to lose in the closing minutes, after extra time.

But even that was turned to advantage. Mr Pleat had used the directors' money wisely a few months before to sign Steve Foster, Peter Nicholas and Mick Harford, and with the Wembley dream over Luton town concentrated on avoiding the danger of being sucked into another relegation dogfight.

Love affair

Mr Pleat's relationship with Luton Town — he had married a local girl and settled here to bring up his family — used to be like a love affair.

It deteriorated into a bitter divorce when Tottenham made their move for the Luton boss in the summer of 1986. David Evans battled through many hours, including late-night visits to the Pleat family home, to try to persuade his manager to stay.

Tottenham's lure proved too powerful. When the big chance comes, said Mr Pleat, you have to consider it if you're ambitious. Turn one down, and you might never get another opportunity.

His spell at Spurs turned out to be shorter than anyone expected, and that explains why when Mr Pleat talks about Luton Town he still slips into the old "we can do it" instead of "they can do it."

He said: "Luton's is always the first result I look for. I had 12 years with Luton, and only 15 months with Spurs.

"I'm delighted for the club, and whatever is said about me you can't take away the years of hard work we put in.

"We got the youth policy going, which is why I am glad to see Kingsley Black, Tim Breacker and Rob Johnson doing so well. And don't forget players like Frank Bunn and Gary Parker, who did well for us and were sold for good prices.

"At a club like Luton you have got to spend wisely, and hope that the youngsters coming through can take up the challenge.

"And I'm delighted for the players who deserve to go to Wembley. I remember persuading Ricky Hill and Brian Stein to stay with the club, and Wembley is a reward they deserve."

And Mr Pleat draws from experience to back up his view that the Town can beat Arsenal.

Underdogs' day?

"It might not be a bad thing for Luton to be the underdogs," he said. "Last year at Wembley Spurs were favourites to beat Coventry. Liverpool were favourites to beat Arsenal in the Littlewoods final. But the underdogs won each time.

"The same thing happened in the other Wembley games: in the FA Vase and FA Trophy, and even in the Rugby League final.

"It happened again in the Simod Cup final when most people expected Luton to beat Reading. It's not a bad thing to be the underdogs at Wembley."

The other major cause for Mr Pleat's optimism is his memory of the last time the teams met in cup competition, when Arsenal were beaten at the third attempt in the FA Cup (See Page 10).

"Arsenal couldn't cope with the subtleties of Brian Stein and the guts and determination of Mick Harford. And on Sunday I think it will be imperative for Luton to get the first goal. In 75 per cent of games the team that scores first doesn't get beaten. And if you get a second the others know they have got to score three to win and that can be a daunting feeling.

"My head tells me Luton can beat Arsenal. My heart says I hope they do.

"I'm not sure if I shall be at the match, because we have a couple of functions at Leicester with youngsters on Sunday.

"But I will be there in spirit, and I hope everyone enjoys the occasion. Even though the result was a disappointment when I was there last year, going to Wembley is a lovely experience."



● Moment of triumph for David Pleat, with the Division II championship cup in 1982.

Cable/Vision
BEDFORDSHIRE
TELEVISION FOR THE
SPACE AGE

and SCREEN SPORT

**Congratulate Luton Town F.C.
on a great season
and making the Final to Wembley**

SCREEN SPORT

Wide coverage of world class sports
into your living room 9 hours a night
seven days a week
See Screen Sport on . . .

Cable/Vision
BEDFORDSHIRE

YOUR LOCAL TV NETWORK

LUTON TOWN FC
0898 700 273

SOCCERLINE
News every day from Kenilworth
Road, presented by BRIAN SWAIN,
Sports Editor of the Luton News.

Calls charged at 38p per minute peak time, 25p off peak, including VAT. An Airport Dateline Ltd service.

Memories of town's 'chocolate foot' star

THE 1959 Cup Final was not the proudest moment in the life of Wembley centre-forward Bob Morton. His greatest thrill in over 500 games for the Town was promotion to the First Division in 1955.

"Wembley was a big let down, and I still feel sick when I think about it," he said.

"We were bad and the better team on the day won. We thought we only had to run out to win. Nobody ever thought that we might lose, particularly after we had beaten them 5-1 at Kenilworth Road a few weeks before.

"We couldn't put two passes together the whole match. We tried all sorts of switches. Billy Bingham was moved back into the middle, I came back, and Dave Pacey moved up, but it made no difference.

"But the greatest moment of my career was when we won promotion to the First Division in 1955. The club had never been there before, and it was great to feel that you were a member of a First Division club.

"The crowd at Kenilworth Road in those days was tremendous. It was packed every week. I think the crowd made a bit of a difference at Wembley. With the old running track round the pitch we felt so isolated from the fans when we went out there after being used to them breathing down your necks at Kenilworth Road."

Rated as one of the finest players never to get an England cap — he was capped for England B — Bob Morton thought one of Luton's biggest mistakes before the Wembley final was pre-match training on the Cedars sports ground at Leighton Buzzard.

"Wembley was notoriously soft, and we found this ground at Leighton Buzzard that really was soft and it took it out of us," he said.

His memory of the sacred turf was the give. "We sank three or four inches into the turf, and the ball was just light enough to float on the turf. That is how players got injured when they were stretching for the ball," he said.

A one-club man, Bob Morton was a gentleman of soccer and didn't receive a single booking in his long career which ended at Luton the year before England won the World Cup in 1966.

"I would have liked to have continued in management, but there weren't the opportunities then."

Instead he continued his career in non-league soccer as player-manager of Blechley Town. "Robert Maxwell was the club president. It was his first football club and I was his first manager. Now he owns half the Football League," laughed Bob.

In the fifties Bob was called "chocolate foot Morton." He laughed: "That came about when I scored a goal with my left foot, which was most unusual. Our manager then, Dally Duncan, who is now 80, called it my chocolate foot, and the name stuck. I still visit Dally who is living in retirement in Brighton."

If a First Division star reaches the Wembley Cup Final these days he can earn himself enough to set him up for retirement.

"When we went to Wembley our total income from the share out, including the players' pool and all the fund raising events, was £60 each," said Bob.

At the time he was earning the Football League maximum wage of £20 a week — "just a couple of quid more than they were earning at Vauxhall."

Bob, now 60, works for a firm in Leighton Buzzard which supplies pubs and clubs with glasses.

Success brings joy to former Hatter

POSSIBLY THE most talented inside-forward ever to pull on a Luton Town shirt, Eire international George Cummins, is still battling away for the good name of his old club.

George lives in Aintree, Liverpool, where the Town and their synthetic pitch wouldn't win any popularity stakes.

Cummins, who has been unemployed for the last 18 months, had been chocking on a diet of Liverpool. "I've got a job at Everton glory and is delighted that Luton's cup triumphs this season have given him a chance to get his own back."

"It is all Everton and Liverpool — you would think no other teams exist if you live here," he said. "They've been at Wembley in the last few years and are always talking about breaking records — I get a little tired of hearing it."

Recollections and advice from SOLDIER BLUE! THE COULD HAVE MADE



• Tony Gregory

WHEN LUTON Town returned from Wembley the day after the '1959 final to receive a rapturous welcome from thousands of fans outside the town hall one of the Wembley heroes was missing.

Squaddy Tony Gregory, the Town's left-winger, was doing his national service in the REME and had to report back to his barracks in Aldershot straight after the Cup Final.

"I always regret that I missed those tremendous scenes in Luton on the Sunday, and I blame my army service for be-

ing so below form in the biggest game of my life," he said.

Gregory did his two year stint in a football battalion and was given leave every weekend to turn out for Luton Town.

"The 1959 final was the biggest day of my career. But being in the army I had problems and couldn't train correctly. In addition to playing for Luton I had to play for the British Army once every four or five weeks. I played for the battalion every Wednesday and my camp every

Monday. I was battle weary by the time we got to Wembley.

"We had beaten Forest 5-1 at Luton three weeks previously and I was up against Bill Whare and had a good game against him. I think I was over-confident that I would have a good game again at Wembley. But we got off to a bad start and it really took us an hour to get our act together."

Tony Gregory still remembers the nightmare of the last minute when he was blamed by thousands of Luton fans for missing a sitter that would have saved Luton's life and taken them into extra time

DEVASTATION



DEVASTATED: The look that says it all. Luton's Eire international George Cummins walks disconsolately away as Billy Bingham receives his runners-up medal from the Queen. Waiting in line are John Groves, Allan Brown, Bob Morton, Brendan McNally and Ron Baynam.



FRUSTRATED: Another Town attack breaks down in the 1959 Final at Wembley as Forest goalkeeper Chick Thomson punches the ball away from the head of Luton's right-half John Groves.



• George Cummins — Town won at Liverpool

how you would do it all different next time."

When he left Luton Cummins had a short spell with Cambridge City before ending his career with George Britton at Hull City.

"When I stopped playing the spark went out of my life," he said. "I used to live for football and live for the next game."

He now lives for his wife and five children. Three of his four boys, George, Brian and Kevin were born in Luton.

George came to Luton for a trial a few years ago. Said Dad: "He didn't have the same feeling for the game. I used to cry if we lost a schoolboys match. I had to win and I was always living for the next game. Young George hadn't got the same feeling for it" he said.

kick-off.

"We had no manager at the time and were left to go our own way," he said. "Normally in a dressing room before a game a manager would clear everybody out except the players and would give some players some stick, praise others, and get them keyed up for the job and their minds concentrated on the game."

"It was all different at Wembley. We were just left sitting around. We could hear the crowd singing outside, and we lost concentration. We were enjoying the occasions and not worrying about the game itself. It was a nice day out. We were there. Everybody was having a good time, and it didn't really matter about winning."

"But afterwards, when you lose, and when it is all gone, you realise what you have lost and

the Hatters Wembley veterans

CUP CHANCE THAT SQUADDY A HERO!

against ten-men Forest.

"I had a reasonable game in the second half and in the last minute incident I headed against a post when I should probably have scored."

"I was five yards from the post when I got the ball and I had to head it back across goal from a very fine angle. I had to make up my mind in a split second and unfortunately my header hit the post and bounced out again. But it was a tremendous occasion and the memories of that day will live with me for a lifetime," he said.

Soon after, Gregory was transferred to

Watford. "I played three times better for them than I ever did that season at Luton," he confessed.

Now 50, Gregory lives at Tilston, a village between Chester and Malpas, and is in charge of international sales of the specialised contracts group as a director of Hunting Petroleum.

After finishing his league career with Watford he played for 11 years in the Southern League with Bedford Town and Hastings Town with former Luton Town

coach Tim Kelly, and also played for Dover before taking a job as player-coach with Barnet and finally player-manager of Stevenage.

He has watched Luton on tele and says: "I think they've a very good team now and have had for two or three seasons. The pitch does help them at home where visiting teams are deceived by the bounce of the ball. But Luton's style of football is good one touch stuff which is very exciting to watch."

"I want to see them go to Wembley and win, but anything can happen on the day."

CELEBRATION



• VICTORY celebrations could hardly have bettered the "welcome home" that the 1959 players received as they drove to a Town Hall reception the day after losing 2-1 to Nottingham Forest at Wembley.

Thousands turned out on a wet Sunday afternoon to cheer themselves hoarse as the players, surprised and tearful at the reception, arrived to take their salute on an open topped coach and were then introduced one by one to receive the adulation of the fans on the Town Hall balcony.

Eric Norris, then a young junior reporter on the Luton News, says he will never forget the emotion of that afternoon. "I had seen the Town win their way to Wembley through every round thanks to an understanding chief reporter who kindly fiddled the days-off rota, but I was one of the unlucky ones who couldn't get a ticket for the Final," he said.

"In fact I even missed that cup final on TV. When it was televised live I was sitting in our print works in Alma Street complete with boater and rosette listen-

ing to a black and white battery-operated radio which I bought specially for the occasion, and processing the racing results for that night's Saturday Telegraph Green-En.

"In those days the Cup Final was always shown again on the Sunday afternoon. But I even missed that because I was on duty among the welcoming committee round the war memorial. I was still wearing my Olney's boater and had blood streaming down my face where I was struck by a waving rattle."

perhaps it will be different later."

"We all wore straw boaters on the way to Wembley, and the thing I remember most about the day is Billy Bingham, down on his knees in the coach, holding out his boater, and signing 'Mummy' like Al Jolson."

Too relaxed

"Everybody kept telling us we had to be relaxed — and we were much too relaxed. That's why we lost. We didn't gee ourselves up enough, and I hope that when Luton go there again they will really get themselves worked up and ready for it."

Will Luton win? "If you had asked me a cou-

'Don't end up losers' says one who was



BY ERIC NORRIS

ONLY ONE member of the 1959 Cup Final squad — left-back Ken Hawkes — is still an ever-present at Kenilworth Road.

Looking forward to returning to Wembley, this time as a supporter, Ken says: "I never miss a game at home and also go to most of the away matches."

He still keeps up an active interest in the game as coach to Electrolux in the Key South Midlands League but says: "I hardly ever see them play because I am always watching Luton."

He remembered: "Losing the cup was the worst moment of my life. And we lost because we didn't prepare properly for it."

"We kind of did the right thing at the time. We went and asked clubs who had played at Wembley regularly for their advice, and they told us just to try to relax and the football will come. But far too many of us took the advice too literally and relaxed on the field."

He now realises that a cup final is a completely different set-up from a league match and different from the rounds leading up to it.

"You have to go out to win, and that is what Forest did when they ran all over us in the first 20 minutes — they went out to win the game. So I would advise Steve Foster and the lads to go for it."

Now 55, Ken Hawkes, who still lives in Luton at Brompton Close, said you can't compare football today with football in the fifties.

"You must move along with the times. We played the old 2-3-5 system in which the left-back, number three, played against their right-winger, number seven."

"And even if three was having a nightmare against seven, nothing was done to change it, and that was how it was at the end of the game. It's all different now, and even in local football, players are switched around so that a danger man is marked out."

"Full-backs now are fast and fit and attack like wingers. That was unheard of until Jimmy Armfield at Blackpool, George Cohen at Fulham, and Ray Wilson at Everton started doing it."

Ken strongly supports Luton's stand against soccer hooligans who were unheard of in his days as a player.

"Luton have taken a lot of stick over their membership scheme and plastic pitch, and I think they deserve better support from the rest of the clubs."

"At least Luton are trying to do something about the problems and other clubs in the First Division should support their efforts and give it a try for a year or so before they condemn Luton. As regards the pitch, most of the clubs have pitches like Luton on which they train regularly, so they can't say they are not used to them."

He admits that he was one of the players who opted to stay at home in Luton in the days leading up to the final, but advises the town to "get right away".

"There is a long wait before you go out at Wembley when the players are standing in the tunnel. I was chatting to Forest's Stuart Imlach. He said they had been down to the east coast and hadn't seen another human being for a week before the game."

"Coming down Wembley Way they saw all the crowds and it really got them wound up and ready to go out and win the match."

Why the broken leg player said sorry

THE CUP FINAL in 1959 was marred by an unfortunate accident when Nottingham Forest winger Roy Dwight — Elton John's uncle — broke his leg in a collision with Luton's right-back Brendan McNally.

Nearly 30 years later the Luton Eire international defender revealed that amazingly the pain-racked Dwight actually apologised to him for the incident before being stretchered off.

Brendan, 52, who is now installation manager for local firm Zenith Windows, and lives in Katherine Drive, said: "He kicked me on the chest. I said: 'That was a bit high Roy,' and he said: 'Sorry Brendan.'"

"As they were taking him off I said: 'Don't worry Roy. You'll be back in a few minutes' — but of course he wasn't. I have seen Roy Dwight several times since then and we always have a laugh about it."

McNally was also injured in the collision: "I did my cartilage and missed the international the following week. I had to go into hospital for an operation on my knee," he said.

His favourite memories of the time are of all colour and excitement cup fever generated in the town.

"All the shops and streets were decorated. There were pictures of the players and flags in the windows of nearly every house. When I look round the town now I don't see many flags, but

perhaps it will be different later."

"We all wore straw boaters on the way to Wembley, and the thing I remember most about the day is Billy Bingham, down on his knees in the coach, holding out his boater, and signing 'Mummy' like Al Jolson."

Too relaxed

"Everybody kept telling us we had to be relaxed — and we were much too relaxed. That's why we lost. We didn't gee ourselves up enough, and I hope that when Luton go there again they will really get themselves worked up and ready for it."

Will Luton win? "If you had asked me a cou-

ple of weeks ago I would have said no. But Arsenal haven't been doing so well lately, and I now think Luton could beat them. I really hope Luton do win. I have always thought that if we had gone back to Wembley again we would have won. You have to go there twice or more, and Luton are lucky because they are doing it in the same season."

Brendan had five seasons as skipper of Cambridge City in the Southern League after leaving Luton, and was then manager of Dunstable Town.

He still gets his enjoyment from non-league soccer: "I watch all the local football, and there aren't many local players in Luton that I don't know," he said.

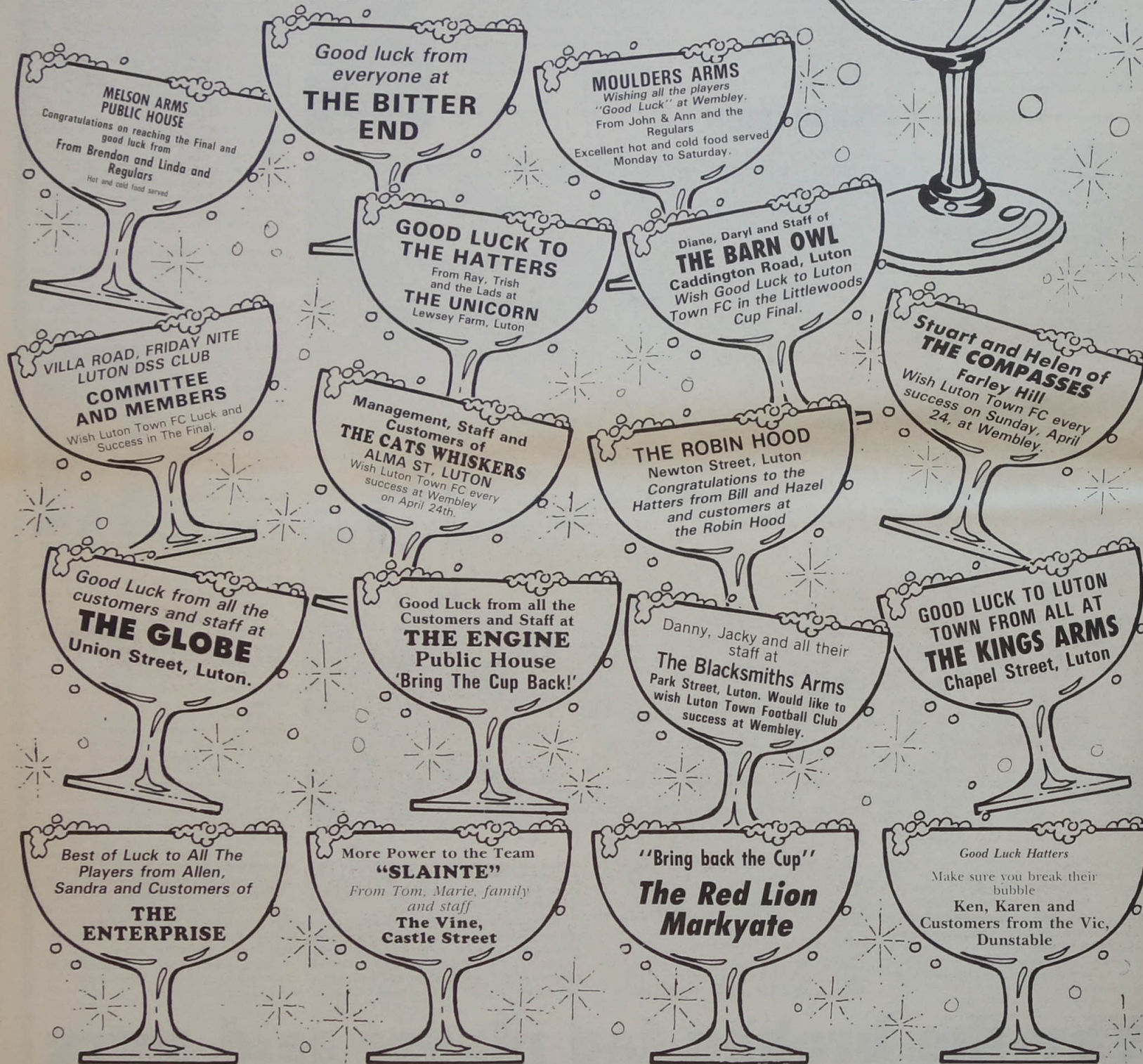


• Brendan McNally

Cheers!

LUTON TOWN F.C.

From Your 'Local'



All the best
on the big day
from your local
Newspaper
for sport

Luton News
AND
DUNSTABLE GAZETTE

JOHN MOORE WILL BE CHEERING FOR LUTON

Ex-manager
says: I'm
happier now

BY BRIAN SWAIN

JOHN MOORE, the manager who walked out of Kenilworth Road because he wasn't enjoying the life any more, will be cheering for the Town at Wembley.

"I'm still very much a Luton Town supporter," he said at his home in Luton. "I want them to win, and I know they can."

Mr Moore is a Scot who has spent just over half his life in Luton. He came as a 22-year-old defender from Motherwell in 1965, settled in the town, and rose from journeyman player to First Division manager.

As a consistent no-nonsense defender, he served Luton Town with distinction, winning a Fourth Division championship medal in 1968.

Two years later he helped the club to promotion again, into the Second Division, and by the time his Luton career as a player was over, in 1973, he had made 276 appearances for the club.

He played briefly for Brighton and Northampton, before becoming manager of Southern League Dunstable, where the art was all about keeping a club going with tiny bank balances and even smaller crowds.

Youth cup

David Pleat brought Moore back to Kenilworth Road to coach the youth team, where he had outstanding success. The Town's juniors reached the FA Youth Cup semi-final under Moore's guidance.

By the time Mr Pleat left, to go to Spurs nearly two years ago, John Moore was reserve team coach, and promoted to the top job.

And he set a record in his one season in charge — Luton Town finished seventh in the First Division, their best-ever place. It would have got them into European football in pre-Heysel days.

He also had the satisfaction denied to most managers — of beating mighty Liverpool twice in one season, with seven goals put into their net. It was 4-1 in a First Division fixture at Kenilworth Road, possibly the Town's best performance of the season, and 3-0 in an FA Cup second replay. That was the night Kenny Dalglish became famous for moaning about the synthetic pitch and for saying that Luton Town ought not to be in the cup anyway, because they had failed to get to Anfield earlier that month for the first replay.

What's the difference between Kenny Dalglish and Boeing 707? was the question posed in a Fleet Street cartoon. The Boeing stops whining when it gets to Luton was the answer that gave many of us a laugh. But if Mr Moore enjoyed the joke, he didn't let on.

At his very first Press conference, on the day he was introduced as the new manager in June, 1986, Mr Moore said: "I'm not the type who gets excited easily."

Today, as an office worker in a double glazing company, he has no regrets about his management style and the criticisms it provoked.

Feelings

He wanted the team to do the talking. And when the manager needs to, particularly at post-match press conferences, he hid his emotions.

He staggered and almost silenced the Press room at Kenilworth Road on the night Liverpool were taken apart. "You must be elated by that performance and result," suggested a reporter. "Certainly not," replied a manager who never looked at ease on such occasions. The Fleet Street writers never understood the depths of the manager they tried to draw out.

He admits now that he deliberately hid his true feelings. "When I left the ground that night and got into my car to go home I certainly did feel elated. I knew we had done something special."

LUTON TOWN F.C.
0898 700 273

SOCCERLINE

News every day from Kenilworth Road, presented by BRIAN SWAIN, Sports Editor of the Luton News.

Calls charged at 38p per minute peak time, 25p off peak, including VAT. An Airport Dateline Ltd service.



● Tense times for John Moore, seen here when manager of the Town.

"But I didn't want to say that in the Press conference. I didn't want to sound as if I was crying. In the same way, when we lost, I didn't let people know how miserable I sometimes felt about defeats."

To this local sports editor, who had known Mr Moore as a player, and had travelled with him on pre-season tours in this country and abroad, Mr Moore was a different man.

In a one-to-one meeting he would talk easily and confidently about football in general, and Luton Town in particular. Words were always chosen carefully, and sometimes withdrawn or amended. But with a crowd of reporters the determination to avoid saying the wrong thing led to continual misunderstandings, with the lack of communication at the level the Press wanted being mistaken for surliness.

Happier

And after just one season Mr Moore decided that the problems and pressures of the job were not for him, and he resigned.

"There are a lot of things about professional football that I miss," he said. "But on the whole I am a happier man now that I am out of it. I have regular working hours, and I don't have to take the job home with me."

"I'm not out working several evenings a week. I've got more time for my family. There's a danger when you are heavily committed to football that you don't see your children growing up."

Mr Moore is still an occasional visitor to Kenilworth Road on match days, but is also often to be seen on the public parks on Sundays, watching local teams battling for points in games far removed from places like Anfield and Old Trafford.

He also watches Arlesey Town quite often — to see his 18-year-old son Scott playing in midfield. "I don't know if he will be good enough to consider being a pro footballer," said Mr Moore. "But he enjoys the game, and that's the most important thing."

Emotions

With his wife Pat and their two other children, Graham, 16, and Paula, 14, the former manager says that his family life is more satisfying and complete thanks to the extra leisure time he has.

And like all Town fans, Mr Moore is looking forward to seeing the team at Wembley. "I don't know how I will feel when I see them walk out," he said. "I keep my emotions in check, but I expect it will be an emotional moment."

"I suppose that personally I feel a little disappointment that it didn't happen when I was at the club. But I am absolutely delighted that it has happened now."

"Everything I ever did at Kenilworth Road was for the good of the club, and this will be a great day for them. I'll be pleased to be there."

"I couldn't get to the Simod Cup final, and because I work Saturday mornings I haven't been able to go to away games this season."

"And I haven't seen them lose once... I hope they keep that up against Arsenal!"

That defeat still rankles

LUTON'S Wembley right-half John Groves is still haunted by the 1959 cup final against Nottingham Forest — he is living in the heart of the "enemy" camp in Derby.

"Coming from Nottingham, losing to them at Wembley hurt like mad," he said. "And unfortunately even today the final is the only game that people seem to remember."

"Luton had a lot of great games that season, but all people want to talk about is the final — and we lost that one."

The topic comes up regularly. "When people meet me in the local they always say 'You played for Luton in the 1959 final when Forest won the cup.'"

"It has always rankled a bit with me since I came back to Derby, because I probably see more of Forest and Derby County than any other teams, and my friends are all Forest fans."

"Getting beaten is the only thing about the final that sticks in my mind. That, and the fact everybody seemed more relaxed on the day than I would ever have thought possible."

"I wasn't relaxed. I couldn't relax before any game — they were all the big one to me."

John, who spent two years at Bournemouth after leaving Luton, has worked for Courtaulds for the past 20 years. But although he has a desk top job he is pretty fit.

He loves walking round the rugged countryside in the neighbourhood and still



● John Groves.

turns out regularly for the ex-Derby County XI at the age of 54.

He still admires the quality of the football that Luton Town serve up. "They have a reputation for it," he said.

"I have a theory that the teams down south do play a bit more football — we are cloggers up here. All the teams in the south play good football, with the possible exceptions of Watford and Wimbledon."

The bittersweet Wembley memories

WEMBLEY Stadium holds a mixture of bitter and happy memories for Margaret Turner, the widow of goal-ace of the fifties, Gordon Turner, who died tragically of a wasting disease 11 years ago.

The verdict of all the old Luton fans, even today, is that Gordon should have been in the 1959 cup final team. They believe his goal-power would have won the FA Cup for Luton.

But Gordon, who as 12th man didn't even get his name on the team list in the programme, spent a frustrating 90 minutes sitting in the stand watching Luton slump to defeat against Nottingham Forest. There were no substitutes in those days.

Skipper Syd Owen and trainer Frank King, who between them selected the side, kept faith with the line-up that had played in all the previous rounds, which meant no place for Turner, who scored 160 goals for the club.

He had lost his place before the cup run began in January through a loss of form which was not helped by a leg injury. Although he returned to play in all the league matches at the end of the season, and helped hammer Forest 5-1 at Kenilworth Road only three weeks previously, he could not break into the cup side.

"They dropped him after all he had done for the club," said Mrs Turner.

Her greatest day at Wembley was when her son Steve played for Barton Rovers in the FA Vase final against Blue Star in 1978.

It put the family record straight. "To see Stephen coming out at Wembley with Barton was my greatest thrill. He went there again with Enfield, but unfortunately was on the losing side on both occasions," she said.

Will the Town be winners on this occasion? "You never know in football," said Margaret. "Arsenal are a good team, but we have beaten them a few times."

GOOD LUCK TOWN
From all at
Scanners Video
in Amptill
We're proud of
our little club

COME ON YOU HATTERS
Let's have a season
to remember and
make my dream a
reality. From John
Pyper, Life Long
Supporter and BTC
President

All the best from the 'Newsagents'
K=D, Trip, Pandora's,
Smokes, Smokes,
Mr Kipling, B+S,
Pastels and
Waldeck.

LUTON TOWN
have found a new
location for their
ground.
It's called
Wembley!
Good luck
from Rich



• Frank King at home last week.

'Pre-match mayhem is recipe for disaster'

"GET AWAY from it all. Forget the razz-matazz and concentrate on the job of beating Arsenal."

That's the advice to Luton Town from the man who was in charge of the team when the club had its first taste of Wembley in 1959.

Dunstable Road chiroprapist and physiotherapist, Frank King, was the Town's trainer and physio when they went to Wembley for the 1959 Cup Final against Nottingham Forest. In the absence of a manager, he and skipper Syd Owen, were responsible for picking the team.

If he and Syd hadn't shown loyalty by sticking to the same line-up that had played in all the previous rounds, and above all if the side had gone to Wembley with the right attitude, he thinks they would have won the Cup — and he wants today's Hatters not to fall into the same traps.

"They must get right away from Luton for a few days before the final," he said. "In 1959 I wanted to take the players away to Blackpool before the final. But it was entirely in their own hands. They wanted to stay in Luton."

"They players afterwards blamed the club because people were knocking on their doors at midnight and in the early hours of the day of the match pleading for tickets for the game. But it wasn't the fault of the club. We had no manager and the players decided. Even Syd Owen wanted to stay in Luton."

"The build-up to the final was chaos. It was nearly a 24-hours a day job for us in the few weeks leading up to the game."

"It was a hell of a job trying to train for the game. All our routine was thrown out of gear by photographers and TV people — we had a contract with BBC and had to upset our routine to meet their wishes."

"There were always ticket touts around the ground after the players. Stan Flashman was there, and another of the big boys from London."

"The players were also constantly pestered by players from other clubs ringing up and asking them to sell their tickets for them. Everybody was out to buy and sell tickets at inflated prices. Football was forgotten, but if we had gone away four or five days before the final we could have settled down to a little normality."

Even on the big day Luton Town were so drunk with the occasion that they found it impossible to take the job

BY ERIC NORRIS

of beating Nottingham Forest seriously enough.

"We all had straw hats and when we drove up Wembley Way in the coach we were waving our boaters at everybody," said Frank. "The players were singing all the stupid songs you could imagine as we drove up to Wembley Stadium."

"We were all laughing and joking when we went into the dressing room. It had always been my practice before every cup-tie to clear the dressing room of everybody except the 11 players and the 12th man 30 minutes before the game. Everybody had to stop laughing and talking and concentrate on the game to come. That didn't happen at Wembley."

"Everybody was coming in and out. We had three CID men in there asking questions because some foreign diplomat had been robbed — directors kept poking their heads round the door wishing us luck right up to kick-off time — reporters and BBC men were still coming in and so did FA officials."

"The players were still in celebration mood. Billy Bingham didn't take his straw hat off until it was time to run out on the pitch, and as they went out up the tunnel the lads were still laughing and joking," he said.

As a result the Town got a rude awakening when the game kicked off. "We let them get right into it," said Frank. "Little Stuart Imlach (who later became a Luton Town player) went like a bomb and left Billy Bingham who was supposed to be marking him, for dead."

"We were already two goals down when Roy Dwight went off with a broken leg. Dave Pacey scored for us in the second half, but even then our tactics were all wrong. Syd Owen liked to play defensively with wing-halves Pacey and John Groves around him. But at that stage everybody should have been pushing up for an equaliser."

"I went to the touchline and shouted for everybody to go on attack. Instead Syd switched Bob Morton, who was playing centre-forward, with Pacey and we still had five men at the back and Forest hung on to their goal lead to the end."

On reflection Mr King said: "It wasn't the best day of my life. The result spoilt that, and when we went

to the Cafe Royal after the game for the banquet everybody was trying to be cheerful, but we were all dispirited."

The fact that goal-ace Gordon Turner was left sitting on the touchline as 12th man was another bone of contention among the fans after the final.

"Syd and I always picked the team," said Frank. "We then submitted our selection to a directors' sub-committee of Tommy Hodgson, Fred England and the chairman, Percy Mitchell, but they never once altered it," he said.

"It had been the same team for every cup tie, and on reflection we should have left somebody out for Gordon Turner or Jimmy Adam, but when it came to the final nobody had the courage to drop any of the players who had come through all those matches."

He'll never forget the scenes in George Street and outside the Town Hall when the team drove home the following day waving their boaters from the top of an open top coach.

Palladium

"There must have been four or five thousand people shouting and cheering. That was tremendous, but after it the team had to go straight back to London to appear on the TV show, Sunday Night at the London Palladium."

The next day the team were given another banquet by Luton's lady mayor, Barbara Andrews, and on the Tuesday it was straight off to Germany for a three weeks tour. Frank King, a former Everton and Derby County goalkeeper, who is now 71, was sacked by Luton Town in October 1964 but had already prepared for a departure from football by starting his own practice in Dunstable Road.

"I still love Luton Town," he said. "I would love to go back to Wembley with them. I think they can beat Arsenal. Luton don't get the recognition they should in the national papers — but they're as good as any team in the country. They proved that against Liverpool last year," he said.

His favourite player: "Bob Morton was the best. He was a smashing lad and an inspiration to everyone. He is the kind of player I used to tell the youngsters to model themselves on. He was always neat and tidy and well-mannered and I don't think he was ever even spoken to by a ref in the whole of his career."

'That defeat could be a blessing'

— Ron Baynham

A PLANT maintenance man with Britannia Airways at Luton Airport, Luton Town's 1959 Cup Final goalkeeper, Ron Baynham, believes the Town's defeat by Reading in the Simod Cup Final could be a blessing in disguise.

"We beat Forest 5-1 a few weeks before we played them at Wembley and I think that made us over-confident," he said.

"Losing in the Simod Cup should put the Town players in the right frame of mind to beat Arsenal when they go back to Wembley. If you are going to lose, it is better to lose in the weakest cup of the lot."

Capped three times for England, Baynham, who is now 57, said: "Going there for the cup final was the greatest thrill of my life — it was better than being capped by England."

"It was a tremendous experience and an unforgettable day at Wembley. The Luton crowd, with all their boaters, looked tremendous. No other club can mount a smart turnout to match that."

"But the thing I remember most is getting there. We were a struggling First Division side, but every time we played in a cup match we just hit it off, everybody was on song, all the way through to the final. The lads played absolutely great."

He said the worst match to play in was the semi-final. "I was awake at night worrying about it. I couldn't sleep for thinking that one mistake by me would stop us going to Wembley. It was nerve-racking before those matches."

And he paid tribute to his old captain, Syd Owen: "I got three caps for England. It wasn't me that won the caps, it was Syd. We had a terrific understanding between us, and Syd's play as a centre-half in front of me did more to get me in the England side than anything I did myself."

Ron hung up his boots in 1966.



• Ron Baynham.

Meet the men who play for Luton

INJURIES HIT TOWN EFFORTS

THE TOWN used 20 players to get to the Littlewoods Cup final, in a season bedevilled by injuries.

Ricky Hill, David Preece and Meka Nwajobi all had to drop out of the cup run, while Micky Weir opted out.

Six players appeared in all

seven cup-ties: Les Sealey, Tim Breackner, Steve Foster, Mal Donaghy, Danny Wilson and Brian Stein.

Rob Johnson, Mick Harford and Darron McDonough appeared in six, and Ashley Grimes and Mark Stein each played in four.

Weir went home to Scotland after the first three, and Kingsley Black made two full appearances. He made another as sub, as did Nwajobi and David Oldfield. Hill, Preece, Nwajobi and Richard Harvey made one appearance in the tournament.



DARRON McDONOUGH: A year ago Blackburn, Bradford, Barnsley, Shrewsbury and Reading were the destinations Darron was heading for, instead of Wembley. After spending all his career with Oldham in the Second Division, he was transferred to the Town in September 1986, for £85,000, with then manager John Moore explaining that he wanted more cover for defence and midfield.

McDonough came with the reputation of being a utility man — Oldham boss Joe Royle even told the Town that McDonough looked useful in a centre-forward's shirt.

On transfer deadline day a year ago, with McDonough unable to claim a regular place in the First Division side, his former Oldham manager Jimmy Frizzell, who had moved to Maine Road, offered £75,000 to take him to Second Division Manchester City.

McDonough, whose career had hit a doldrums patch, was willing to go, but the Town refused the offer and City declined to increase it.

A few months later Peter Nicholas was a surprise departure from Luton to Aberdeen, McDonough replaced him as the hard man of midfield, and has become a regular.



KINGSLEY BLACK: A left winger who was signed after completing his schooling in Luton, Kingsley, 19, has emerged as the most exciting young prospect of the season.

He adapted to a midfield role and might just be a revelation on the wide pitch at Wembley if he gets the chance.



RICHARD HARVEY: Holder of nine England caps as a schoolboy, and still only 19, Richard was quietly brought through the junior sides to make his First Division debut in a 1-0 victory against QPR in November 1986. He combines composure at fullback with the confidence to drive forward to support attacks.



DAVID OLDFIELD: Born in Perth, Australia, 19 years ago, but brought up in Newport Pagnell, striker David is in his fourth year with the Town. He enjoyed a remarkable senior debut, scoring both goals when Luton beat Everton 2-1 at Goodison Park in the Simod Cup in February.



ROB JOHNSON: Ten years of loyal service has gone almost unnoticed by many. But 25-year-old Bedford-born Rob has filled in as a midfielder or defender whenever asked, despite being less than delighted at his role as a man on the fringe of regular first team football.

Ian Allinson's arrival was the latest blow to a man who asked for a transfer in the hope of finding regular football. But Allinson was cup-tied with Stoke, and Johnson is set for a Wembley appearance despite the odds against him.

His career has been something of a battle. Four years after joining the Town as an apprentice he was in the first team squad in the summer of 1982, but suffered a horrific knee injury on a pre-season tour of Scandinavia.

It was ligament damage which normally ends careers, but after a year's surgery and treatment he was back in business. He made his debut as right back, but in his second game, at Sunderland, the other knee suffered a similar injury.

So his first two years in the Town's squad amounted to three major operations, one and a half games, and a four-match loan spell at Lincoln.

BOBBERS TRAVEL CLUB



Wembley Here We Come!
Good Luck
LUTON TOWN
WERE WITH YOU ALL THE WAY!

From All the Committee and Members of the Away Travel Club

Filmergraphic Press Limited

for unbeatable service in design, phototypesetting, finished artwork and printing

Wishing the Hatters every success for Wembley

Bainson House, Alton Road, Luton, Beds. LU1 3NS
Telephone: (0582) 36407 & 31474
Fax No: (0582) 25244



• AS THEY WERE: Frank King, seated, with some of the 1959 squad.

30 years of service to local industry
Road haulers of repute
R. W. HARVEY & SON
Road haulage contractors
45 Bedford Road, Sandy, Beds. SG19 1ES
Harvey's Transport and Luton Town are really going places

Bulk trailers, flat trailers, crane trailers, rigid vehicles
RHA Telephone: Sandy (0767) 80623



LUTON INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT, LUTON LU2 9LY. TELEPHONE: (0582) 405100. TELEX 826409. PRESTEL 20291.

A GOALDEN OPPORTUNITY TO WISH OUR TEAM EVERY SUCCESS



Meet the men who play for Luton



MAL DONAGHY: Was there ever a bigger soccer bargain than the £20,000 paid to Larne for a central defender who was put straight into the Town's league side in the summer of 1978, and has been performing consistently ever since?

A quiet, thoughtful man, the perfect composed foil to Steve Foster, Mal has now overtaken Ricky Hill as the longest-serving Town player with over 400 games behind him.

In ten years he has never been dropped, and the consistency has run through all levels of football since he helped the Town win the Second Division championship in 1982.

He earned his 50th international cap for Northern Ireland last summer, and has played in two world Cup campaigns, with a third well possible.

Few men will have deserved a testimonial year more than Mal, who will complete his tenth year with Luton Town in the summer, a couple of months short of his 31st birthday.



DANNY WILSON: The first signing Ray Harford made as manager, and a midfielder who might have gone to Oxford last summer instead of opting for Luton. The broad Lancashire accent belies his Northern Ireland caps, through Irish parentage, for a man who has worked for more than ten years to become an overnight success at Kenilworth Road. Born at Wigan, he played in the lower divisions, with Bury and Chesterfield before Brian Clough snapped him up for Nottingham Forest. But after only ten league appearances and one goal he was shunted out to Scunthorpe United on loan before Brighton signed him.

They accepted the Town's cheque for £150,000 last summer, with Wilson thinking hard before deciding that Ray Harford's spiel was more impressive than the offer Maurice Evans made on behalf of Oxford.

At 28 he seems set for the best spell of his career after the long road from Scunthorpe to Wembley.



LES SEALEY: At 30 he was a certainty for the trip to Wembley until injury in a midweek league match robbed Les of his place in goal.

A sickening clash of heads with Sheffield Wednesday's Lee Chapman just over a fortnight ago left Sealey unconscious, put him in hospital for 24 hours, and then out of the team for the FA Cup semi-final against Wimbledon.

It was an experience Les and replacement goalkeeper Andy Dibble both knew could be a personal tragedy. The Town paid Coventry City £80,000 for Sealey five years ago after failing to persuade Bobby Gould to take Jake Findlay in part-exchange.

So three experienced goalkeepers were competing for one place. A cartilage injury knocked Les out of the side the following summer, and he played on loan for Plymouth in the Third Division . . . until Dibble got injured. Sealey became undisputed Number One, only to suffer the agony of losing his place again earlier this month.



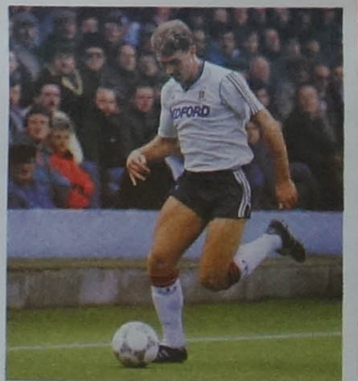
ASHLEY GRIMES: The 30-year-old left back, whose sweet left foot is so good it more than makes amends for possible shortcomings in the air or in the other boot, is one of the few Town players with Wembley experience. In 1983 he was a midfielder with Manchester United, in their squad for the FA Cup final against Brighton, but confined to the sub's bench.

But he has been back with the Republic of Ireland, and his career with Luton has been a remarkable case of a player overcoming adversity.

Dublin born, Grimes made his name at Old Trafford but was on his way out at the time of the 1983 cup final. Coventry boss Bobby Gould beat David Pleat to the deal in the close season that year, but the £200,000 transfer to Highfield Road was not an unqualified success.

A year later Ashley moved to Kenilworth Road, became the regular left back, but was hit by a back injury after only nine games. By the time he had suffered 12 months out of football Mitchell Thomas had emerged and Grimes was staring Third Division football in the face.

Lou Macari, his old pal from Old Trafford days, wanted to take him to Swindon and David Pleat agreed to the deal. But then Pleat left Luton and the deal was put on ice. Thomas was snatched by Spurs, and Grimes stayed. And the Wembley reward is only right considering the marvellous left-foot free kick he cracked into the Oxford net to kill off the visitors in the second leg of the semi-final.



TIM BREACKER: At 22 the fair-haired right back has become one of the most consistent members of the Town's side since breaking into the side three years ago, and has already passed the 100-game milestone.

Born in Bicester, he was an Oxford United supporter as a youngster, but the Town's scouts first noticed him in school soccer after his family moved to St. Neots. They took him on as an apprentice in the summer of 1981 and 18 months later came firm evidence of his potential when he was a member of the Town team which set club history by reaching the semi-finals of the FA Youth Cup. The squad included Mitchell Thomas, Gary Parker, Stacey North, Ray Daniel and Mark Stein.

A year later Kirk "Basher" Stephens moved to Coventry, and Breacker stepped into the vacancy and made it his own, and England under-21 recognition followed.

YOURS FOR THE PRICE OF MICK HARFORD'S BIG TOE.



VAUXHALL. ONCE DRIVEN, FOREVER SMITTEN.

VAUXHALL IS BACKED BY THE WORLDWIDE RESOURCES OF GENERAL MOTORS. CAR SHOWN CAVALIER LX.

LITTLEWOODS Cup souvenir published by the LUTON NEWS, Grosvenor House, Alma Street, Luton, LU1 2PL. Telephone 21222 for editorial, advertising and invoicing. DUNSTABLE GAZETTE, 83 High Street North, Dunstable LU6 1JJ. Tel: (0582) 608811. FAX: Luton (0582) 402135. All other departments, St Albans 66166. Published by Home Counties Newspapers PLC, 63 Campfield Road, St Albans. © Home Counties Newspapers PLC, 1988. Origination and printing by Goodhead Press, Launton Road, Bicester (0869) 253322.



LUTON TOWN FC

0898 700 273



News every day from Kenilworth Road, presented by BRIAN SWAIN, Sports Editor of the Luton News.

Calls charged at 38p per minute peak time. 25p off peak, including VAT. An Airport Dateline Ltd service.