



Come on you HATTERS



Issue No.
44

LUTON TOWN SUPPORTERS CLUB

Spring
2000

**FOREIGN
PLAYERS-
asset or liability?**



VIEW FROM THE CHAIR

Did anyone even realise that he qualified to play for Nigeria?

The problem of clubs losing players during the season worsened with the recent news that the Cayman Islands have secured the services of, amongst others, Barry Hayles of Fulham. Hayles qualifies not because he was born in the Cayman Islands but as a naturalised British citizen who has not yet played for any of the home countries. As such he can take his pick of the British colonies and can hardly be blamed for accepting international recognition and reported pay cheque of £70,000.

Increasingly, this issue will be taken into account by lower division managers when looking at potential transfer targets. I suspect that Lennie Lawrence would not contemplate signing any player, however promising, who stands even an outside chance of being called up for Outer Mongolia during the domestic season. the reality for clubs at the game's lower levels is that they simply cannot afford players to recompense and, as important, they can ill afford the cost of an increased squad to cover these absences.

It is imperative that the governing bodies sort the problem out quickly to avoid the situation of clubs not

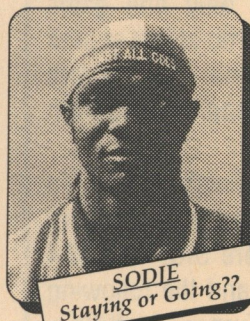
wanting to release their players for international duty or simply avoiding signing overseas players in the first place. In the long term, either scenario would be to the detriment of the national teams who would either be deprived of the players, or will find their players lacking the necessary league experience to enhance their international performances.

My belief is that action needs to be taken on two fronts:

- national football associations must meet both the cost of players salaries and insurance for any illness or injury picked up on international duty while players are absent for the domestic season playing for their country.
- a consolidated international fixture diary needs to be put in place so that everyone in the game worldwide knows when the major international fixtures will take place. If the European, African Nations and CONCAF games all took place at pre-selected dates, then all national leagues could take a break at that time.

However, would you fancy watching football on a summer's afternoon? Because that's what FIFA are proposing with a football

Continues over....



SODIE
Staying or Going??

would encounter when they signed Efetobore Sodje from Macclesfield Town on a Bosman last summer.

Inside this edition of the LTSC Newsletter...

- TOWN ON TOUR NEWS!
- HATTERS CLASSICS - Pot Belly & the International 1949/50 season
- PLAYER & GOAL of the Season Preview 2000
- VOICE OF THE FANS LETTERS PAGE
- PREDICT-THE-SCORE COMPETITION - Update
- Report on Cliff Bassett Guest Speaker Evening
- PLAYER PROFILE - Matthew Spring

.... and much more!!

Exclusive

Read our Vice-President BRIAN SWAIN'S Column

"TALK OF THE TOWN"

**DON'T FORGET
YOUR VOTE!**





calendar running from February to November. It's food for thought - what do you think?

Finally, many thanks to Cliff Bassett and Rod Fountain for attending the Supporters' Club evening back in February. It proved to be one of the most informative evenings we have held in recent

time. (Read report inside). We heard details of Cliff's intention to look at disposing of his existing shareholding and bringing in additional investors to help with daily pressures and financial burden of running a league club. This is likely to mean Cliff will step down from his current position as Chairman, although he would like to retain an involvement with the

club in the future. However, any plans would have to be seen to be protecting the long term future of the club. It is hoped that the outcome of these discussions will be known by the end of the season.

We will keep you updated on any developments in future newsletters.

Keep supporting the Hatters! -
Mark Chapman - LTSC Chairman.



Bud Aherne



The news that Bud Aherne had died at the age of 80 brought an immediate response of sorrow from those fans old enough to have seen him play and our feelings and condolences are with his family in their sad bereavement.

To those supporters who remember Bud in Town colours over 40 years ago, he will not fade from their memories; for however old we may become, heroes like Bud Aherne always remains in the mind's eye, a vibrant young man who enhanced our lives with his character and skill.

Aherne, who arrived in Luton in 1949 and established himself in the team at the tender age of thirty, was probably the classiest defender Luton ever had. He was already an established international and during his first season at Kenilworth Road he became only the seventh player in the Town's history to be capped, when he played in Northern Ireland's 2-0 win over Wales. His phenomenal positional sense, expert timing and polished distribution made him one of the foremost fullbacks in world football and, as a son of Limerick, he was picked by the Republic of Ireland for all five games in the same season.

On the domestic front he was invaluable; his experience and pedigree were of enormous benefit to the Town team, for during his first two seasons, Luton were constantly fighting off relegation and Aherne's

contribution was quite outstanding. In a team that failed up front, the defence was constantly under pressure and it was Bud Aherne who was so frequently the saviour. His assured deportment and super-cool temperament were often the decisive factor in guiding the ship in the mist and mud of a February dogfight against relegation.

In his second full season at



1954, he amassed 20 international caps of which 15 were won as a Hatter's player. His record stood until George Cummins overhauled it with 19 international appearances and both players achieved their success when far fewer matches were played at national level.

As the years rolled by, Luton's defence developed into a powerful cohesive unit. Players like Owen, Morton, Shanks and Dunne seemed

Luton, in the town he adopted as home, he superseded the forty-year old record of Bob Hawkes by becoming Luton's most capped player, and in the following years, up to

to rise to the standard Aherne has always set for himself. In his third season he missed only one game and, with forwards who at last scored regularly, Bud found the Hatters climbing up, instead of fighting furiously for survival.

In 1952 Luton finished 8th. In 1953, with Jesse Pye in the forward line, the Hatters were 3rd. In 1954 the Town were 6th and the following year, with Gordon Turner in full flow, Luton won promotion. During six seasons Bud Aherne had missed only 35 league games and his influence had been awesome.

During the halcyon days in the sunlit upland of Division One Aherne was masterful, playing on the stage he was made for. He jockeyed the best wingers in the land into tight corners, intercepted with uncanny precision, tackled with perfect timing and proceeded to pass the ball with the assured skill of a midfield playmaker.

He played his last game for the Town in February 1957 when a broken leg finished his career. Even at the advanced age of 38 he was still sorely missed, quite simply because he was probably the best full-back Luton Town ever had.

Bud Aherne

- What a player you were.

Yours - Frank Batt - LTSC Member.

TALK OF THE TOWN

The day I heard a legend score

DOUBTLESS everyone with any interest in football felt sad to hear of the death of Stanley Matthews. I did, not least because I am old enough to have seen him playing against Luton Town, in the days when you would pay the admission price just to watch Matthews, never mind the other 21 men on the field.

And I think I can claim a unique "achievement" about the wing wizard - I am the only man who sat in Luton and heard Matthews score his final Second Division goal, in Stoke, nearly 150 miles away.

It was the last day of the 1962/63 campaign, not the happiest time to be a Town supporter. Our decline, immediately after the 1959 FA Cup final, was well on its way to a slump from First Division to Fourth. We went to the old Victoria Ground, Stoke, on May 18, needing to win to have a chance of avoiding relegation to Division Three. Stoke needed to win to clinch the championship and promotion.

In those days I was a young general reporter on the Luton News, and its sister publications which included the much-missed Saturday Telegraph, the final edition of which in the soccer season was the Green 'Un. A very good football paper, it needed a huge staff to get it out by 6pm on Saturdays, using old-fashioned technology and hot metal printing. Saturdays were part of the working week, and the chance to go to football was restricted to one week in four. The next best thing was to volunteer for the day's hardest task - taking copy from Eric Pugh, otherwise known as Chiltern.

No-one else volunteered, for various reasons. Some hated sport. Some hated Eric Pugh. He could be a miserable beggar, and for years he had little time for me, suspecting that I wanted his job. But he began to accept that I had some abilities, not least in being able to decipher his ramblings when he was phoning in his match report. It covered two full pages, and the system was that he sat in the Press box with phone clamped to an ear and gave a running commentary describing the game into the ear-phones of the copy-taker at the other end. His style, if you could call it that, was often somewhat turgid, and not always the best of grammar. So I took a delight in listening to his ramblings, and turning them into half-decent English as I typed. Eric was also a great drinker - shortly before he died he was warned that his gin and tonic diet was killing him, so he stopped putting tonic into it. By Saturday night, when he saw his handiwork, he hadn't a clue that it had been substantially re-written by some little erk in the office.

Anyway, to get back to Matthews, a winger I had seen a few times, and loved to bits. On May 18, 1963, a crowd of over 34,000 packed the Victoria Ground to see the promotion showdown. Stoke duly did the business, but poor old Eric was in dreadful trouble because the noise in the stadium drowned out his voice, and he and I had a fraught afternoon trying to knock out several thousand words. Our story was about the Town being relegated - we finished bottom of the table and went down with Walsall - but for everyone

else it was about Matthews, at 48 about to lead Stoke back into the top flight.

I did the best I could from the jumble of news crackling down the phone line from Stoke, until the second goal went in. I couldn't hear Eric, but I knew immediately what had happened. Matthews, more famous for making goals than taking them, had completed the championship hunt by scoring. I knocked out a quick paragraph before the noise subsided enough for me to hear Eric screaming at the top of his voice something along the lines of "the bugger has scored." It was some time later before the goal description could be transmitted as the Stoke crowd kept up a roar of acclaim that lasted well after the final whistle.

Now fast-forward eight years. Eric had died - his ashes later finished up on my lawn because I deliberately bought the relevant section of the Oak Road penalty area when the plastic pitch was laid - and I was Sports Editor and driving all over the country to watch

the Town home and away. The M6 had not been completed, so to go to Lancashire, for instance, you used the A5 and A34 up through Manchester. And in a village called Sandon, near Stoke, is a smashing little pub called the Dog and Doublet. It was about 1973, I think, that I first stopped there on my way to a game, and when I walked in the bars were a football fan's heaven. The walls were covered with pictures of the great football stars of the 50s and 60s, Matthews among them. To my delight, another star who appeared in lots of the pictures was serving behind the bar. It was Neil Franklin, a brilliant centre-half for Stoke and England, and long-time pal of Matthews. Within five minutes of our meeting, Neil and I became friends. We took to each other immediately, as sometimes happens, and stayed in touch until he died.

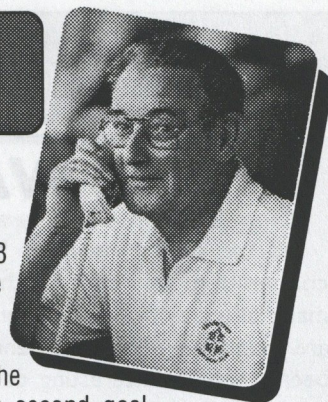
That friendship led to me taking Neil to the Footballer of the Year dinner, organised by the Football Writers Association. And when Matthews, a former winner, was among the guests, I was treated to an evening of golden memories as they talked about football, their lives, and their beliefs.

When we stood for a minute's silence at Kenilworth Road to mark the death of Matthews, the memories came flooding back. He was not only a brilliant footballer, probably the finest I have ever seen, he was a smashing bloke. So was Neil Franklin. I met a lot of other top players in later years at Footballer of the Year dinners, including Billy Wright, Pele, Bobby Moore and Franz Beckenbauer. Part of the pleasure was in discovering that they were still "ordinary" people off the football field, kind, courteous and delightful company. Matthews was all those things - but extraordinary as a footballer. I wish Stoke still played at the Victoria - every time I went there I thought of the strange twists and turns of fate, as I sat in the Pressbox where Eric Pugh sat to talk to me all those years ago on the day I heard Stanley Matthews score.

Brian Swain

Don't Forget to read my last Exclusive column.

In some circumstances, certain members read a repeated article from the previous newsletter due to a mistake at printing stage.



Stanley Matthews in action during his heyday

THE WAITING GAME IS NOW OVER!!!

As the new Millennium has arrived, the results for the competition up until 26th February 2000, have finally materialised by flying that ever popular airline 'Pigeon Post'. So are you fizzing with excitement or just simmering quietly? It has been a time of interesting developments, and it's great to see some familiar teams are still aiming for their dreams, and a warm welcome to the new teams, who are hoping to set the League on fire!!!

Congratulations go out to Harpenden Hatters for improving on last year's position in the Premiership, and for regaining top spot, from Oak Steward, who will no doubt be planning their revenge. I suggest that they don't seek any advice from BTC Lad! On their way down is Herve's Gone, as they slip from the Second Division into the Vauxhall Conference, leaving only one more League to go, leading down too the Step of Doom. Isn't it about time the Class of '88 started doing their homework by

revising, if they want to make a proper challenge for the title?

M.A.S.T elevated themselves from the Step of Doom to a massive leap into the shining light of the Second Division. The biggest surprise of all was watching Bye Bye Kohler come all the way from the Beezer Home League into the Premiership, it looks like they will be around for along time to come!!!

Is the Wizard really losing his magic touch, or is this a deviously cunning plan to make sure he keeps going down, down and down, until he reaches the Step of Doom?

The tournament has just started, let the jousting commence and may there be merriment, as we find our knights in shining armour and the dragons in disguise. So until the next enthralling adventure is brought to you by the ever reliable 'Pigeon Post' airways, please keep calm and DO NOT PANIC!!!!!!

99/2000 LEAGUE TABLES ARE AS FOLLOWS:

PREMIERSHIP

Position	Name	Total Points
1	HARPENDEN HATTERS	18
2	HEREFORD UNITED	17
3	OAK STEWARD	15
4	DARRYL WALL	15
5	SILVERDOME	14
6	TEEN TOWN	14
7	ANDY'S HATTERS	13
8	WEASEL FAN CLUB	13
9	OLD HATTER + 1	13
10	TOYBOY ENTERPRISES	13
11	P.R.'S PREDICTIONS	12
12	HEROES OF '59	12
13	PORTISHEAD HATTER	12
14	MUTE CELEBRATION	11
15	HARDWAY HUSSARS	11
16	TORONTO TONY	11
17	BYE BYE KOHLER!!!	11

SECOND DIVISION

18	THE ORANGE SKODA	10
19	TINGEYS TIGERS	10
20	TOP TEAM	10
21	HITCHIN ROAD '52	10
22	WAKEFIELD HATTER	9
23	FORTY WATTS	9
24	THE DRYNECKS	9
25	SIMPLY THE BEST	9
26	GILL'S JEWELS	9
27	HATTERS & SAINTS	9
28	THE OUTSPANS	9
29	AWAYDAYS	9
30	LILLY RANGERS 2	9
31	ON THE UP	9

32	LUTONIANS IN LANCs	9
33	LINDA'S LIKELY LADS	9
34	KNEBWORTH PLAY IN ORANGE	9
35	M.A.S.T	9

VAUXHALL CONFERENCE

36	TAYLORS TURNIPS	8
37	HERVE'S GONE	8
38	FRENCH MEMORIES	8
39	EYE WOAN TWIN	8
40	GARLEY'S GIANTS	8
41	IANs MINI HATTERS!!	8
42	LAZETTES	8
43	THOMAS TERRIERS	7
44	HAPPY HARRY'S HEROES	7
45	LONDON HATTERS	7
46	RADDY ANTIC'S LEFT FOOT	7
47	LILLYWHITES	7

BEEZER HOME LEAGUE

48	BRACKNELL HATTERS	6
49	MUSSON'S HATTERS	6
50	JOHN KELLEY'S KIDS	6
51	ANTHONY SMITH HOPEFULS	6
52	WIZARD	6
53	EXCRUCIATING CRUCIATES	6
54	STEVO'S SUPERSTARS X1	6
55	ROSEMARY SELLARS	6
56	DAVE BEAUMONT FANS!	5
57	JUNCTION 10, 2001?	5
58	NOBBY NOHOPE	5
59	NATIONWIDE DIVISION 2	5
60	BASSETT RULES OK X1	5
61	THE STRAW BOATERS	5
62	LUTON MAD LAD	5
63	THE MAGNIFICENT ELEVEN	4
64	HAWKHURST HATTER	4
65	CLASS OF '88	4
66	B.T.C LAD!	3



Town-on-Tour



Following the Hatters away, throughout the U.K.

THE FINAL RUN FOR ANOTHER SEASON

The fixtures have not been kind to us this month with no less than four away games, three of which being long treks to Wrexham, Burnley and Preston North End. This makes for a busy month for Town on Tour and more importantly a very costly one for our regular clients.

We at T.O.T. therefore decided to reward those people travelling to all the away games this month by offering FREE Travel to the last away game of the four at Chesterfield. Our regular clients are very much appreciated by the T.O.T. committee and in offering a free trip are showing that appreciation.

As we draw near to the end of the second season of our away game travel service we are on

the lookout for extra Town on Tour committee members. To continue to provide a level of service that is better than alternative requires human resources. If you have been a passenger upon TOT and have enjoyed the service to date, and wish that to continue, then joining the crew and adding your efforts and expertise to the service. Contact Andy on 01582 620814 to discuss your interest.

Listed below are the last set of games, prices and departure times.

The TOT committee would like to wish all its clients a great close season break and will see you all in August 2000 - Happy Travelling!

League Games Prices & departure Times till the end of the Season

Date:	Destination:	Departure Time	Adult Member	Cons Member	Non Member
Sat 25.3.2000	Chesterfield	11.30#	£11.00	£9.00	£12.50
Sat 08.4.2000	Scunthorpe United	10.00#	£14.00	£11.00	£15.50
Sat 22.4.2000	Gillingham	11.45	£9.00	£8.00	£10.00
Sat 25.3.2000	Wycombe Wanderers	12.30	£7.00	£6.00	£8.00

Coaches depart from Maple Road Car Park

(secure parking in Maple Road Car Park - Book your space through LTFC Ticket Office at £3.00 per car OR now on the day from the car park attendant.

Denotes a Milton Keynes Coachway pick up approximately 20 minutes later

Boarding commences 15 minutes before departure

Service Station stops will be included on longer journeys

- To qualify for membership reduction a valid Luton Town Supporters Club membership card must be shown at time of booking
- To ensure a specific seat upon a coach payment **MUST** be made at the time of booking. A ticket will be issued to confirm your booking.
- Pay on the day clients cannot reserve specific seats and will not be issued with a ticket.

Book seats in the following ways:

- Through the Club Shop at LTFC during the week and Saturday mornings.
(In person or over the phone 01582 411622)
- At the Supporters Club Kiosk at the Kenilworth Road end of the ground before and after home games.
- On board Town-On-Tour coaches.

LUTON TOWN SUPPORTERS CLUB COMMITTEE -Season 1999/2000 as follows:

LTSC President	- Nick Owen
LTSC Vice-President	- Brian Swain
Chairperson	- Mark Chapman
Vice/Deputy Chair	- John Pyper (N/L Editor)
General Secretary	- Cathie Crocker
Membership Secretary	- Vic Fussell
Treasurer	- Julie Parry
Press Officer/ Deputy Gen Secretary	- Trish Johnson
Luton Town F.C. Representative	- Cherry Newbery

Town-on-Tour Co-ordinator - various members as below

Additional Committee Members:

Yvonne Fletcher(N/Letter Ed.), Marilyn Fussell, Adrian Shotbolt, Peter Tullio, Nicola Parsons, Peter Hosier, Ray Lelliott, Wendi Arnold, Ian Kelly, Andy Finch, Maureen Ingram

We still have spaces available on the committee, which if interested, can contact any LTSC committee member in our Kiosk in Kenilworth Road on matchdays and have or better still chat at one of our forthcoming events.

We are here to help you.

Lack of a Luton Town Fanzine

Dear Editor,

As a keen collector of Fanzines, I feel I must bring to the attention of Luton Town supporters the lack of a Fanzine. I feel Luton Town is the only club in Division Two and possibly in the entire Football League that does not have an alternative fans viewpoint on the club and our game. When one considers that a large number of non-league clubs can even produce at least three or four per season which suggests to the wider Football World, Luton are short of creative writers and publishers.

Our last fanzine which came out in May 1999 was adequate by the standards of the Division, although I feel with a bit more effort could be up there with the "Southend United's .. "What's the Story, Southend Glory" and Gillingham's "Brian Moore's Head is like the London Planaterium".

A Fanzine is healthy for supporters to criticise

Dear LTSC Editor,

Well, Lennie Lawrence describes his team as "Jeckyl & Hyde" - lacking consistency. The unpredictable and hard working Stuart Douglas certainly is guilty of that!

One minute, unbelievable pace and skill create "easy goals for Phil Gray against Bristol Rovers last month and the winner against Stoke City, the next minute he's missing "sitters" against Rovers that could have sewn up a 3-1 lead before half time. Instead the "Roberts 'n' Cureton" show takes over causing so much anguish to not only the Hatters team, but also to the optimistic ambitions of the Luton Town fans.- Yes! in recent years, it seems that Bristol Rovers have a "hoodoo sign" over L.T.F.C. and they're certainly getting their own back for the 12-0 "humiliation" 64 years ago when the late, great Joe Payne, notched those record breaking 10 goals in 1936.

The way the normally dependable and excellent Gary Doherty was turned and made to look "ordinary" by ex-Canary Jamie Cureton for the all-important third goal in the game at Kenilworth Road, highlights the difficulty Luton will have in establishing themselves as a true (consistent) force.

Now the way I've been writing so far, it would seem that I go to most games nowadays - not so. In fact, the last game I saw the Town play live was at the end of November in the FA Cup replay at Sincel Bank, Lincoln City. On that occasion the persistent Douglas settled that tie.

Due to a change in my financial and domestic circumstances, I no longer manage to get see as many Town matches, - but thanks to the "wonders" of "BBC Three Counties Radio" I often manage to tune into the commentary of the Town games up here in the North East Midlands (and only 15 miles south east of Sheffield !). The trouble is, once it gets to 4.00pm, the reception gets so poor, with the continental radio stations overpower the weak signal from deepest Bedfordshire, over 100 miles away!

Still, the early kick-off at Cardiff City was appreciated by me listening to the whole game up here in the North. What an excellent display and result that was with Matthew Taylor, Liam George and Springy at their very best.

Living in the mist of a triangle of small clubs, between Mansfield, Chesterfield and Rotherham United - the later being Julian Watts first club, and I'm sure he's looking forward to going back to Millmoor

and air their views opposite to the clubs official line. Be it a criticism at the Luton Town Manager or a mickey take out of Watford, and that lot down the road do it well with "Clap your Hands, Stamp your Feet". So my message to all Luton Town supporters, have you got any ideas for a fanzine revival with possible new names like "On the Town", "Up the Town". If you have any contact me via the this newsletter.

Yours faithfully,

Brian Ellis - LTSC Member

Address supplied.

Editor's Reply:

Yes Brian, we desperately need a fanzine back on the streets, especially with the behind the scenes plans for new investors to come into the football club & relocation talk, which we hope will be good news in the forthcoming months.

OK - LTSC members, any ideas - start putting them on paper now.

where he's still regarded as one of the best players sold to Wednesday in recent years (well within the last 10 years). Not that Luton will get relegated but "The Millers" should gain, not only promotion in early May, but also to clinch the Division 3 Championship too.

The 6,500 crowd was promising for Luton against Bristol Rovers, but as often happens they "fail-to-produce" when they manage to tempt the "fickle-fan" away from his (or her) armchair? One guy who can't be regarded as "Fickle" is the old Lutonian who lives in Leeds and hitch-hikes to most Hatters games - both home and away. His distinctive red (pink?) hair makes him a "Tango-like" character for the Hatters.

I managed to borrow my car back from my 20 year old son the day Luton played at Lincoln in the FA Cup, and whilst heading back westward after the game, I came across "our friend" (and Oh so-Loyal "Town fan) casting a lonely figure - some 3 or 4 miles from Lincoln City centre, walking alongside the eerie A57, an isolated road in rural Lincolnshire at the best of times.

I managed to give the Luton Town fan from Leeds, a lift to the M1 Motorway services near Sheffield (and hopefully safely home), but to me the players at Kenilworth Road and generally across the country should realise that the effort shown by dedicated supporters such as our "red haired" pony-tailed friend - must be matched by their efforts on the pitch".

Another interesting feature of that game at Lincoln City was, as I came away from Sincil Bank, I noticed a nearby street being named Scorer St. I wondered, how many Premiership or Nationwide Football League teams have "Football-sounding street names near their grounds?

I dare say your readers will come up with some "pearlers" - perhaps WHEN Luton Town get their new ground, approaching roads could be named "Joe Payne Place", "Owen Approach" or "Morton Meadows" there again a Douglas Drive, Doherty Downs, Spring Park, Taylor Croft, Lawrence Lane or Johnson Avenue wouldn't be out of place would they.

So come on you Hatters! let's have your suggestions regarding people who have contributed both past and present to the "well-being" of the club that we love.

Kind Regards - Geoff Evans - Worksop, Notts.



A Regular Feature on great Matches & Players from the past ...

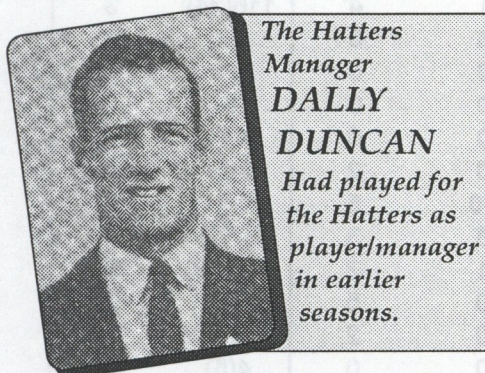
Hatters Classics

Part Six - Pot Belly and the International -
Season 49/50



Fifty years ago local supporters were thrilled by one of the most extrovert characters ever to take to the Kenilworth Road pitch.

Even later generations who never had the good fortune to see him play have often heard his name mentioned with reverence and genuine affection, for in Bernard Streten, Luton possessed not only a wonderful athletic goalie but also an ebullient showman.



The Hatters
Manager

DALLY

DUNCAN

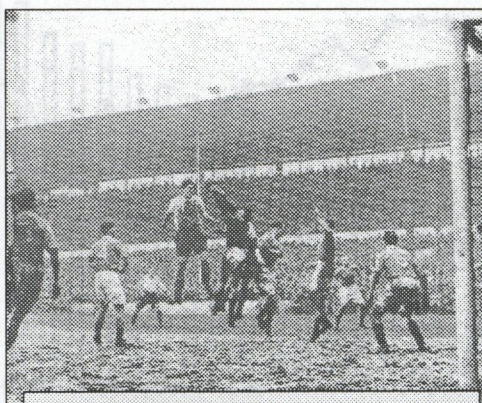
Had played for
the Hatters as
player/manager
in earlier
seasons.

He reached his peak when Duncan had just completed his second year in management. Streten had been performing miracles in goal considering the fact that he was only 5 foot 9. His acrobatic exhibitions were a pure joy to behold. The fans clapped until their palms ached as Streten soared across goal, caught the ball at full stretch and then, in one continuous movement, curled up into a bundle, hit the deck and rolled over three or four times like an enthusiastic hedgehog. Dear Bernard never did anything by halves, he would rarely roll over just once when there was time and space for half-a-dozen such tumbles. His showmanship and rapport with the crowd were totally infectious. Suddenly he would walk round the six-yard box on his hands whilst admiring schoolboys threw him their

precious, rationed sweets. Streten would thank the kids with a huge smile and then pull off a couple of spectacular saves with a toffee in his mouth before swinging on the crossbar like a monkey. Older, cynical heads in the crowd, raised on more dour professionalism, thought they'd seen it all before, in truth, they had never seen anything like Bernard. They considered him a right bloody show off, and perhaps he was, but he was good enough for England.

At the reception after his international a large, portly dignitary offered Streten some unwarranted advice. As he waddled away Bernard snorted, "Who's that pot bellied bastard?". Unfortunately, old "Pot Belly" happened to be a selector with equally large ears and Streten never played for his country again.

Back with Luton his disappointment showed in his performances. On the final day of 1949 he conceded six at Grimsby Town and perhaps the cap he had won had gone to his head!. But he never did like Grimsby. It was cold; it was damp; and even the women smelt like kippers. Fortunately though, Streten had a



Action photograph from a Luton match at Kenilworth Road during the 1949/50 season. - Great days !!

**BERNARD
STRETEN -**

Luton's International Goalkeeper -
with one cap - Came to club in 1946/47.

heaven-sent opportunity to redeem himself against Grimsby at home in the cup the following week. Sadly, however, when the forwards finally clicked and scored three, Bernard conceded four.

Hatters Player
BILLY

ARNISON

Finished as
Town's
leading scorer
with 19
league and
cup goals.



Much of the blame for the Town's demise was heaped on Streten. He was duly dispatched to the reserves as his replacement, Irworth Hughes, kept goal superbly in a tense, but successful battle against relegation. The trouble with Luton was not the defence, but the forwards. Even Stobbart with four goals in one memorable game against Blackburn Rovers only managed to score four more in 25 matches and, without the desperately unlucky Arnison, eight other players were tried at centre forward during the season. The meagre total of 41 goals was the Town's worst for 42 years; a depressing record, which by strange co-incidence stood for another 42 years. It clearly shows just how bad Luton were in 1950 and just how lucky they were to survive. But it certainly wasn't Streten's fault.

COME ON YOU HATTERS!

Yours - Frank Batt - LTSC Member.



Luton Town F.C. Statistics - 1999/2000

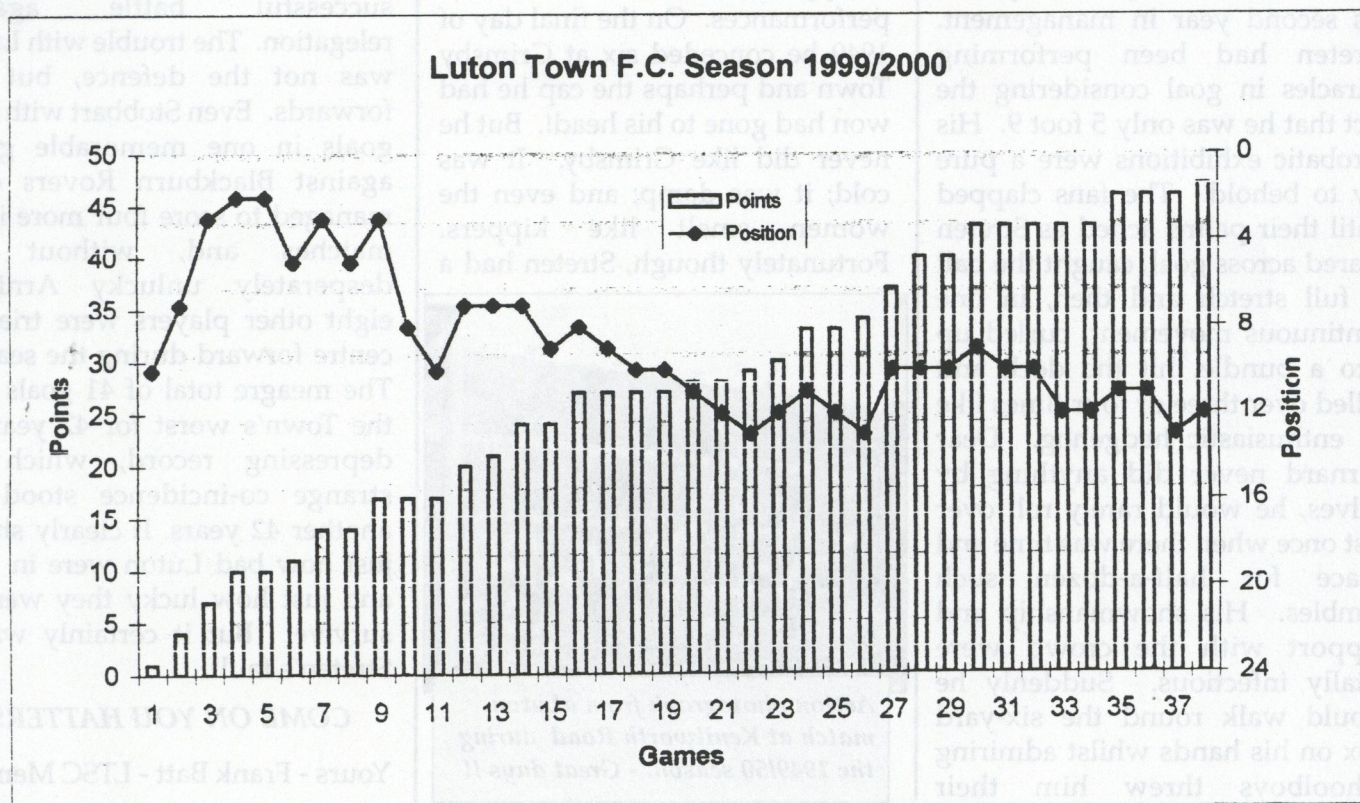
(as of 21st MARCH 2000)



LUTON TOWN F.C. NATIONWIDE LEAGUE STATS 1999/2000

PLAYER	1999/2000 APPEARANCES			1999/2000 GOALS			TOTAL ASSISTS	TOTAL BOOKED	LTFC CAREER	
	LEAGUE	CUP	TOTAL	LEAGUE	CUP	TOTAL			APPS	GOALS
N.Abbey	32	8	40	0	0	0	1	2	44	0
J.Ayres	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	1	1	0
E.Boyce	18(6)	3(2)	21(8)	1	0	1	2	0	23(8)	1
G.Doherty	36	6(2)	42(2)	2	3	5	5	1	49(30)	11
S.Douglas	31(4)	8	39(4)	3	1	4	9	5	102(32)	18
A.Fotiadis	8(14)	0(2)	8(16)	2	0	2	1	1	34(54)	9
S.Fraser	20	7	27	1	0	1	2	4	34(3)	1
L.George	29(5)	6(1)	35(6)	13	2	15	5	0	42(17)	15
P.Gray	21(1)	3	24(1)	8	1	9	6	2	141(13)	50
M.Johnson	36	6	42	0	0	0	2	3	381(17)	9
T.Kandol	1(3)	1	2(3)	0	1	1	0	0	4(6)	1
A.Locke	23(4)	5(1)	28(5)	3	0	3	2	6	28(5)	3
G.McGowan	7(2)	0	7(2)	0	0	0	0	3	51(8)	0
M.McIndoe	2(15)	2(2)	4(17)	0	0	0	1	1	24(25)	0
R.McKinnon	0(3)	1	1(3)	0	0	0	1	0	36(5)	2
P.McLaren	17(4)	5	22(4)	1	0	1	1	4	116(34)	3
N.Midgley	8(2)	0	8(2)	3	0	3	3	0	8(2)	3
P.Read	0	0(1)	0(1)	0	0	0	0	0	0(1)	0
B.Roberts	6	0	6	0	0	0	0	0	6	0
A.Scarlett	2(1)	0(1)	2(2)	0	0	0	0	0	4(8)	1
E.Sodja	5(4)	4(1)	9(5)	0	0	0	0	2	9(5)	0
M.Spring	37	7	44	6	2	8	10	5	104(7)	11
M.Taylor	31(2)	6	37(2)	2	1	3	8	3	37(2)	3
T.Thorpe	3(1)	0	3(1)	1	0	1	1	2	117(39)	65
J.Watts	37	7	44	2	0	2	0	5	44	2
A.White	8(3)	2	10(3)	1	0	1	0	2	61(23)	3
L.Zahana-Oni	0(1)	0	0(1)	0	0	0	0	0	4(5)	0

Luton Town F.C. Season 1999/2000





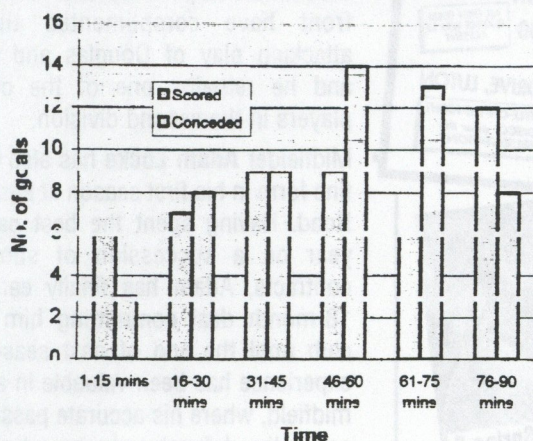
Luton Town F.C. Statistics - 1999/2000

(as of 21st MARCH 2000)

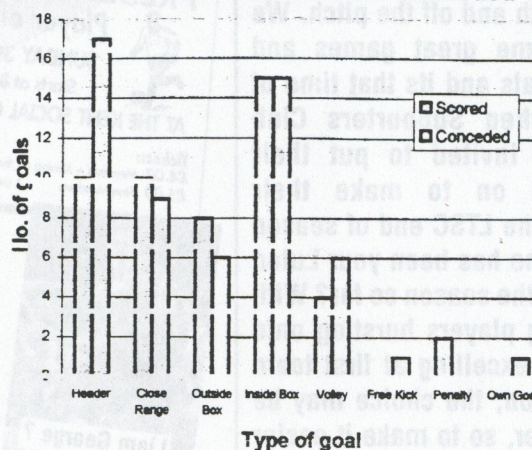


All statistics kindly supplied by Patrick Johnson - LTSC Member

When We've Scored And Conceded



How We've Scored And Conceded



NATIONWIDE LEAGUE DIVISION 2 CLUB-BY-CLUB STATISTICS EXTRA

	Shots On Target	Shots Off Target	Corners	Fouls	Yellow Cards	Red Cards	Average Attendance	Average Away Following	Pos
Blackpool	114	118	186	437	52	3	4401	524	23
Bournemouth	147	181	170	388	40	1	5025	536	10
Brentford	174	176	177	450	42	4	5732	603	9
Bristol City	180	200	229	452	43	3	9984	672	11
Bristol Rovers	204	196	240	499	52	2	8133	1112	2
Burnley	174	191	234	451	50	3	12457	1796	5
Bury	133	146	185	423	50	3	4203	327	18
Cambridge	178	170	184	469	36	3	4287	409	21
Cardiff	155	174	245	388	44	6	6951	733	22
Chesterfield	143	157	204	362	23	3	3151	204	24
Colchester	143	155	147	517	47	2	3727	370	16
Gillingham	204	183	202	414	32	1	6758	857	6
LUTON	190	168	233	490	42	3	5771	819	12
Millwall	213	222	265	601	70	4	8296	830	3
Notts County	148	166	197	410	57	2	5798	506	7
Oldham	204	192	226	422	42	1	5528	528	14
Oxford	171	151	196	439	46	2	5700	593	19
Preston	208	188	235	486	39	2	12296	1478	1
Reading	200	196	193	532	59	2	8270	661	17
Scunthorpe	152	155	178	403	40	1	3992	478	20
Stoke	173	230	223	408	48	2	11046	1181	8
Wigan	181	182	200	397	49	4	6728	1141	4
Wrexham	187	191	219	399	51	5	4073	347	15
Wycombe	146	185	182	413	39	7	5308	447	13



LUTON TOWN SUPPORTERS CLUB

Who will be your Player & Goal of the Season ?

I am sure that all Luton Town supporters would agree that the 1999/2000 season has been fairly memorable both on and off the pitch. We have seen some great games and some great goals and its that time of year again when Supporters Club members are invited to put their thinking caps on to make their selections for the LTSC end of season awards. So, who has been your Luton Town player of the season so far? With so many young players bursting onto the scene and excelling at first team level this season, the choice may be harder than ever, so to make it easier for you, I will run through some of the major candidates:

- **Matthew Spring** has been a virtual ever-present in the Town's midfield this season. At the age of 20 he already has over 100 first team games under his belt and is one of the hottest properties outside the Premiership. He has weighed in with several important goals, currently tops the chart for the number of goal assists, and he will surely be one of the front-runners for this season's award.
- **Gary Doherty** is another player expected to attract a large number of votes. Another of the Hatters' young brigade, this is his first full season as a first team regular. Despite our relatively poor defensive record, 'Dozza' has stood out at the back this season, and is also the subject of interest from several Premiership clubs, having been capped by the Republic of Ireland at under-21 level.
- * Fans' favourite **Stuart Douglas** may also have an outside chance of claiming the award. His goal return of 4 from 35 starts may be disappointing but his work-rate on the pitch is second-to-none, and his whole-hearted, courageous style sees him eulogised by his supporters. His pace and determination are vital elements of Luton's successful attacking play and this season has been his best yet for the Hatters.
- Top scorer **Liam George** is also likely to be in contention for this year's award. Recovering from a broken leg which saw him miss the majority of last year, Liam has flourished in his position behind the

LUTON TOWN SUPPORTERS CLUB
PRESENTATION EVENING
Player of the Season
SUNDAY 30th APRIL 2000
 Starts at 8.00p.m. til late*
AT THE KENT SOCIAL CLUB, TENBY DRIVE, LUTON
 ALL FIRST TEAM PLAYERS WILL BE PRESENT
 *RAFFLE-ON-THE-NIGHT
 *DISCO after the PRESENTATIONS
 Tickets:
 £4.00 Members + Joining on the night
 £5.00 Non-Members * Extension applied for



Liam George ?



Matthew Spring ?



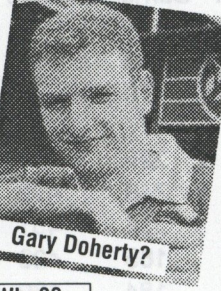
Phil Gray ?



Julian Watts ?



Adam Locke?



Gary Doherty?

.. or Who??

front two, and has been Luton's major goal threat for most of this season, with 15 goals to his name so far. Liam is another player to have earned international honours, having also played for the Republic of Ireland under-21s.

- **Matthew Taylor** is strongly tipped for this year's Young Player of the Season award, but could also be in with a chance for the main trophy. Matthew has made a successful jump from the youth team straight into the first team, breaking into the Hatters main side at the age of just 17, and has done well enough to hold his place at left wing-back for most of the season, scoring three cracking goals along the way.
- **Phil Gray** has been another star performer for the Hatters this season, having returned to full fitness for arguably the first time in his second spell

at the club. He has now made 140 starts over his two spells with the club, scoring 50 goals in total, including 9 so far this season. His experience and touch at the front have complimented the raw attacking play of Douglas and George and he remains one of the classiest players in the second division.

Midfielder **Adam Locke** has also been in fine form in his first season at Kenilworth Road. Having spent the best part of a year on a succession of short-term contracts, Adam has finally earned an 18-month deal committing him to the club until the end of next season. His experience has been valuable in a young midfield, where his accurate passing and combative defensive play have been used to great affect.

- Captain **Marvin Johnson**, who has now made approaching 400 first team starts for the Hatters, is one of the few loyal one-club men around in football today. He has led by example from the back in one of his finest seasons for the club and is sure to be amongst the honours for the Players' Player of the Year, a trophy he won in 1995.
- Defender **Julian Watts** has also impressed this season having arrived on a free transfer from Bristol City in the summer. His aerial dominance, no-nonsense style and leadership from the back have ensured that he has successfully fitted into the three-man defensive system and he can be considered one of Lennie Lawrence's best signings to date.

The choice is yours!

For the first time ever, a new trophy for Luton Town goal of the season, is up for grabs this year. The award will be presented as a tribute to Hatters fanatics **Barbara and Stamford Tripp**, the former of whom died in hospital having been taken ill at a Luton Town home game earlier this season. This year more than usual, we have seen some cracking goals scored by Hatters players, but which was the most memorable for you?

Matthew Spring, who hardly ever seems to score tap-ins, could be in contention for the award with a number

Who will be your Player & Goal of the Season ? cont...

of his goals. Who could forget his wonderful solo effort in the F.A. Cup against Kingstonian, a goal which made it onto Match of the Day's top ten of the month, or his belter at Craven Cottage which earned the Hatters a 2-2 draw and a replay with big-spenders Fulham later on in the competition. His two twenty-five yard strikes in the 4-1 Kenilworth Road demolition of Scunthorpe were also something special and any one of these goals could well see Springy follow up his 1997/98 Young Player of the Year award with the Goal of the Season trophy.

However, several other players have scored goals worthy of mention which LTSC members might like to consider before making their selection. Matthew Taylor's first goal in league football, a 30-yard thunderbolt in the 3-1 home win over Wrexham, was quite breathtaking, and since then he has followed this up with two more long range efforts, in the F.A. Cup against Kingstonian, and the last gasp point-saver at Blackpool in January. Adam

Locke has also recorded three goals of extreme quality – his solo effort in the same game at Blackpool which saw him beat three defenders before executing a right-foot drive into the bottom corner, as well as precision long range strikes against Oxford on his home debut, and Chesterfield on Boxing Day – a real Christmas cracker.



The majority of top scorer Liam George's goals have been taken from close range, but two in particular were out of the top drawer. In the aforementioned Wrexham home game Liam notched the Town's third of the game after just 37 minutes having cut inside two defenders and curled the ball around Luton-born goalkeeper Kevin Dearden's outstretched arm. His

eighth of the season, in the Town's impressive 3-1 win over Gillingham emulated this for quality, with Liam's mesmerising skill taking him around six Gills defenders before rounding the keeper to slot home.

Other notable goals might include Neil Midgley's double in the 2-1 home win over Burnley, both the product of excellent passing moves; Alan White's 20-yarder in the return match at Turf Moor, which set the Hatters up for a memorable victory; Phil Gray's low volley, a late winner in the home battle with Cardiff; and Andrew Fotiadis' bullet header from Phil Gray's accurate cross in the win at Reading.

Choose from these, or any other of the Hatters' total of 58 goals in all competitions so far this season, for your vote for our inaugural Goal of the Season competition.

**DON'T FORGET TO POST OR HAND
IN YOUR LTSC VOTING SLIP -
DEADLINE IS 22nd APRIL 2000.
YOUR VOTE COUNTS !!**



The Player Profile



This is the second of a series of interviews we have with the first team players. This time we have chosen one of the best youngsters in the first team squad.

Matthew Spring

is a bright, confident and easy to interview player, full of ambition and enthusiasm.

The Early Years: He was born in Harlow, Essex twenty years ago, and played football for Broxbourne School, Lea Valley District, and for Herts County Under 14/15 football teams.

Luton Town: It was to one of these games that Terry Westley took the Luton Town YTS lads, and he spotted Matthew, who joined the Youth Team at sixteen, and was apprenticed a year

Scoring a Goal:

later. After a short spell in the Reserves, Matthew joined the first team, and now has around one hundred games under his belt.

"It's good to score, but I don't like to go over the top. If I have half a chance I'll go for it, otherwise I'll pass the ball to another player in a better position".

Cup & League games: "League games are always there to be played, but I like the cup because we play different teams, and that makes for a change".

Ambitions:

"I want to play in the Premiership, but to PLAY, not to sit in the reserve team. I never want to be a high profile player like Beckham. I would rather make other players secure in the game".

Hobbies:

Matthew loves to play golf with six or seven of the other lads, but only in the summer months - "My hands get too cold in the winter"!

Thank you Matthew for taking the time to be interviewed.

Maureen Ingram - LTSC Committee Member



Presentation Evening



PLAYER OF THE SEASON

SUNDAY 30th April 2000

The Kent's Athletic Social Club, Tenby Drive, Luton.

Tickets: £4.00 Members £5.00 Non-members

Ticket only event due to limited space.

Tickets for this event are now available in three ways

1. From our Kiosk on first team matchdays
2. On the Town-on-Tour Travel Service.
- and 3. By writing to the LTSC c/o LTFC, The Ticket Office, Kenilworth Rd, Luton. LU1 1DH.

Lookout in the Luton Town Programme and local press for more details

BAR
Extension
until 11.30pm

Goal of the
Season Video
Clips expected

REPORT ON THE CLIFF BASSETT EVENING

Meeting with the Fans 3/2/2000

Since the club came out of receivership, this had been a long awaited meeting to face the fans with the new owner and true supporter of Luton Town F.C. His well documented and bitter battle with David Kohler to take control of the club had gone-on for many months.

The meeting took place with a very large and enthusiastic crowd at the Football Clubs' 'Eric Morecambe Suite' back in February. Accompanying Cliff was a man that he brought in to oversee the business side of the club - *Director of Business Development* - Rod Fountain, (Son of Eric Fountain) Former Chairman of Vauxhall Motors and was the instigator of the Vauxhall/GM sponsorship deal with the Hatters back in the early 80's.

After the formal introductions by our Vice-President & compere Brian Swain, Cliff Bassett and Rod Fountain gave their talk on the football club.

Cliff stated that there will be changes in the foreseeable future. He does not want to continue with everything on his shoulders. He wants others to be involved, and running a football club must not just be a one-man ego trip as it had been the past.

His long-time dream was to see the club in safe hands and in reality, in a new stadium within the next three years as a Division One team, with promotion being achieved next year if we failed to make it this time round.

Rod spoke about where the club stands at present since it had come

out of receivership and the future for the club.

After which the meeting was open to 'Questions and Answers' from the floor.

A small selection of Q & A's are as follows:

Q. Where do you think LTFC will be in two years time?

A. Still here at Kenilworth Rd, but the new stadium plans should be well under way by then. And if we can keep this team together I would hope we will be in Division One by then.

Q. What sort of Stadium are you planning and where?

A. A total of 26 sites were looked at in David Kohler's time, and everyone agreed that Junction 10 of the M1 was the only realistic one. We hope also that it would take only 18 months to complete, and from what happened over the previous scheme, we believe that if we went for something with a capacity of between 12,000 to 15,000, it would not be called in for another public enquiry.

Q. As you look at potential investors, can you guarantee David Kohler will NOT be among them?

A. The biggest deterrent to that is yourselves!. But there will be safeguards to ensure the situation does not arise again where any one person can have total control, without the finance to back it up. I want to see a working board of directors, and no-one should hold more than 15 -20 per



CLIFF BASSETT
Chairman of LTFC

STOP PRESS... Close-season volunteers required

As first initiated by FLAG (*Fans of Luton Action Group*) last season, when the club were in administrative receivership, and trying to save money by not using outside contractors where possible. FLAG got supporters / volunteers together for the summer period to work at the ground on general cleaning and painting duties. The work itself is as stated by *Club Secretary* Cherry Newbery - "although the work is not heavy, is not of a clean nature, therefore old clothes are essential". The period over the summer months are from the 5th to 30th June. If you are interested, you can either contact us by popping into the kiosk on matchdays or contacting Cherry Newbery at the football club on (01582) 411622.

Watts & Locke (White) Player Guest Evening

A great night was had by all, and would like to thank 'Alan White' for standing in at very last minute, due to Adam Locke going down with illness at the eleventh hour.

■ If you would like to contribute to this Newsletter in future issues, don't hesitate to contact us by coming to see a LTSC Committee member in the our kiosk or writing c/o the Football Club.

cent of the shares at anyone time. The spread is important.

Q. What about FLAG's involvement?

A. It is essential that there should be a community base within the football club, and of course if they have money to invest they are welcome. The F.C. is for the local community, and the local community has got to be for the F.C.

"A good football club is good for the town".

The night was not all deadly serious, with plenty of chuckles over light hearted suggestions from the audience. One question though, that the audience had mixed feelings about, was on the subject of bringing additional money through sponsorship was: *Why Vauxhall, once our shirt sponsors, were not supporting the club like they used too.*

He was told that the relationships between Vauxhall and the football club had deteriorated under the previous Kenilworth Rd ownership. Vauxhall money is already spoken for. So were is the Vauxhall sponsorship money budget going? The answer was to sponsor the Leicester Tiger Rugby Club. The fan jumped to his feet and said that's something everyone should know about, even the local press and that "Big loud mouth on the local radio".

That concluded the meeting, and one of the best we have held in recent times, and Cliff and Rod were given a standing ovation.

J.P.

TALK OF THE TOWN

Been there... seen it... done it...

THANKS to my good luck at earning a decent living following Luton Town, I have made a lot of friends among footballers. And one or two who were not always nice to know.

For instance, I won't name him, but in the middle seventies we had a raw young centre-forward transferred in. Well, the supporters knew he was raw. The trouble was he didn't know it himself.

A hot temper was one of his major problems on the field, especially in his early career, and Harry Haslam despaired of teaching the lad to stay calm. It took a long time, and on one memorable occasion, about four weeks into a season, I wrote in the Luton News that the boss was losing patience with a player who was in the team to put the ball in the net, but had so far collected more cautions than goals.

Our young star in the making was not amused. One afternoon, having taken the wife to the shops, I was waiting in line to drive out of the library car park when the unmistakable figure of the young blond striker appeared. He saw me, shouted a suggestion that was most unfair on my mum and dad, and then proceeded to kick the front wing of the car. Luckily, his timing was not too good, and the dents inflicted were only small ones before the car and I escaped.

A few days later, to his credit, he apologised and an ednuring friendship resulted. One of the things that upset him, he said, was that he was a professional footballer, and was being criticised by a bloke who had never experienced his side of the story. I have heard something similar many times. There are still many players who think that only ex-players should be hired as football reporters. No-one else, goes their logic, could possibly write with true feeling about what he sees.

I used to reply that as a general reporter I had covered rape and murder trials and done a half-decent journalistic job even if I hadn't taken part in a rape or murder...

Another regular jibe was that as a journalist, I had no idea of the heat of battle generated in league football. Perhaps not, but I know a damn sight more about the heat of battle than most of the footballers I have ever met.

I was at the tail-end of a generation that did National Service, two years in the forces whether you liked it or not. Did I not like that when the call-up papers came. Two years later, to my considerable surprise, I found that overall I had liked it, despite the interruption to my career in Civvy Street.

I won't bore with all the details, but being offered a passport to places I had only dreamed about visiting, I volunteered, after my basic Army training, to go to Cyprus, where there was a real battle going on, against EOKA terrorists. Fortunately, we had not been there long when a peace deal was sorted out, but before that happened we rapidly learned the true meaning of heat of battle. Experience that, and not much else in life will faze you.

The best thing about the Army was the opportunities available if you were any good at any sport. To look at today's balding beer-bellied old hack, you might be surprised to know that he was once half way to useful on football, hockey and cricket fields. (I tried rugby, but used to get drop-kicked too often for comfort by big ugly blokes who though it was funny to pick me up and play keepy-ppy with me before booting me into touch).

And now for the secret of when I nearly got put in prison because of a football match. I was a regular in the regimental team, playing at what was then known as right half. In fact, when I look back, I think I was the Matthew Spring of Ayiois Nikolais...

Anyway, in a cup match we were in a tight game with an RAF unit, for whom we had no regard at all. They were the Brylcreem boys, suspected of being poofers to a man, and always told by us to get on with their jobs and leave us to do the fighting. Being an RAF team, I suppose we should have known they might have decent wingers...

The bloke on their left wing hung around as far upfield as he could, waiting for the ball to be shoved over the top towards the corner flag. I think their coach must have been John Beck or Graham Taylor. Our right back was a nifty counter-attacker, but not the best defender you have ever seen. And I was getting more and more annoyed as the winger waltzed past him as he pleased. The bloke prepared to try it on yet again, and as I was dropping back to cover the inevitable surge past our full-back, I shouted at my teammate: "For Chrissake you f---g expletive deleted are you ever going to tackle the f----g expletive deleted."

In my defence, I would only say that such language was perfectly normal in the barracks. I knew hundreds of men who could only read and speak four-letter words.

On a football field, of course, it is different... or at least it was then. The ref blew up, called me over, and sent me off for foul and abusive language. I was expletive deleted gutted. We lost the game.

Within a couple of days the Army FA forms came through and I was suspended for 28 days. But far worse was to follow. About a week later, the orderly officer marched into hut 39, and marched me out again between two burly regimental policemen. I was under arrest, locked in the guardroom for the night, and then up before the beak next morning, the beak in this case being the regiment's Commanding Officer.

I couldn't believe it when the charge was read out. It was the Army's catch-all offence, which carried the possibility of imprisonment - Guilty of conduct prejudicial to good order and military discipline. And it was all because of that bloody fullback. Well, sort of. It transpired that the left winger was a high-ranking officer in the RAF, and having seen me sent off he was still not satisfied with the routine suspension to follow. He laid a charge against me of serious insubordination by swearing at one of Her Majesty's commissioned officers. Just because I had called him a f----g expletive deleted.

As all good soldiers do in such cases, I pleaded ignorance - how was I to know that the f---g expletive deleted was an officer?

The Army CO was half-sympathetic, doubtless secreteence. My suspension lasted beyond that football season, by which time I was due for demob, so I never did play Army football again.

Brian Swain

This article has been repeated due to certain members not receiving it ... production problems

DID YOU KNOW??? ■ From the players that were in the '88 Littlewoods Cup final squad v Arsenal only five are still playing at top level - A. Dibble (Hartlepool), T. Breacker (QPR), David Preece (Cambridge Utd), Kingley Black (Grimsby Town) and Mark Stein (AFC Bournemouth). Other are either Managers or coaching in some capacity.

