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Luton/Dunstable on Sunday, April 17, 2005

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Newell: Now for th

Mike talks to Luton on Sunday about his desire to win the league

UTON Town manager Mike Newell says his side are still focused on winning the League One title, even though they have already been promoted.

Speaking after Thursday morning's training session at Luton Rugby Club he told *Luton on* 'There's no doubt about it, the players are 100 per cent focused on winning the league, winning promotion won't stop that.

"In the end I was glad we were promoted by way of Brentford beating Tranmere because it meant there were no huge celebrations like there would have been had we won a game and then got promoted. "Obviously it is going to be great when we play MK Dons and I am

sure the fans will enjoy it, but we know we've still got a job to do." Asked whether he had set out to win the league at the start of the season, Newell added: "At the eginning of the season I was confident we could do something. We brought in a few players like Paul



Underwood at the end of the previous season and Marlon Beresford and Rowan Vine and that was good because before that I couldn't bring any new faces in. We had lost Boycie and Matthew Spring, who were top players for us, and we

needed to make a few additions to the squad. We were able to offer new contracts to players already at the club and the new owners came in and backed us all the way "I felt we had been unlucky the season before and, looking at the

and Plymouth Argyle) I personally didn't think they were any better

"I knew we had a great team spirit here and after the first six games we were still unbeaten and I felt we could go on and get automatic pro-

"We were not getting beaten which was important and I wanted the players to keep that mentality. Not the winning mentality but the not getting beaten mentality, if you like."

getting beaten mentality, if you like.

Now Newell knows he will be taking his side to face the likes of
Leeds United, Wolverhampton
Wanderers, and possibly West Ham
Crystal Palace and Norwich City. So what are his hopes for next season "I haven't set any targets for next year," he said, "I don't want to go

into a new league and say if we stay up its a good season because if we are fourth or fifth from bottom people might start thinking that's a good season and relax.

"I want to go up and just see how r we can go and see what we can

"If you look again at the likes of QPR and Plymouth they have both more or less held their own and haven't made that many additions

"I won't be setting the team any targets. In fact my only target at the moment is to win League One."

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21 it was a real sickener to see Hull on top after two successive draws, with Sheffield Wednesday and

Peterborough, let Luton's champi-onship rivals catch up. This was put right against the Hatters of Stockport

through goals from Chris Coyne, Steve Howard and a penalty from

today that we've learnt from our mistakes," explained Mike Newell.

was unhappy at going out of the FA Cup – although it might be a bless-ing in disguise if we can concentrate

Aussie defender Coyne got things started with a close range volley two minutes from half time and hot-shot

Howard grabbed Luton's second on 54 minutes, Nicholls convert-

ed a spot kick on 72 minutes but Luton could have had five

gated but Luton's apparent ease in a routine win showed that the

skipper Kevin Nicholls

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Pivotal moments

'Bouncebackability' Luton Town 4 - Bradford City 0 30.10.04

THE 2004/5 season could not have started any better for Luton Town aders suffered their first defeat, at

Hatters then lost their first away game at Walsall three days later. You can't win them all, we said. a blip had turned into three defeats

n seven days.
Luton's response? To dish out a
hrashing – with Bradford City the
unwitting victims.
Goals from Steve Howard, Paul

derwood and a brace from Ahr aying power. A buoyant Mike Newell beamed:



their promotion to the Championship

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Director of Football – and together with Mike Newell the pair were leading Luton to the top. But before this been broken up.
Harford answered the call from for s 'Trouble At The Top Gocumentary nid-week. The programme lifted the d on the John Gurney farce.

But Hatters seemed to have put he dark days off the pitch behind hem and with Newell – the one postive legacy of the Gurney era – making the headlines for all

'Life after Mick' Luton Town 5 - Wrexham 1 5 11 04

Luton/Dunstable on Sunday, April 17, 2005

vell publicly backed Harford after the game saying: "We'll miss nim and we wish him all the luck in he world. He's made a mass ntribution to this club and to the

continuition to this club and to the squad we've now got here."

Feelings are still mixed over Harford who was released from Forest when Kinnear was axed a month later. He returned with Swindon as assistant to another ex-Hatter, Andy King, in March and watched his former side ruise to a 3-1 win.

Although he couldn't show it on the butside, you got the impression he ather enjoyed seeing how far his latters had come.

'Now you're gonna believe us' Bristol City 1 - Luton Town 2 18.12.04

to believe we can achieve some-thing special this season."

This thrilling away win courtesy of



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of the terraces in the 80s and early

clash with Wrexham that duo had

mer Hatters' boss Joe Kinnear at struggling, fallen giants Nottingham

Forest to be his number two and

as a player and appreciated his undoubted coaching ability.

But Luton showed that it would be

business as usual on the pitch with this thumping victory which did as

much for morale as it did for their

Steve Robinson, Stephen O'Leary,

His untimely departure upset a lot of loyal fans who had idolised him

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of Town's season

brought festive cheer to Luton fans along with Mike Newell's proud admittance after the game that Hatters were real championship contenders going into 2005.

Newell is far too media savvy to make grandiose statements when the season was only at the halfway

It also made up for the previous week's FA Cup third round exit against Brentford when Hatters had a rare off day.

"We had a chat about what we stage.

But he'd seen enough flair, determination and effort in his troops thus far to say out loud what all Luton fans were dreaming – that this could be lutor's year. could have done better last Saturday and it was evident

be Luton's year. He quite rightly talked up his hardworking side who had silenced the Ashton Gate crowd despite having many first team regulars out. This didn't stop Luton taking the lead through Chris Coyne's powerful header from a Paul Underwood cross. Leroy Lita equalised for the hosts just after the hour mark but Hatters weren't content with a point Instead they pushed forward and gave everything in the pursuit of victory. It came one minute from time when Showunnii (in for suspended top-scorer Steve Howard) got one of his long legs to another Underwood

'Back on top' Luton Town 3 - Stockport 0 15.1.05 HAVING led League One since

Hatters had simply outgrown most of the opposition in League One – and were ready for a new challenge. 'Brko's late show-stopper' Luton Town 1 - Hull City 0 12.2.05

decider in the middle of February? Mike Newell and Hull City boss



petitors just who deserved to be top with crisp passing movements and calm defending.

But Hatters couldn't find that finishing touch in the final third - until the Croatian Sensation pulled out his party piece at the death to send the Kenilworth Road crowd into raptures. Newell was clearly overjoyed at the final whistle. "They (Hull) can have no arguments - we were by far the better team. The players are all delighted in the dressing room, but delighted in the dressing room, I'm not getting too carried away.

'Seaside special' Bournemouth 0 - Luton Town 1 MANY of Luton's points amassed on the road have been down to Mike

Newell's men's never say die spirit. Hatters have only lost four games away from Kenilworth Road this season and Newell has often explained that his team simply won't

That philosophy was never more evident than two weeks ago on the South Coast.

Bournemouth, in a play-off posi-tion, had comprehensively beaten Luton 6-3 in last season's corresponding fixture.
Their cause this season was

helped even more when Hatters were reduced to ten men after just 21 minutes when Russ Perrett was sent off for a professional foul.

But Luton won the game through substitute Enoch Showunmi's

time – and no-one was surprised.
Despite the Cherries' numerical
advantage, Luton's disadvantage
spurred them on even more.
Bournemouth were played off the

side's tension, Newell bought on two strikers to win the game.

Afterwards, with automatic promotion all but tied up, Newell spoke of the players' desire for the League One title.

"All my thoughts are on winning this division. I'd be majorly disappointed if we weren't crowned champions now."





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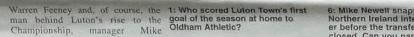


definitely been one

Kenilworth Road so

we've teamed up





Newell.

The winner will be the envy of Hatters fans everywhere and will give scored nine league goals up to and the owner an instant reminder of this including Saturday April 9?

3: Gary McSheffrey enjoyed a sec-ond spell on loan at Kenilworth Road. From which Championship

yesterday's visit by MK Dons?

closed. Can you name him?

: Which team ended Luton Town's F.A Cup run this season?

: Finish this chant sung regularly Top of the league...

9: Ahmet Brkovic has scored 14 goals this season. Do you know which country he was born in?

10: Which legendary striker did Hatters boss Mike Newell lead the line with at Blackburn Rovers?

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p goalscorer Steve Howard, fans' Quiz, Luton/Dunstable on Sunday,

urite Ahmet Brkovic, rising star 28 King Street, Luton, LU1 2DP.

Sol Davis, goalie Marlon Beresford, Correct answers should reach us

kipper Kevin Nicholls, new signing later than Friday April 29.

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And finally and more importantly Congratulatons to Luton Town Football Club on securing promotion to the Championship.

Best win: The 5-0 win against Bristol Turning point of the season: No turn-Turning point of the season: When HAT a season! City. I haven't seen such a good all round performance for a long while. We tore them to shreds. ing point, the 12 game unbeaten run set the tone for the season. Two crucial So what did the fans make of points in the season was beating Bradford 4-0 after losing three in a row Favourite song: Top of the league, it? We spoke to

a selection of the Hatters' loyal army of followers and asked them for their views:

Name: ANTONI GOSTOMSKI.

How long have you supported the mighty Hatters? For as long as I can

Player of the season: Sol Davis

improved player I Turning point of the season: Steve Howard's injuryagainst

gratulations

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Peterborough and Oldham away. Those goals made me believe it could be our year.

Best win: Hartlepool away – but Hull at home comes a very close second

Favourite song: And now your gonna
believe us, the town are going up.

Name: DANNY WEATHERILL.

How long have you supported the mighty Hatters? 15 years.
Player of the season: Can't choose

between Marlon Beresford and Kevin

Why? We have been crying out for a consistent keeper and Marlon has been outstanding. Kevin is a constant driving force from midfield, and has been an absolute giant

Turning point of the season: Beating Bradford 4-0 after we had lost three games in seven days. It stopped the rot and showed what a good team we realName: ELLIOTT KENYON.

Age: 26.
How long have you supported the mighty Hatters? 21 years.
Player of the season: Kevin

Why? He has been awesome, has added so much more to his game, has always worked so hard but this season has really dominated games

Turning point of the season: I do not think there has been a turning point. The start of the season set us up really well and has given the play-ers so much confidence. I think the best thing about

this season is how we have bounced back from defeats After the first three defeats we won a load. Then after the Brentford

four in a row. After Port Vale we hammered Bristol City 5-0 and beat Swindon. Since the Barnsley defeat we have won four in a row again. Best win: Hard to pick just one Hartlepool away, Hull home and

Bournemouth away.

Favourite song: Any songs relating to Mike Newell. What he has done is amazing.

Name: RICHARD HARDY. Age: 25.
How long have you supported the mighty Hatters? 20 years.

Player of the season: Kevin Nicholls. Why? He's our leader – on the few occasions we have been struggling this season, he's the man who has pulled us and beating Hull 1-0 after a string of draws. Both results gave us the confidence to kick on and create big gaps

Best win: Hard to pick just one - any from Bristol City, Hull or Bournemouth last weekend.

Favourite song: We are unbeatable before we lost a match earlier in the

Name: GRAHAM EVERITT. How long have you supported the mighty Hatters for? 29 years. Player of the season: Marlon

Why? Experience and ability to pull

of stunning saves and the end of games. Sometimes I don't think peo-ple give goalies enough credit.
Turning point of

Beating Bradford at home 4-0 after three straight defeats

Best win: Bradford 4-0. Favourite song: The Sol Davis song sang to tune of Gold by Spandau Ballet.

Name: JON BROWN. Age: 30. How long have you supported the mighty Hatters? 24 years.

Player of the sea-son: Sol Davis. Why? His perfor-mances have been consistently high and he has controlled his aggres sion more than ever before

we came out of the tunnel on the first day of the season back in August. Since then, the only way has been up. Best win: Bristol City away (We never Favourite Song: He's only a poor lit-

Name: NICK BROWN.

How long have you supported the mighty Hatters? 22 years.
Player of the season: Kevin Nicholls.

Why? Gives 100 per cent every game a true skipper who leads by example.

Turning point of the season: Not sure there was one, the season has just gone really well from start to finish

Best win: 1-0 win against Hull at

Favourite song: We are Luton Town say we are Luton Town.

Name: EAMON MCTAGUE

Age: 26 How long have you supported the mighty Hatters? As a long as I can remem-

Player of the season: Kevin Nicholls Why? He dominates midfield and has

led by example this season. A truly inspiring captain Turning point of the season: Winning away at Bristol City. We never win

away at Bristol City. We never win there and this season we won in style. Best win: Beating fellow promotion hopefuls Hull City at home. What a win, what a performance, what an

Favourite song: The one about our former striker Tony Thorpe who walked out on us, although I don't think you can print it.



As a loyal supporter of Luton Town for over 30 years, Chris Park and CP Contracts are delighted at gaining an automatic promotion to Division 1 and look forward to Mike Newell and the team parading the Champions Trophy in a couple of weeks time.

Well done to all who kept the faith during the fallow years and the dark days of administration, bring the good times on!

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Graham congratulate Luton Town F.C. on their promotion to the Championship League. Good luck for next season.