

MAD AS A HATTER!



A LUTON TOWN FANZINE

Issue 15

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Marvellous!



Suave Marv slots home his third goal of the season, and all at the right end! Magic!

MAD AS A HATTER!



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Editorial

Five years ago Luton Town were on course for three cup finals and were in the upper reaches of the old first division. We were, quite simply, supporting one of the best teams in the country. The financial position was not good, but the club still owned its ground, so things were not too desperate. As we all know, that season reached a successful conclusion and it has been downhill ever since. It is to be hoped that recent results signal at least a minor improvement in our fortunes, and if so it will be in spite of some rather strange events at Kenilworth Road recently. The first of these was the rumoured sale of Phil Gray to Middlesbrough. Such rumours are, of course, nothing new but in this case the rumours are reported to have originated from David Kohler. This in itself is quite extraordinary, to say nothing of the timing, just prior to the Brentford game which could have had an incalculable effect on the morale of the team. And finding that the M.D. is telling people about transfers at such a time, and before they are signed and sealed, must cause wonder even amongst those who think he is doing a good job running our club.

The second point is the speculation and rumour over the impending appointment of a player manager. The names that are being bandied about would of course be popular with Town fans, but regardless of your viewpoint on David Pleat, such speculation is unwelcome while we still have a manager under contract. In fact it all seems reminiscent of the events of two years ago which led to the dismissal of Jim Ryan. Is David Pleat going the same way, or is this a ploy to prompt a resignation? We will have to wait and see but there is, it is said, no smoke without fire, and what we have to ask is who is lighting the fire and fanning the flames? We've heard a rumour that it might be.....

Luton borough council have recently published the borough plan for the next ten years, the aim of which is to look at where new housing shopping and leisure facilities will be located and to allocate land uses to all areas of Luton. The plan includes the relocation of the football club away from Kenilworth Road to be replaced by new housing, but does not indicate where the football club will be moved to. In simple terms it plans Luton without Luton Town, which is just not good enough. We urge all of our readers to contact Luton Council and your councillors to ask where the football club is going to be placed in the new plan. This is not a case of helping David Kohler, but of protecting the future of our club, the same reason we want Kohler out.

Working Together ?

When we met David Kohler before Christmas (see last edition) the MD came up with the figures; £1.1m, £2.3m, you know the form - the quotes "no, I don't want to leave but...." the rest of the sentence is old news, the first bit is the important bit - and the beers; Becks and Grolsch cool from the fridge. A good host in a boardroom that had a copy of the Littlewoods Cup and that should, by rights, have had a large trainset running into disrepair. Anyhow we, as the fans, were billed to come up with the passion but we were upstaged, as I wrote before, by John Buttle who's dreams for the future were based on club and supporters marching together onwards in harmony.

We agreed with the idea but couldn't really comprehend what it all meant. As supporters who were originally dragged onto the Oak Road terrace by cruel fathers in the late 70's, we had already missed the last time that club and supporter had been together. That, of course, was during the dark days in the mid-seventies when it looked really bleak. The fans and the club were apparently together though and they waved goodbye to Andy King and lived happily ever after.....

Previously, in the thirties, the Bobbers Club raised tons of cash (by today's value, running into hundreds of thousands) on ground improvements. So what is it about the supporters and the club they support that has us now at constant odds with each other. The present feeling of mistrust towards the board is well rooted back over ten years and to two words - "Milton Keynes". The chairman at the time, Denis Mortimer, would seem to have been talked into the would-be relocation by some mysterious third party. Not surprisingly the fans were having none of the idea and everyone around at the time will remember the well produced "No to Milton Keynes" leaflets, the march before the Birmingham game (1-1, Ricky Hill scored, attendance 11,111), and the plane that flew over the ground with the trailing banner spelling out opposition to the move. Eventually Denis Mortimer could take no more of the supporters opposition, to the board robbing them of their club, and in stepped..... David Evans.

David Evans, who would still have had Luton Town move to Milton Keynes until the MK council chucked out the idea, had a lot more up his sleeve. Not that David Evans particularly sought to alienate the Luton fans, rather alienate the whole of the rest of the world. Millwall fans somehow managed to beat the tight restrictions imposed by a quarter final of the cup that was not all-ticket and a police presence that would've had trouble quelling a small pub fight, didn't Millwall fans have a reputation before 1985? Danny Baker's boys smashed up the joint good and proper, and provided David Evans with the perfect excuse to turn Luton Town FC into the official tory policy prototype. They got a plastic pitch laid and then they banned all travelling supporters.

So Luton Town became the most hated club in the country, not that boyish souls who would take that as some sort of compliment could - this was a considered reckoning and had little or nothing to do with the notoriety of our ruff-tuff fans. The damage the away fan ban did to Luton Town FC is immeasurable - how much did it lose the club in advertising? How much was lost on the banning of the casual supporter? Who knows? David Evans would probably have a better idea than anyone, but he never accrued a loss to the club - or to himself. By his reckoning selling the ground to the council was good business as he paid

off loans to himself and the other directors with "less interest than he'd get at a building society" - we were probably still on cloud nine from Wembley '88 at the time to care too much.

Whatever the case the subsequent owners Nelkin and Kohler seemed, and seem, to be happy to let the slide continue. Nelkin obviously realised too late that people don't necessarily have to come from Tyneside to be passionate about football and David Kohler has stubbornly stuck to his guns in a media hyped crusade against the thugs with catchphrases like: "I can't let these people win" to the press (is he on about "the thugs" or the team?) and "come on fellas, what can I do?" a plea accompanied by outstretched arms and directed at the fans when they go and meet him. David Kohler says he wants to leave but I don't believe him. And there lies the distrust between fans and the board which a lot of the supporters, rather naively think will be put right by having a familiar name - Haslam - at the helm. They may be right but "Happy Keith" doesn't have that ring about it.

And there, or thereabouts, lies the other obstacle in the way of fans and club in holy matrimony. The fans aren't even together. And I'm not upset because the "middle" are prone to taking the rise out of the "right side" (interesting chant that boys but have a quiet word with yourself about it eh?). But the number of "religious denominations" about at Kenilworth Road at the moment is terrible - we've got the supporters club, the Loyal Luton supporters club (with their fanzine D.Pleated), the Bobbers (if they still exist), supporters who aren't in any club, the Junior Hatters (alright, so I'm scraping the barrel now), Chief Blondie and Charlie Chaplin - the unholy trinity (you'll know them by different names, but you will know them), Mad as a Hatter (good blokes and that but, have you noticed right - they smell....), The Hatter (see Junior Hatters) and the editorial board of the now sadly defunct TOWN magazine who still go to the matches but have given up the aim of funding new suits by doing the fanzine because you were all too bloody tight. All these organisations say virtually the same thing (except for Chieftain and the boys who don't say much coherently - a request for a bar of soap and a stick of deodorant would be a good start) but are all deeply cynical of each other. This of course is a pity and one can't help but think what the supporters might achieve with just one official or unofficial supporters club however big and argumentative it would no doubt be. After all, it's all well and good with ten of us agreeing with each other whilst crying into our pints but it ain't getting much done now is it?

Tim Kingston



Let's ban football

SIR - Why don't they ban football? Yes, I know that is a revolutionary-type statement in this soccer-wild country but it is about time someone spoke up.

You reported last week on Leighton Town fans going amok over a poxy little game in the next county. God help us when two premier division sides confront each other.

The time has come to say enough is enough and ban a sport that causes more injuries than boxing.

I know footie fans will argue that things are a lot better now than they were in the last decade, violence wise.

That a small minority should not ruin it for the rest of the peaceable crew and that football is our national sport after all.

I don't care. I worry about the violence of our age and want our police force to be working constructively to prevent crimes against the vulnerable in our society - the elderly, children and women. I don't want their precious resources spent enforcing a load of jobs cheering on their favourite team, so pack-led they are happy to knock hell out of each other for the sake of Millwall, West Ham or whatever other bunch of perm-haired jerks they choose to follow.

The thing is, football is a minority sport, as is every other sport. The majority of this nation doesn't give a monkey's who won on Saturday (perhaps because the majority of this nation are women). So let's stand up and ban the game. After all, we could give all those leftover grounds to the rave party goers - legalise the raves and we would waste less police time again.

Full name and address supplied.

This letter appeared in the "South Bedfordshire on Sunday" on 10th January, and I thought it worthy of a wider audience, if only to show there are some pretty serious crackpots out there - it's always "name and address supplied" isn't it? It doesn't really need much comment other than if football's a "minority sport" then so is every other sport and, come to that every other leisure activity. So on the grounds that we ban football, we should ban television, shopping, driving and so on. Presumably, "FNAAS" would wholeheartedly wave his/her arms in support, if they ever allow him/her out of the strait-jacket.

That, until Saturday, 30th January, was where I was going to leave this article. For the benefit of our readers who may not be aware of the events of that night, briefly Luton police arrested the organisers of an illegal, unlicensed rave, the upshot being that an estimated 3,000 blocked Stuart Street in protest for around four hours. I understand that the protest was generally peaceful. Now, picture this scene - after another home defeat Town fans decide enough is enough and decide to block the main roads around the ground in protest - would the police allow that to continue for four hours?

Now, I'm not criticising Luton police who, on the whole are pretty good - although some visiting fans may disagree - but the point I'm making is that football supporters are perceived both by the police and by half-wits like "FNAAS" as criminals whilst attending a legal event, properly licensed by the fire and safety authorities. On the other hand, rave-goers attending illegal, unlicensed (and, therefore, potentially dangerous) gatherings are given the kid-glove treatment and then cry wolf if any police action is taken uttering on about their civil liberties being infringed, and so on ad nauseam. I've nothing personal against raves, but I do feel the authorities need some consistency and logic in dealing with these large-scale gatherings.

Which brings me neatly back to the letter. Who do you think would be the first to complain if a rave happened near him/her?

Victor Meldrew



Marv checks his leg is still in place after being trampled by a herd of donkeys, while John Martin (in the nice new not purple referees kit) prepares to take names.



Ramblings of a Madman

Wednesday 13 January 1993

Mixed Emotions

Luton v Bristol City (Postponed again). This must be the first ever match report of a game that was called off. When it was called off an hour and a half before kick-off my emotions were mixed. There was the annoyance of not seeing a home game since December 19. There was the let down of not seeing a game I had played out in my mind during different stages of the day, there was the disgust of imagining David Kohler saying we will have to sell again if anymore games are called off (I fear there will never be enough games called off before we have to sell Trevor Peake). Then there was this great feeling of relief, this great feeling of still being in the Cup in the middle of January.

There's nothing quite like that empty feeling of being knocked out of the Cup in the 3rd Round, knowing the Wembley dream is over for another year, a blank Saturday on 4th Round day, it just gives extra time to reflect on another 4 months of fighting relegation. The division might be different although the name is the same, at least the last few relegation struggles have involved trips to Old Trafford, Goodison Park and Elland Road. It is quite amusing to hear people saying how poor the quality of football is in the so called Premier League, these people should come with me to a couple of games, they will not ever complain again. At least the game being called off for the second time keeps the dream alive for another week. I can envisage the draw for the semi-finals being Arsenal v Luton or Bristol City or Derby or Grimsby or....

When the game is finally played and we buy the original 2nd January programme, I look forward to that great pre-match ritual "find how many players Kohler has sold in the past three weeks". The joke about the players not wearing numbers on their backs but sell-by-dates is becoming more like reality every day.

At least we didn't have this problem when we had the hated 'plastic pitch' but of course called off games are not new to the much travelled Luton fans. The memory goes back to that January day in 1986. The replay at Anfield with the whole country covered in blizzard conditions but the word from Anfield being the game will definitely take place. The coach driver of the supporters bus took some convincing but after ringing the A.A. and being told "you will get there as the motorways are usable, but you might not get home as it is due to snow again at midnight". The vote went for the motion, "let's get there, if we were to win who cares when we get home". Admittedly half way there I was beginning to doubt the wisdom of voting for the motion but by this time there really was no turning back. On arriving at Anfield I thought something was strange when a man was selling hot-dogs at half-price and of course it was pointed out that the floodlights were not even turned on. You can imagine our disbelief when we were told that our coach might have made the journey but the players were still at Heathrow. It doesn't matter how cheap the hot-dogs were it took weeks for the bad taste of the teams travel arrangements to disappear.

Looking back everything about the team and the club looked so much brighter then. David Pleat had gone but left things in quite good shape (well he

should have never returned) Mick Harford was knocking on the door of the England team and most Luton fans still knew who Raddy Antic was. Unlike the fans who walked past him at Notts. County on the last game of last season when we had just been relegated. I just shook his hand apologised to him and walked on. (How come a statue has never gone up of him outside the Town Hall.)

Well may be I should not be so greedy, I did use to pray for one Wembley Cup Final in my lifetime and may be it is my fault for not stipulating F.A. Cup Final.

The Littlewoods Cup Final was great but it does not have the magic of the FA Cup and we did get there in the 1959 Final and of course I have seen us in two FA Cup Semi-Finals (they say the pain of Villa Park will heal one day, but I am still not sure) so may be I shouldn't complain and just carry on watching page 311 on teletext which says Luton v Bristol City (postponed again).

Friday 22 January 1993

A Downward Slide Towards Oblivion

Well we find ourselves progressing on the wonderful road to Wembley. I can almost hear Kohler now "winning the Cup is going to bankrupt the club". But of course, it is also going to give him lots more publicity and feed his ego. What a surprise he doesn't want to sell out and if he was to sell out he would like to stay on in some capacity or another. The sad thing is he probably believes that himself, or he realises no other company would give him thirty grand a year and a Range Rover. So we find ourselves still shouting (or whispering in some cases) for his head when may be we are missing the point. All of this Kohler Out business is detracting our attentions away from our high profile manager. That any T.V. or Radio company still thinks he has got any credibility left amazes me. Here we are fighting another relegation campaign and struggling to beat anybody and he is telling other managers what they should be doing. I know that all you Pro-Pleats are probably up in arms blaming everything and everyone other than Pleat, but he is the manager and he is tactically naive. Don't get me wrong I was his greatest fan first time around. But he took us as far as he could and for that I will always be grateful. But he should never have come back, and although Kohler keeps saying there was more to the Jimmy Ryan sacking, as far as I'm concerned he didn't do anything wrong.

We remember Pleat as such a great wheeler-dealer, well he really has lost it this time around. You really have to worry about someone who spends money on Trevor Peake. Although you can't compare them it is quite fair to say Peake isn't fit to tie Foster's bootlaces. I would like to have heard what Foster would have said to his defence had he been captain when we were cruising 3-0 against Cambridge and then we caved in. From where I was standing Peake didn't appear to have anything to say. As usual because he never seems to have anything to say. Is it any surprise that Dreyer and Hughes start scuffling on the pitch, I wonder what captain Trev had to say about that. With no discipline and no leadership, a manager who spends more time on a television gantry and a chairman who loves seeing his picture in the papers, it is a wonder to me that we haven't been relegated already.

So where does this leave us, Kohler tells anybody who will listen or should I say anybody who didn't change channel when he appeared that not only will he not act as a banker (exactly what I was thinking) but he is going to decide if

the person is fit enough to run the club. Well is it any surprise to anybody that we are now on a downward slide towards oblivion. Keith Haslam probably is not the answer and he definitely is not a Mr. Big but he seems to be the only one with the slightest interest in the club and at least he had been to the ground before his interest in buying the club, which is more than can be said for Kohler. So he should be allowed to have a try and let's be honest could anybody be more unpopular than Kohler.

Monday 25 January 1993 Cruel Irony

"On Saturday at 4.40, a bunch of vicious Hatters' fans would certainly have done him harm had they been able to lay their hands on him". Of course him is Kohler, and I was one of a bunch of vicious Hatters' fans. It is a great shame that the reporters from The Sun who interviewed him "in a refreshingly honest and frank interview just moments later" didn't bother to speak to some of the bunch of vicious Hatters' fans. The reporter may well have found out that we are not really vicious but even the most passive of people can only take so much until they snap. We have all read about death threats and being attacked driving through the town centre this might be true but this whole thing being a campaign of race hate is completely untrue. Being of the same religion as him I know this has nothing to do with anti-semitism as somebody said "It doesn't really matter if he was an Icelandic Moslem", we just don't want him running the club we support. I resist calling it "our" club while he is involved. He is never going to understand us or our view point, it doesn't matter how many fans he invites in to the boardroom or action groups he sees, he just doesn't share our feelings and passion for the club. Because he paid £600,000 (although one newspaper says "he paid £600,000 with a partner") he thinks that makes him a better supporter than anybody else, this is the sort of man we are dealing with. May be he should be more careful when spending that sort of money next time. He is not a chartered accountant as some of the press reported and one of the reasons "he had to move home" was because he has moved in to one of his own empty houses on his own empty development.

Kohler seems to be making this into a personal crusade for himself and it seems to me he does not have the clubs best interests at heart, he says "he will stay and fight the fans who aim such hate and venom towards him". What surprises me is how amazed he always is at the fans reactions towards him. As one paper reported "Luton's failure at home to Derby was not so much a thrashing as suicide by every method available". How would he feel if the team he supports had just committed suicide. He says "I've learned you mustn't let people who behave in a totally unacceptable way affect you". What he hasn't seemed to grasp is that we feel that he is behaving in a totally unacceptable way. It was different when there was no one around to buy his shares but now there is. Keith Haslam might not be a Jack Walker or a Lionel Pickering but as Kohler says "they wouldn't want to get involved in a club like Luton after seeing what happened today". But that happened because people care and they don't want to see it wound up. He says he "will stay and get it right but accept it's going to be a long, hard and bumpy road". Well if that's the case stop moaning and complaining the whole time. He knows that until he sells his shares he is stuck with them but we are stuck with him. The reporter in the Daily Mail was one of the few who actually got any where near the truth when he commented "The saddest conclusion, however, is that very few people beyond Luton's own, tight, football community, care very much.

When you have finished sieving through all the match reports, it is quite difficult to actually find any reference to the game, but I did manage to find some detail on the football things like "Derby were too aggressive for Luton, who were full of bright ideas but simply ran out of steam. Well that's down to the high profile manager. Yet Barnsley had the same gap between games and they didn't seem to run out of steam. Pleat says "I have made £3.2m by selling players in the last 15 months" - and that is a kick in the teeth for any manager. Well he was the one who took the club's Report and Accounts with him on holiday before accepting the job, why didn't he bother reading the thing. Doesn't he think it's a kick in the teeth for any fan having to hear him on the radio and television after we lost yet another game. Yet when you try and have a go at Pleat at a game you get people shouting don't blame him he is the one who is forced to sell all the players, well that might be true but he is the one who bought Trevor Peake and Ian Benjamin. The Daily Express reporter tells us "it was a cruel irony when ex-Kenilworth Road favourite Pembroke scored his hat-trick", he didn't know just how much cruel irony was involved when opposite his report was a picture of Wegerle showing his early goal for Blackburn and above that a headline mentioning Garry Parker for Villa, that's cruel irony.

So back to Kohler just in case he had thought I had forgotten about him, he tells us "I have to have a sense of humour to be involved in a club like Luton"! Wrong you don't have to be involved at all. Well if he thinks things are tough now I have a feeling if we keep losing home games things might get hotter still. So if Kohler and his fat property friend didn't find Saturday a laughing matter may be its best they find somewhere else to spend there leisure time.

Friday 29 January 1993 Bitter and Twisted

Why bother coming to watch? Its a very good question, but it is a very simple question. The real question runs so much deeper, probably much deeper than the questioner ever realises. The first thing to bear in mind is the fact that the person asking the question doesn't have the same feelings, passion or commitment even though they probably think they do. They are the sort of people who wouldn't think twice about missing five or six home games some for reasons they would think are quite acceptable, the wives birthday, an anniversary, or a wedding. Away games would probably be limited to two a season, one a close by London ground, the other the annual last game of the season to see if we can escape relegation. Although it looks as if these type of people will miss this seasons game at Southend, because it will probably all be over long before that game.

Another question aimed towards me is why don't you get behind them? Soon these people will want me to feel sorry for the players. There they are taking home about three times the average wage, training for two hours a day, two or three times a week, and coming up with second rate spineless incompetent performances and I've spent thirteen pounds to watch this garbage. When those overpaid nancy boys who think they are footballers start putting in something like as much commitment as I have put in getting there week after week then I will get behind them. If anybody else performed so badly at work they would be shown the door.

Somehow after close self examination, I find there must be some perverse pleasure to be obtained in such fanaticism, anyone can be blinded by seeing

only good, but it takes honesty and a certain amount of scepticism to see the real picture. Sure we can't compete with the big five and we are not going to win cups every other year, but whats wrong with some good honest toil and some honest comments from the manager. I am sick of him wasting my time telling me the soil mix is wrong. Its not the soil mix which gets overpowered in midfield or can't score goals, or is the worst centre-half in the world.

So the next few months will see me further tested, I will probably become more cynical, a lot more bitter, just a little bit more disillusioned and lot more twisted but I promise not to question those not as committed to the cause as me.

Horton Stephens

From across the Pond

With Luton Town comfortably positioned for yet another end-of-season relegation battle, it's time for a few notes from across the big pond. So, from this end of the pitch I'd just like to say:

- England will play three matches this coming June in America. They will be against the United States, Germany and Brazil.
- If the new Division One were the old Division Two do you think Luton would feel they would have to be at the bottom of it?
- No matter what the personal opinion is concerning the U.S. hosting the 1994 World Cup, make no mistake, it will be a total success.
- Still, it really won't matter in this country after it's over. A sad statement, but, unfortunately, true.
- Why is it that in surface area the Luton program is larger than most in Division One?
- I really feel proud knowing that the Town's sponsors' initials are USA.
- Of all the 1994 World Cup venues, Foxboro Stadium (Boston, Massachusetts) will offer the best atmosphere for supporters.
- And the brew pubs and ethnic bars within the Boston area will provide excellent beer.
- It still is unimaginable to think that the World Cup is going indoors.
- I have heard that one of the better pub football sides in England is the "Horse and Groom" located in Kent. Any truth to that?

Oh, well, back it is to the short-wave for me. Until there are a few more idle moments I'll just row back to my side of the pond.

Brian Surette

Come on You.....?

After the disappointment of the game on Boxing Day being called off it was a double blow to find the FA Cup 3rd Round game had also been called off. As I quickly glanced down the fixtures being played that day a thought sprang to mind. What would give me nearly as much pleasure as seeing a Luton victory, a heavy defeat for ****ford. With this in mind we decided to travel south down the M1 to see ****ford v Wolves.

As we relived famous victories against the old enemy the problem arose in conversation of which end to stand at. A difficult choice seeing as we had beaten both teams this year. Should we stand with a load of northerners cheering on victory or stand with the enemy and mock him unmercifully. On entering the Watford terrace a good vantage place was found, somewhat surprising seeing it was the 3rd Round of the Cup.

It wasn't long before Holdsworth had scored a beautiful own goal which will surely be included in Danny Bakers second edition of great own goals. As a deathly hush emanated from the Watford end, the Wolves fans went mad. The silence was hardly broken when ****ford scored against the run of play which was certainly undeserved.

With the start of the second half, one which Wolves should have been winning by at least two goals me and my fellow Town fans warmed up the mocking process. It seemed that the Wolves players could feel these comments emanating from our throats and started to score goals. The more we mocked the more they scored. Was I in heaven.

It was a good twenty minutes into the second half before we heard a cry of "Come on you Horns" which made us chuckle even more. The insults we shouted had no response on the Watford fans around us. So bad was the Watford play, they even started to join us. The noise increased until a chant of "Perryman out" could be heard, not bad two chants in over an hour and a half.

As the game petered out and Wolves scored their fourth the fans started to leave. On the final whistle one fan turned round to me and said he would probably see me next week. "Not likely", I replied. "I'm a Luton fan and only came here to see you get hammered and take the piss. Merry Christmas".

People will always discuss the derby games we have had with Watford but I will also comment that one of the best times I had was the 3rd Round of the FA Cup in 1992/93.

M.I.

According to the programme for the Brentford match, on 13th February, David Kohler was seen possibly following advice received from supporters. The programme states that "every able bodied person was forking the pitch, including David Kohler!"

If he was following advice received from fans we suspect that he may have misheard a request to "GO FORK YOURSELF!"

Mirror, Mirror.

This is the letter that we sent to the Daily Mirror in response to their outrageous headline (right).

We have not received a reply yet, but then did we really expect one?

Daily Mirror,
Holborn Circus,
London EC1P 1DQ.

Attention Mr Keith Fisher, Sports Editor.

28 January 1993

Dear Sir,

Reference your report on the Luton Town v Derby County match in Mondays (25/1/93) edition, headlined "Luton Race Hate Fury".

Whilst we applaud your crusade against racism in football, please stop tarring Hatters fans with the same brush as Everton supporters. Our conflict with Mr. Kohler is about football, and the security and future of Luton Town Football Club - not race.

This mistreatment of Hatters fans goes back to your November 10 "Race Hate Hell" article, which followed an item on Mr. Kohler which appeared in the Jewish Chronicle. In both items the treatment of Mr. Kohler by fans was grossly exaggerated, to such an extent that he told the local press that he had been misquoted. He still claims that on one occasion he heard the shout "Yid, Yid, Yid!", but no-one present at the protests, including the police, can back this up. Surprisingly, in view of the seriousness of racist abuse and the offence caused to his companions, he is unable to say when this happened.

We attended all of the after match protests last autumn and at no time was any reference made to Mr. Kohler's religion - in fact until November 10 the majority of supporters had no idea he was Jewish, and now that we do know we don't give a damn, because it simply isn't an issue.

As for your report last Monday, according to our local press aggressive moves were made, fists were waved but to quote a Luton Town spokesman "a lot's been made of very little". We can't condone the use of violence, and sadly, a few people will do stupid things, but after years of being criticised by the board for our apathy it is a bit rich to be portrayed as mindless thugs.

Now that you have printed Mr. Kohler's side to the story twice, how about printing the fans side? There are two sides to every story. Luton Town is a club suffering an ongoing crisis and the fans blame Mr. Kohler. Isn't it about time you asked them why?

Yours faithfully,
on behalf of the editorial team of Mad as a Hatter!

14 PAGES OF SUPER MIRROR SPORT

LUTON RACE HATE FURY

Louts hit
at chief

In Praise of David Kohler

I can't understand why people condemn Mr. Kohler and the current Board of Directors for doing their best to ensure that this Club stays in the highest position possible in the Football League.

These men have devoted a lot of time to the job. It takes a rare kind of man to give so much for so little. Of course players have to be sold. A Club such as ours has to get by on low attendances and at best the Club is making a loss.

The wage bill should really have gone down with relegation, but it hasn't. Every week Mr. Kohler and the other Directors have to dig deep into their pockets to pay the players.

So, the next time you feel like sticking "Kohler out" stickers all over the town, consider that money it cost to print them up would have gone a bit of the way to keeping the team in clean shirts.

It's easy to complain, but until some money bags wanker of a pop star or a drug baron from Colombia decides to buy the Club, then we have to support Mr. Kohler's efforts.

What a fine job he's done. He's kept us in Division One. Maintained our position in the division. Led the Club to a victory over Watford. Sold where necessary to keep the first team the shortest and youngest in the League. What a fine achievement!

So to sign off, thank God for the Devil you know.

Paul Devall aka 'Dr. BIG'

P.S. It is the April 1st edition of Mad isn't it?

P.P.S. If the people of Luton got off their f*****g arses and supported the Club, the problems would be very much diminished. Then again, I travelled 900 miles to watch the Sunderland home game and it was the biggest load of bollocks I'd seen in years. Hardly crowd attracting stuff. Mr. Kohler - please go and go quickly.

One and a Half ~~Two~~ Games in a Day

Sounds like one of those things you used to hear on 606: how many people have seen the same club twice on one day, first away then at home? Well the 27th of January I was going to just that except that it didn't quite go as I planned...

At 2.00 pm on the Wednesday, Luton Reserves were down to play Ipswich Reserves, at Ipswich, and the evening was the top v bottom clash with Newcasel. As I live a mere 20 miles from Ipswich it seemed like a good idea to catch the reserve game on the way - so I took the day off work and off I went. I suppose I should have known it was going to be a strange day for as I walked innocently through an Ipswich shopping arcade I was accosted by a skinhead (remember them? I must have stepped into a timewarp) who proceeded to tell me I must be mad to walk through Ipswich dressed like that (i.e. in a Luton promo jacket (why the hell are they called promo jackets anyway?)), that Ipswich fans hated Luton (can't say I've noticed) and then sadly lamented the passing of the good old days (when you could have a good scrap with the Luton Migs). He then regaled me with a tale of how they (he and some 200 of his mates I think) took over a Watford pub and scared the shit out of a few Watford fans - he didn't seem to like them much either so I suppose he wasn't all bad. Anyway after that entertaining interlude I went to the Portman Road ground with about 10 minutes to the kick off and saw this poster on the gate: "Today's Combination Match will be played at Bury St. Edmunds". Oh, is that so, ah well, it's only 20 miles away...

Well, Bury is on the way to Luton anyway so back to the car and on my way. Now everyone has had fun from time to time trying to find that elusive ground but at least you normally get some garbled directions in the last programme to help. I know where Bury cricket ground is so I went that way first but, no, not there. After some 10 minutes driving round and round I decided to break with tradition and ask someone the way. Of course they didn't know either but thought it was "over there somewhere". Eventually I caught sight of some "floodlights", very short ones as this is a Beazer Homes club we're talking about here, and after going up three dead ends found the place just before the half time whistle blew. We were 1-0 down already apparently. Soon after the start of the second half we were two down to a cracking header from the edge of the box. Would we crumble? Would we collapse?

NO!! The reserves acted out a complete mirror image of the first team, they came back from 2-0 down to win 3-2 with a last minute goal! If this carries on I'll give up watching the firsts and follow the damn reserves round the country instead! The winner was a corker, a lob from all of 30 yards over a stranded keeper. So it was worth it after all and I can always say it was another ground to visit - if I ever go senile and become a groundhopper at least I've got a few non-league grounds under my belt now. It's a tiny ground, about 100 people in attendance though, but one side is very shallow, with a marsh behind, that they lost even more balls over that side than we usually do over the Executive boxes (yes that many!). And reserve games are always more intimate, you can hear every shout, every abuse - and that's just

the players. How about this: Campbell stands one foot from a player at a throw in. Wayne Turner asks him quite why he stood there to which he replies "I'll stand where the fuck I want". Quite Jamie, quite.

So has anyone ever seen Luton one and a half times in a day? Home and away? Of course you have, hundreds of you, I wasn't even the only Town supporter at Bury St. Edmunds on this day and as I went out I brightly said to a fellow Hatter "Now let's go and sort Newcastle out". "That'll be a different story," he replied - and it was, sort of, but then you'll know that because you were there, well, if you weren't where were you?

The Expatriate

And, if you weren't well you missed a bit of a treat - this was as good a 0-0 draw as you'll see. Most encouraging from a Town point of view was the way they bounced back from the Derby game with such skill and commitment that at times it was difficult to tell which side was top and which was bottom, both tried to play football as it should be played and it was only thanks to two fine goalkeeping performances that the onion bag wasn't disturbed. One of those games where you have the ground thinking "Now if we played like that every week...."

Finally, two special mentions. Martin Williams was outstanding, especially in the second half, he looks like yet another to watch (and sell). Also, and this really goes against the grain, Alf Buksh the referee, who played his part in letting the game flow - easily the best ref. we've had this season.

A.C.



Clean Sheets and all that

12.12.92 WOLVES 1 TOWN 2

Three wins away before Christmas is virtually unheard of in Luton, so I suppose that relegation has had its compensations. When Town have won the occasional away game it hasn't been at the larger grounds, nor when they go one goal down. Today was to prove an exception on both counts.

Despite going one down, the equaliser soon came and for the rest of the match Town were to remain in control. But just as a draw seemed inevitable, the winner came by way of Phil Gray's second goal. A mistake by the Wolves keeper on the edge of his box let in Gray who nudged the ball goalwards. Those of us on the terrace beckoned and the ball duly obliged.

All too often in the past Luton have been the victims of late goals, which made this victory even more sweet. Even better was the fact that in the last few minutes Luton still looked the team more likely to score and apart from poor finishing we would have. Still, with our away record in recent seasons, we have to be grateful for small mercies.

P.I.

19.12.92 TOWN 0 SUNDERLAND 0

Why is it that visiting goalkeepers are ALL playing blinders at Kenilworth Road this season? Beats me ... but not them! A lot of huffing an' puffing, not really much else, except if after all that experience in the football league, all Mr. Butcher can do is push, kick and pull then is it worth it? All that and I've got a Luton free Christmas, bloody hell I better get drunk!

The Major Oak

28.12.92 WEST HAM UNITED 2 TOWN 2

In a season in which we've thrown away our fair share of leads, it was a real novelty to see the lads fight back from 2 down, especially against a side that will be there or thereabouts when the promotion places are decided.

After a dull first half in which the only incident of note was a disallowed "goal" for West Ham which, I have to say, was a very marginal offside decision, things really livened up in an exciting, end to end second half. Town, in particular, had come out strongly after the break and it was slightly against the run of play when West Ham scored from the spot - a fair decision but I doubt Mr. Pierce would have given it at the other end. Soon afterwards Timbo lashed in a 30 yard rocket as we'd been expecting him to do all afternoon and that was that. Or so we thought, as straight from the kick-off without a Hammers player touching the ball, Becksy pulled one back with a deflected drive from 20 yards. We were still in a state of shock when Dreyer somehow bent his neck to loop a header over Miklosko and two defenders on the line and, yes, it did cross the line - just. For ten minutes afterwards, the Town carved through West Ham at will with Scotty in particular creating havoc, but by the end we were happy to settle for a well earned draw. As West Ham

piled on the pressure at the end Clive Allen shot straight at Alec when you would have put your bottom dollar on him scoring, and his cousin Martin managed to put an injury time effort out of the ground, but we deserved the point for showing the guts and character to come back when all looked lost.

A.C.

09.01.93 BIRMINGHAM 2 TOWN 1

We were beaten by, depending on your point of view, an absolutely brilliant goal, or a complete fluke. I'll leave you to make up your own minds, but when a striker like John Gayle spends 87 minutes showing a complete lack of footballing ability, then bends a shot in from 25 yards, you do begin to wonder....

Ultimately, though, we paid the price for not being positive enough, once we'd equalised through Becksy's corner (lucky!!), it was obvious that Birmingham were there for the taking but all too often the final ball wasn't good enough - Preece in particular had a poor day - or the support for Gray didn't materialise so, not for the first time this season, our territorial (and technical) superiority counted for nothing. Definitely one that got away.

A.C.

16.01.93 TOWN 0 COUNTY 0

First half - "same ol' Luton, takin' the piss - same ol' Luton another near miss ...". And so it came to pass that Fatman Cherry led a charmed life, with a bar, a post and another great save - you get your life ...

Second half - no one had a clue how to kick the damn ball. Normally reliable feet, suddenly turned into enemies from within - oh well, at least we didn't lose! There is unrest in the forest ... (SIGH!)

The Major Oak

19.01.93 TOWN 2 BRISTOL CITY 0
(or, the Pools Panel got it right!)

It couldn't be worse than Notts. and, luckily for us, it wasn't. Mind you, the first half hour almost matched it for ineptness but quite unexpectedly one of the sides (us) managed to string more than two passes together and Phil Gray lashed Preece's cross home. At least this livened the game up, with the Town starting to turn on the style, and Bristol starting to turn on the Town - Cole in particular seemed to completely lose it and a less charitable referee would certainly have sent him off for raising his hands to Peake, James AND Rees in one incident. On reflection, this lit the fuse for what happened later when Gray, angry after Osman took him out late and unpunished took his revenge with a similarly poor tackle on Scott whose retaliation deserved, and was awarded with, the first red card in a Town game this season. Telfer in particular took advantage delivering any number of good crosses, but it wasn't until eight minutes from time that the second goal came when Becksy lashed a left foot shot high into the net to complete a win that could, and probably should, have been more convincing.

A.C.

23.01.93 TOWN 1 DERBY 5

The trouble with Luton Town:

- 1) They lift your hopes,
- 2) They shit all over them.

What a demoralising day, having had our hopes of walking down Wembley Way risen in the week, back came Pembridge & Co to finish off the job that they had started earlier in the season - of humiliating us.

At last we conceded the inevitable fifth goal at home, having threatened to do it for months.

Yet again, things had started so brightly for us, culminating with a deserved goal on the half hour.

Having given us a very charitable head start, Derby then decided to get going, and 15 minutes later the score was 1-3, largely thanks to Pembridge who in all honesty, had a blinder (serves the Kenny End for calling him a w****r - I didn't).

We started the second half with little hope, and our fears were soon confirmed, as Derby threatened to run riot. At the end we were grateful for only five. The M.D. showed he had his head screwed on for a change, unlike the editorial team, by leaving before the end. Subsequent events in the Maple Stand indicated that he was lucky he did...

Objét

27.01.93 TOWN 0 NEWCASTLE UNITED 0

Great game, first half was one of the most satisfying Town performances for ages. Not only that but tactically it was great to watch two teams that had been told to go out and play in a certain way and doing just that. In the second half Davey boy swapped it about and again gave the Geordies a hell of a lot to think about, except for two late shots that brought great saves out of Alec. A game that neither side deserved to lose.

NICK

30.01.93 BRISTOL CITY 0 TOWN 0

Regrettably, due to the extremely inebriated condition of your roving reporter (in fact, all of us) on this day, there isn't much to honestly say about the game. After reading the Sunday tabloid press, I felt sorry for everyone who had to watch the game sober if the reports are accurate.

I do remember Phil Gray hitting the bar with a header, and Alec making a few saves though, but I'm afraid the pre-match entertainment was far more memorable.

Objét

06.02.93 TOWN 2 LEICESTER 0

The way Leicester had been playing lately, I thought we were in for it today. Thank God, I thought wrong and the Town won their first Saturday home game of the season.

Overall it wasn't much of a game to watch, mainly due to Leicester's ineptness (is that a word?). The players that most shone for the Town were the goalscorers. Marvin - great header. I just wish he would show more consistency; I shit myself every time he gets the ball in defence. Phil Gray - another 90 minutes full of aggression from him capped by a deserved goal - surely he'll be the next to go. Also earning a mention is the Peake/Dreyer double act - another clean sheet. There must be another thrashing somewhere round the corner. Joking aside though, they kept the Leicester attack, especially Oldfield quiet throughout. (I was amused to read the player-by-player marks in Monday's 'Daily Anti-Nazi-League' - sorry - 'Daily Mirror' giving Oldfield 9 out of 10...)

In fact, there was more action from the 'Leaders' at half time (pathetic) than the Leicester attack throughout. My old mate the announcer acted like a pratt again by leaving his mike on at the beginning of the second half. It's a shame he didn't say anything incriminating, we might have finally got rid of him. I'd rather hear Jim Davidson... no, cancel that!

Objét

08.02.93 TOWN 0 BRENTFORD 0

Its all very well keeping a clean sheet and not losing, but this great game is supposed to be about goals and entertainment. After the 4th 0-0 in six games the novelty is beginning to wear off. Brentford came for a draw but were closest to winning with one rattling off the crossbar just before half time. Luton needed to change things around in the second half, but didn't even though some we could mention didn't really get involved enough. As for scoring chances Phil Gray had a couple, and Suave Marv had a speculative shot, but thats about it. More goals please, this is a game for the fans, not the bloody purists.

K.F.H.

13.02.92 TRANMERE ROVERS 0 TOWN 2

A couple of us decided to give this game a miss, as we felt that after all those clean sheets there would be a deluge of goals coming soon. Instead we went to St. Albans City v Chesham United, the top of the table Diadora League clash. In a crowd of 2,880 we were probably not the only Town fans present, experiencing the rarity of a delayed kick-off due to the size of the crowd. Chesham had the better of the first half but it could only get better, as it did when the half time score came through from Prenton Park. Phil Gray had put Town 1-0 up and for the second half we had to decide whether to keep one ear to the radio for more news, or leave the inevitable disappointment until full time. Back at St. Albans, in the gathering fog, Chesham scored an early goal in the gloom at the far end of the pitch. We think they had more chances but visibility was intermittent. Curiosity got the better of us and the radio went on again and as news of Marvin's goal for Town came through, St. Albans grabbed an equaliser. Marvin's goal sounded excellent, the sort he has been threatening to score for years. Our confidence grew and St. Albans began to dominate but our minds were elsewhere. Final whistles were blown at Vicarage Road, where ***ford lost, at Prenton Park to signal a Town victory, and at Clarence Park where honours were shared. All in all, not a bad day, even for absent fans like us.

K.F.H.

Eds note: We hope to bring you an eyewitness account in the next issue.

BOBBIN'S BOOTS



BOBBIN HAD FOUND AN ANCIENT PAIR OF FOOTBALL BOOTS THAT USED TO BELONG TO ONE-TIME SOCCER STAR DEAD-SHOT ERIC

ACCORDING TO THE CLUB HISTORY DEAD-SHOT ONCE ENTERTAINED MILLIONS ON TV.



NEXT DAY WAS MATCH DAY

PLAY A BLINDER LADS, WE'VE GOT THE CAMERAS OUT THERE TODAY.



I'LL WEAR DEAD-SHOT'S OLD BOOTS AND HOPE THAT THEY MAKE ME PERFORM LIKE HE DID.



WOWEE, THE BOOTS ARE MAKING ME SKIP TO THE CENTRE CIRCLE!



WELL NOW, THERE'S ACTION A-PLenty AT KENILWORTH ROAD IF YOU KNOW WHAT I MEAN DES--



I THINK THAT WE COULD BE WITNESSING YET ANOTHER SENSATIONAL CHAPTER, OR NOT, AS THE CASE MIGHT BE-- YAWN

CRUMBS THE BOOTS ARE RUNNING ME INTO A TITANIC TACKLE



GERONIMO! REAL ROY OF THE ROVERS STYLE!

EXCUSE ME ONE MOMENT YOUNG SIR, BUT MIGHT I HAVE A QUICK WORD?



SHORT FAT HAIRY LEGS

WHAT YOU HAVE DONE REPRESENTS UNGENTLEMANLY CONDUCT.



JUST WATCH IT SUNBEAM!

HAVE A CARE, FOR I AM NON OTHER THAN DEADSHOT ERIC!



THIS RED CARD SAYS YOU'RE DEAD, SO SHOOT OFF! SONNY!!

HEIGH HO, HEIGH HO, TO AN EARLY BATH I GO!



IN THE CHANGING ROOM DID THOSE BOOTS ONCE BELONG TO DEADSHOT ERIC?



EEE THEM WERE T'DAYS DEADSHOT ERIC MORECAMBE THE BEST ENTERTAINER THIS CLUB EVER HAD!



WHAT DO YOU THINK OF IT SO FAR?



Raving Mad!!!

Dear "Mad"

After reading your recent article "What's in the net?" in Mad 14 I found myself rather disappointed for I, too, am a true lover of the "goal net". I felt he didn't guide us deep enough into the (er) intricacies of the net. We shall start with the nets at our very own Luton: Sadly, these nets do not stretch back in length but one does get a truly romantic bulge when one hits it with even an average amount of power. Yes bulge - bulge is a symbolic feature of a net, and it's what nets are all about really isn't it? - Who's got the biggest bulge?

So Luton's nets are one of the bulgiest but a net does really need to possess something else - stretching back in length type thing. For this one has to look no further than Barcelona. Talk about a dream net. Just thinking about scoring in a net like that is enough to make even Ray Wilkins stand up and shout "GOTCHA".

So what are the best nets in England - Well the ones at Leeds are pretty sexy and shapey and produce a good bulge. Did you see it when Cantona scored that juggling act last season, Cor Blimey. Ipswich have entered the strangest net contest - and won with a rather obscure portrait that is sort of half Luton, half Barcelona - You'll know what I mean if you've seen them.

Onto the crap nets: Tottenhams possess no bulge, no length, no obscure shapes of the actual netting, just plain boring. They might as well have a block of see-through wood there, it would do the same job. Other poor nets can be found at Chelsea and yes, I'm slightly ashamed to admit it, Wembley. (I'm slightly ashamed because I am a nationalist, and I seem to be one of a dieing band of true English supporters, so come on stop slagging off the wonderful English game - We are talented, so shut up Jimmy Greaves and stop whining about the wonder years. (Excuse me.) - It's not that bad, it's just that you've got those huge stanchions in the way.

Also, I hate Liverpools red nets. It's probably just me but it's just not a 'net' colour.

As I touched on earlier, there is also the shape of the netting to be considered - a likable style are the hexagonal ones found in Italy. (Which, indeed, Luton had for a bit.)

Finally, I like the nets which are held up by a piece of string connected to something at the back. (So there.)

I also think you should have a survey where different people vote on their favourite net, but I don't mind if you don't because I'm a fairly mellow guy.

Chris Miller

Flitwick

Bedfordshire

P.S. I think Martin Keown is horney, and yes, this letter is supposed to open the ANAS (The Associated Net Appreciation Society).

Dear "Mad"

Thanks for printing my letter (Mad 13) and thanks also for tidying up my sentences, I recall what I wrote came out a bit bubbled, but I felt like having a bit of a rant after watching us throw away a 2-0 lead. I also felt just a wee bit peeved the following Tuesday when at least we were upstaged by Portsmouth throwing away a 5-2 lead at Oxford.

I read Cosmo Steve's article with great interest, I too have a mild obsession with goal nets. He told the story of someone who asked for the nets at Luton to be changed because he couldn't see through them. Doesn't Steve remember against Liverpool last season the nets had indeed changed for the large holed Italian type, and then never seen again as the old nets came back. Cloak and dagger stuff eh? Perhaps Kohler objected to paying for bigger holes!

I have a request. Can someone tell me what the rest of the chant is that begins "Ee-ay, ee-ay, ee-ay, oh, up the football league we go ...?" I always try and work it out but for the life of me can't. It would be satisfying to find out the words, and by printing them perhaps more people would sing it.

In my last letter I mentioned someone who had a lot to say about his conversation with our beloved M.D. Since then he has had his story printed in the Luton News, so if he's reading this by now knows who he is, if he is reading then - sorry but I couldn't help but listen and what good pre-match entertainment it was too, much better than the torture we had to endure before the Sunderland match, and during it come to think of it.

Anyway, thats it for now. Keep up the good work, I'm very impressed with 'Mad's professional look, and at 50p a bargain at twice the price although considering your article in Mad 13, I shouldn't give you ideas! Seeing as Gareth Jones ended his letter in Mad 13 with a bit of Welsh (and rather rude at that), I thought I better had too, so here's a translation of a favourite chant on the Kenny:

Dyma Luton Town, Club Pel-droed Luton Town,

Ni yw'r ochr goram mair byd wedi gweld,

O bell ffordd!

Alright? Not 'arf!

Yours in bringing back Mighty Mick.

Yours faithfully

Hedd ap Sion

Aberystwyth

Dyfed

Dear "Mad"

On 2 January I went to watch the Brighton game against Portsmouth in the FA Cup 3rd Round. The local derby meant a capacity crowd in the Goldstone Ground of 17,851. There was a nice little ex-Luton contingent on the pitch with Steve Foster at the back for Brighton, as well as Kurt Nogood up front. Meanwhile Pompey had Ray Daniel at the back and Paul Walsh up the front. Fozzie was rock during the game, whilst Nogood was crap. Ray Daniel sat doing his job rather quietly and Walsh went off in the first half having picked up an injury very early in the half.

The only goal of the afternoon came in the 27th minute, Kurt actually picked up on a mistake in the Pompey defence and delivered a cross straight onto Matthew Edwards head.

The atmosphere throughout the game was one of hostility both on and off the pitch and minutes from time Pompey got what they thought was the equaliser only for Alf Buksh to disallow it. This incensed the travelling crowd who for a couple of minutes were all over the pitch still thinking it was a goal, much to the amusement of the seagulls. Just after the game got restarted there was a mass brawl involving the players (18 players according to the tabloids). But Brighton held on despite being pressurised throughout the second half and if Whittingham had played he would surely have stuck some of the Pompey chances away.

The final whistle was greeted by a medium sized fight at the far end of the pitch involving mostly Portsmouth fans (I think they were fighting amongst themselves).

Anyway the good news is that I managed to get to Kenilworth Road before Christmas but the bad news is that it was on a Friday (the week after beating the Scum). It was good to wander round outside the ground and nip into the shop to get a few pressies for myself!

Philip Morphew

Crowborough

East Sussex

P.S. Is it just me or does Jim "bald c**t" Smith like saying "very much so".

Dear "Mad"

LTFC has got enough problems at the moment. What with Kohler and Pleat, without so called Luton followers causing problems as well. I refer to the train journey back from Bristol City. A little sing-song and an OTT game of cards may be acceptable but what myself and other passengers were subjected to was totally out of order.

The continual barrage of noise, banging of tables (and anything else for that matter), turning on and off of the coach lighting, was bloody annoying to put it mildly, the throwing of objects with no regard for anyone sitting near by climbing on tables and chairs and banging on toilet doors (when in use). All this is totally unacceptable.

May be I am just an old fart who doesn't know how to enjoy himself any more, but come on boys, it just wasn't funny.

NAME AND ADDRESS SUPPLIED

Dear "Mad"

Thanks for issue 14 of MAAH. We would have done the same had we won! All I can say, and this hurts, is that the better team won. We lost the game in every department. Don't expect things so easy on April 3rd.

Matthew

Co-Ed, Clap Your Hands Stamp Your Feet
Watford

Dear "Mad"

I expect you're wondering why the house is called 'Kenilworth'? Especially as I changed it's name in this most miserable year.

Well firstly, it used to be called 'Serendipity' so something had to be done. I've followed 'The Hatters' for 38 years so I didn't have to use much imagination!

However, the guy painting the house (a former Farnborough Town player who follows Spurs) couldn't believe it especially when I insisted on having a navy blue garage door. After getting used to the idea he retorted "I suppose you want me to paint a 'king number 9 on the door too" - I replied, "no point we've sold him!" (This was around the time Mick went to Stamford Bridge.)

One day I'll get round to telling you about Luton's bravest performance v Middlesbrough in the '60s when Harry Walden broke his leg and we went on to win 4-3 against all the odds with Lutons probably worst team ever which included such forgettables as John Lornie and Jim Goldie - incredibly they both scored.

Best wishes.

A.R. Davis

Maidenhead

TOWN TRAVELS

06.03.93 PORTSMOUTH

This is one awayday that never quite lives up to expectations, what with the town not being quite sure wether its the seaside or a port, and the football ground being one that was quite impressive in Pompeys heyday, which wasn't exactly recently. The ground is in Fratton, hence its name, about 5 minutes walk from the railway station of the same name. There are quite a few pubs within 5 minutes of the station. Try the RED WHITE & BLUE, Fawcett Road for Gales Ales, the LANDMARK, 249 Fratton Road, a free house with good value lunches, or the ELECTRIC ARMS, 190 Fratton Road, an Ind Coope house.

13.03.93 GRIMSBY TOWN

Unlike Pompey this is a trip that is more pleasant than might be expected, mainly because the ground is in Cleethorpes. It is close to the railway but the station is about a 15 minute walk, either along the main Grimsby Road or along the Seafront. One feature of the ground is the new stand that has FINDUS, or FIND US, spelled out in the seats. With the ground half empty on my previous visit I never quite figured out which! In Cleethorpes visit WILLYS, 17 High Cliff Road, a pub with its own brewery, and nearby is SMUGGLERS, 12 High Cliff Road with a range of S & N beers. The road travellers amongst you might like to try a visit to Habrough just off the A18 and call at the HORSE & HOUNDS, Station Road, which is reputed to have excellent pub food as well as S & N beers.

24.03.93 MILLWALL

Its a cheering thought that this will be our last ever visit to the Den, although wether Senegal Fields turns out to be any less forboding we will have to wait and see. With this being an evening game there won't be much time for drinking for most of us, which is something of a relief. Those with time on their hands will be able to make their own plans. How's that for a cop-out?

03.04.93 WATFORD

Without a doubt the most important away game of the season. After all, who cares quite so much about the other 22 if we win this one? Normally I'd say let's get a few thousand of us over there to give it the atmosphere of a home match, but this season do we really want another home match? No, so let's just get there and out-sing the horns (oo-er), although that shouldn't be difficult. Pre match drinking is traditionally done in St. Albans, at the Goat or somewhere similar. Make your own plans.

10.04.93 SWINDLE TOWN

Not a misprint, that is what my spellchecker calls it, and it seems quite appropriate somehow. Should be quite an attractive match and is an easy journey to boot. The ground is only 15 minutes walk from the station, which makes the GLUE POT, Emlyn Square (Archers beers) quite handy for both.

17.04.93 SUNDERLAND

A return to the scene of Keith Barbers greatest triumph - master minding our escape from the F.A. Cup 1973 (see "Great Cock-ups of the 20th Century"). There may not be many more visits to Roker as a new ground is planned in a couple of years time. Try the PILOT CUTTER, Harbour View (A183), for Theakstons beers.

24.04.93 DERBY COUNTY

It's Saturday, it's April, so of course it's another away game. Good balanced planning by the old fixture computer, eh? Time the league got a new one. This would be a good day for a spot of revenge, and with their home form.....

The best pub in town is the BRUNSWICK INN, Railway Terrace, which always has a good range of beers, is close to the station and is worth a visit no matter how you travel. Nearer to the ground, and just round the corner from the away end is THE GRANGE, at the corner of Douglas Street and Malcolm Street, which may be worth a try.



Another Meeting with David Kohler

On Friday, 8 January Luton Action had a meeting with David Kohler. It was something of a farce, as DK seemed to think it was to discuss the possible appointment of a fan to the board, while Luton Action were under the impression that it was to allow a 3,000 signature Kohler-out petition to be handed over. Neither actually happened.

As the meeting has been fairly well reported in the local press, I will skip most of what they covered. However, some points were missed by them and that is what I will deal with here.

At the start of the meeting Kohler stated that he likes to deal in the truth, and that he felt he was on trial. He also stated that mismanagement (of the club) was not an issue for discussion. If this was the case I can only wonder why there should be any friction between the supporters and the Managing Director! As proof of his loyalty to Luton Town, Kohler informed the meeting that he has not had a season ticket at Old Trafford for 3 years. Thats OK then, isn't it?

Many matters were covered during the evening, but the two most crucial were the clubs finances and the sale of the club. On the finances a sheet of paper was produced by Mr. Kohler showing that over the 9 years from May 1983 to May 1992 the club made a trading loss of £9,568,000 and sold players for £6,467,904. This gives an accumulated loss of £3,100,096. However, nothing was shown of the sale of the ground for £3.5m which would have covered the lot, and transfers so far in 92-93 come to £1.5m. So in theory the club has around £2m unaccounted for, or at least unexplained. As for the current year losses are projected to be around £500,000, so you can guess what will have to happen to cover that! As an aside it comes as a shock to learn that while the club struggles along with 25 professionals on its books (17 senior and 8 junior) it has no less than 43 administrative staff. This does include the manager and coaching staff, but even so it seems a very high figure, and I do wonder if there is scope for savings here instead of having to send players out on loan to cut the wage bill.

As far as the sale of the club is concerned, Mr. Kohler made it clear that the affairs of Sizematch, the company which owns the shares, are a purely private matter as it is a private company. He again stated that if the right offer was made he would leave the club, no strings attached, but the buyer would have to prove they could do a better job (no strings?). He stated that his service contract with the club was irrelevant to any sale, but he would like to stay on the board, and stay on in an advisory capacity (God help us!). He would also be willing to leave "some" loans in to help the club, his own loan being £100,000. His salary from the club (around £35,000 a year) did not affect a sale as it isn't enough to live on! At the time of the meeting there were no offers to buy the club on the table, in Mr. Kohler's opinion, although that situation has now clearly changed. Sadly, the question remains as to how keen and willing to sell the club Mr. Kohler really is.

The final point is a brief one. Mr. Kohler was asked if in any future player sale he would sell regardless of the effect it may have on results. The answer was yes. It seems he will only be influenced by results of the financial variety.

Town in Victory Scandal

The world was shaken yesterday at the unbelievable news that Luton Town actually won a football match. The shock victory over Frickley Athletic Youth Reserves by 1-0 is being examined by Scotland Yard's Serious Fraud Squad amid allegations of match-rigging. When asked to comment on the incident, Luton Town Manager, David Prattle said,

"I am furious. Week after week I tell the lads that winning is bad for our reputation. We must not sacrifice our principles and throw away everything that this club has achieved in the past four years. Football isn't about winning, it's about taking part and enjoying the game. Being successful just spoils it".

This result had serious effects on the economy. The FTSE index dropped 374 points on hearing the news, the pound collapsed (see separate headline, "Lamont suggests sellotape to fix the pound"), interest rates disappeared and Belgium invaded Ipswich while nobody was looking. When asked why the economy had reacted so badly, Norman Lamont blamed the Germans.

As for the match itself, Luton dominated and got the goal they deserved when David Preece scored on 27 minutes. He then had to be stretchered off and is currently undergoing treatment for shock. Luton's desperate attempts to concede a last minute equaliser constantly failed, and John Dreyer had rotten luck when his powerful header hit his own post.

What the future holds for the club after yesterday is uncertain, although sales of several players have been rumoured to try to avoid repetition of last night's victory.

Graham Johnson

View from the Backside

You've heard the middle, left and right sides of the Kenilworth End, well now you've got the backside boys to contend with as well. Backsider's of the world unite!

This edition we feature the continuing saga of, Scotty Oakes, Scotty Oakes, Scotty, Scotty Oakes, when he get's the ball he does f*?= all. Well let's face it what has Master Oakes done in his time at Luton. Two league goals last season, versus Sheffield Weds (away). LOST 3-2 and versus Palace (home), DREW 1-1, the cross and run leading to Saint Mick Harford's goal versus Arsenal at home last season, three league goals this season including a match winning goal versus Scumford. Coupled with the odd piece of magic once in a "blue moon". To me Oakes typifies the younger element of players today, playing when they feel like it and generally needing a good kick up the backside.

Half-hearted performances are NOT what we need right now, we need players who are prepared to die for the club. Well, maybe that's a slight exaggeration but regrettably Oakesy does not fit into the above category, let's face it, he puts himself out when HE feels like it.

I am not 'slagging' Scotty off, (Really? - Eds) only putting forward a mild case of constructive criticism.

I don't doubt for one minute that the lad has talent, I just wish he'd show it more often than he does.

So next time you have the urge to sing. Scotty Oakes, Scotty Oakes, etc. for gods sake think again, waste your time on another worthy cause such as there's only one Des Linton!

G.S.

WHAT THE FUTURE MAY HOLD

Since taking charge three years ago, David Kohler's time at Luton has certainly been eventful. Successful is not a word that instantly springs to mind though. You all know the facts and have also heard the excuses. Needless to say the frustration of the clubs supporters is both understandable and justified. In recent months a number of parties have been linked with a possible take-over of the club. None as yet have led to an agreement, yet all have been greeted with enthusiasm from supporters who have no confidence in the current board.

Will the departure of David Kohler solve Lutons problems overnight? The answer to this is definitely not. The simple fact is that there are not many Jack Walker type figures out there with endless money to spend on Luton. More likely is that any new directors will again prove to be no more than providing security in respect of the clubs overdraft as well as providing short term loans repayable on request. Similar take-overs in the past have proved to be little else and when the overdraft limit is reached, a player is sold.

Overdrafts and football clubs are though quite commonplace. Both Everton and Celtic have overdrafts approaching £5 million. Unlike Luton though, both have a potentially large support, have a long tradition and have not sold their grounds. The main problem with Lutons finances is that it does not own its ground and therefore has no fixed assets to act as security on an overdraft. This leads to the sale of players dictated by the bank rather than by need.

Clearly, if Luton are to survive as a club, the situation that has developed in recent years cannot be allowed to continue. The main failure of the current board of directors has been its inability to solve Lutons financial problems. Only when this happens will player departures halt with the then manager in a position to enter the transfer market through choice rather than through need. The main problem is though that these problems have remained unsolved whilst a number of players have departed to keep the club afloat. Luton though is fast running out of quality players left to

sell and if the current situation remains unchecked, the future of the club must be in doubt.

A common saying in football is that you cannot run a football club as a business. Yet, this is exactly the approach that is needed if Luton are to survive. Any new board of directors must look at the clubs income and expenditure and try to ensure that hopefully the former exceeds the latter. If not then hopefully any losses can be kept to a bare minimum so, enforced player sales are no longer commonplace.

The main expenditure for any club is its wage bill. This is an area that is difficult to tackle with players demands and varying lengths of contracts. Any club though must keep its players through paying realistic wages. An area that may prove easier to address is the income generated by the club.

Whilst it is impossible to have a magic wand to increase crowds, clearly keeping your better players will at least maintain them. A new ground with decent facilities may attract a few more fans. More importantly though, a new sports complex providing various leisure, sports and social needs may provide the extra revenue that Luton needs to survive. It is on this basis that any new board must look to search out ways of solving the clubs financial problems.

Clearly a move to a new stadium as a part of a complex incorporating other uses will prove unpopular with many fans. Others will also say that Luton should stick to football and not look into other areas for providing an income. Whilst such a traditionalist approach is understandable, it does very little to impress the bank manager. After all, player sales will only stop when the club shows a profit or at the very least significantly reduced losses.

Any changes in a traditional game such as football will always be controversial. Lutons recent experiences in relation to artificial pitches and banning away fans provided an obvious example. However, if clubs like Luton do not look at other areas to provide extra revenue then debts and player sales will remain. It is when a clubs debts cannot be covered by player sales that the real problems start. This is something that Luton must avoid before it is too late.

P.I.

Loan Players

Does anyone know how the loan system works in this country? No, I don't expect you do.

When I receive my copy of the Luton News a week or so after the latest disaster and I see the names of the donkeys that continue to get picked by Mr. Pleat, I wonder what the hell is happening.

Tricky Dave Kohler tells us the wage bill is astronomical to keep these Eeaws off the dole. Perhaps we should let a few more go. We must be saving on Kamara, I'm sure Northampton or Gillingham would jump at the chance of a loan of Linton or Marvellous Marvin.

Then we could put the money into a loan of our own. Some eminent but slightly old players have been knocking around lately, all with more going for them than Ian Benjamin and that other oaf Claridge, who did the right thing by going back to the Cambridge carrot eaters.

How about Paul 'Punchy' Davis, in the doldrums at Arsenal, must be a good choice, but no, he's gone to Bristol City. As club's find it difficult to meet their wage bills every month, some choice, slightly shop soiled players will be up for grabs.

Will Dave 'If they don't like me scream to the Jewish Chronicle to whip up anti anti-semitic support' Kohler stump up the cash? We have only twenty matches to go and the second division looms large and unexciting. What price the Club then?

Let's hope the boy Haslam gets control, at least we'll have someone else to moan at!

Makes you feel old - football club chairman used to be older than me!

Dr. BIG

Passion - Dead or Alive?

Whilst reading the sports pages of one of the national newspapers, I was surprised to see myself agreeing with some comments being made by a Mr. G. Souness. Anybody who knows me, knows I haven't got a good word to say about anything that comes out of Liverpool, especially the football teams and their fans. The article proceeded by stating that top premier league players didn't show the passion they should, towards the teams they play for and to a lesser extent football in general. He could see this especially at Anfield. My initial response to this was that Mr. Souness was developing another excuse to go along with the "injury hit Liverpool" one.

As I continued to read, the article commented on aspects that I could see happening to a lesser extent on the field of play in Division 1. Many of the fans who watch the Town week in, week out would dearly love to swap positions with any one of the eleven players, playing any particular match. Gone are the days when the passion on the terraces was matched by passion on the field of play. Many people would say that the lack of passion is due to the rewards offered to top football players these days.

Greater passion can be seen in youngsters just starting at clubs and in players in lesser divisions as they try to make their way towards the upper divisions. As they get nearer the top the rewards become greater and the passion dies as their thoughts move from football to the finer things in life. Football has become merely a well paid job.

Fans thrive on passion being shown by players. Any player showing signs of such passion will win the undying support from the fans but lose the passion and the fans will surely turn. I'm afraid a classic case of this has been seen at Kenilworth Road lately and anybody who has been regularly over the last year or so will know who I'm writing about. Anyway my passion for the Town will hopefully never die and I eagerly await another article from Mr. Souness which isn't dispatched to the nearest bin.

M.I.



Racism in English Football?

Does anyone remember the bad old days, when coloured players were received with taunts and racist jobs? I do, and I'm white. It all seemed part of British humour - led by total wankers like Jim Davidson and Ron Noades and Bernard Manning!

Remember the movement led (?) by the Daily Mirror to "clean up" the terraces? What happened to that? Died when the "Bouncing Czech" found the water too deep, no doubt. Incidentally, the Czech's don't like that monicker, after all he was British for more of his life than Czech!!

"When Saturday Comes" was printing a load of anti-Maxwell things at the time, and its usual supply of anti-Luton shit as well.

I had the misfortune to attend an Oxford United - Newcastle United match - the reason for this was my girlfriend was attending a lecture in the city of dreaming spires and dopey yokels - so I took the opportunity of going to - well, I'm sure their ground has a name. Anyway, I was safely in the 'home' end as suggested by Sgt. Bugs Bunny the "Oo-aar" Copper.

The game went dismally - fatso Quinn, now hot property at Coventry or somewhere missed a few sitters. Some ex-Luton pillock with a headband played quite well and saved the yokels a few times. In the second half the Geordies defended the end with the titchy cycle stand - or home end - it probably has a name. Another ex-Luton player (now the second division leading scorer) missed an open goal.

"Yew, black cur***" shouted local yokel behind me. "Furk off ter Lunnon" shouted another.

Well, well, well. Mark Stein came closer a few times but failed to score - yokels continued their banter - what price Little and Large??

I was so moved, that I wrote to the Daily Mirror, a paper I hate anyway, and WSC. Not a furking dicky-bird!! So I wrote to Oxford United, and got a letter from some toady, also surprisingly called Maxwell, saying whereas he couldn't refute my serious allegation, no complaints had been made before!! Obviously "black curnt" isn't racist!!

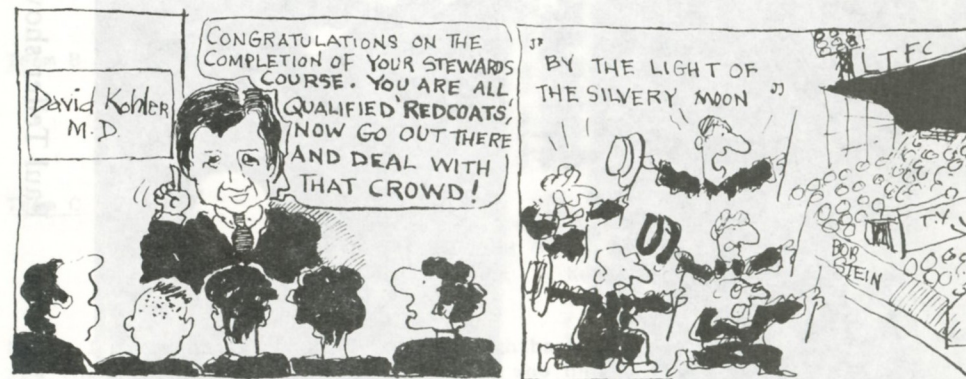
Justice - "Look in the Mirror" - gurgle, gurgle.

Kaptain Kettle

Funny People At Football Matches #3

This man is already famous (and it is indeed a man for I have seen him, and yes, I have spoken to him!). His savage wit and boundless creativity have already been rightly lauded in other publications (no, I don't mean Pat Flood). I am afraid I do not know this mans name but he has surely given countless Luton fans untold pleasure over recent years. I refer of course to the Poster Man who was acclaimed in Town 4 which eulogised him for his posters at the Oak Road end after relocating there from the Bobbers - during last season he took up his appointed place in the New Stand and from that fabulous viewpoint displayed all the old astuteness and sagacity. There have been posters welcoming back old favourites now playing for the opposition (I await this seasons game against Derby with bated breath), posters exhorting the team to greater heights and posters with some very abtruse comments on life in general. One hopes that this season he has lost none of his verve - football needs people like him!

The Expatriate





Paul Telfer shows Andy Roxburgh what he's made of

Three Teams for the price of.....

The thought occurred to me over Christmas that Luton Town must have more former players still playing in the senior English and Scottish Leagues than any other club.

The list includes players from that wonderful '85 squad, 'laughing boy' Harford's teams and Kohler's 'farm'! - players past their 'sell by date', Internationals, Heroes and Villains - some that had it and never used it and some who worked their socks off for the Hatters.

The criteria was to choose players who are now with other clubs and are still in first team squads.

What talent has trod the turf, plastic and mud of Kenilworth Road?

Amazingly, I came up with more than 40 players who qualified excluding Lars Elstrup who ran away to Denmark but had doubts that Richard Cooke, Robert Wilson, Ashley Grimes, Raphael Meade and Ron Futchter were in 1st team squads (they were last year but what about this?)

I couldn't find places for Sean Farrell, Steve White or Kurt Nogan, so they can be subs!

I've excluded trialists such as Ronnie Rosenthal and loan transfers like Steve Sutton.

The teams are as follows:-

Team A

		Sealey	
Breaker	Elliott P.	Donaghy	Jackson
	Pembridge	Parker	Black
	Newell	Harford	Wegerle

Team B

		Dibble	
Beaumont	Futchter P.	Foster	Thomas
	Wilson	McDonough	Oldfield
	Walsh	Dowie	Stein M.

Team C

		Judge	
Kamara	Rodger	Aizlewood	Daniel
	Thompson	Stein B.	Kennedy
	Claridge	Small	Weir

N.B. I'm not happy about Kamara at rightback or Brian in midfield - what do you think, what would your Team A be - who have I missed - can we get these players back together for a testimonial or can Kohler find some money and resign (SIC) the Team A. They could beat most of the mediocre Premier teams!

I look forward to the comments of 'Mad' editors and readers.

Andy Davis

A "Local" Derby

The coaches outside the ground in Brno would put most English Premier League teams to shame, only Manchester United and their traitor supporters are used to seeing 83 in one place.

Yes, BOBY are playing away. Our trip this week is to the country's capital, Prague, for the top of the table battle with rivals Sparta Prague. By Anglia TV's rules this is a local derby game, Prague is only 200kms away!

The coaches are provided free by the club, the tab is being picked up out of the pocket of Mr. BOBY himself. A local entrepreneur, who also has dabbled in property development, but had the sense to get out whilst the going was good. Sound similar to Luton Cola? Somehow, I can't see Luton's incredible Chairman digging into his own pocket to ensure that the club has sufficient support at away matches.

The trip to Prague takes a few hours. As the only non-Czech in the multitude I read "VIZ" most of the way there. It takes this long to get through it, as I have to explain all the jokes to the Czechs with me. They particularly like the "Billy the Fish" Super Duper league. VIZ hits the nail on the head again!

We arrive at Sparta in time to have a few beers whilst we are pointed in the right direction by stern looking Prague and Czech Republic police. These guys are the same ones that were breaking heads before the 'velvet revolution' got rid of the commies, now they are called Police rather than bastards. Lots of them still are bastards though. Video cameras are very much in evidence as we stream from the coach park. The 'Rowdies' wave for the cameras and do acrobatic tricks, "Hloupý bratru" (Loopy brothers) do the best pyramid for the cameras. The alsations think it's funny to bark and attempt to bite the bottom layer!

With the entertainment over we find our places on the terrace. This stadium is very large and there are a lot of seats, but not for the BOBY supporters. Later in the month CS (CS? Who? - Eds) had their get together before flying to Rumania for a world cup qualifier here.

Sparta come out first, and although they're fourth in the league their strikers find it impossible to hit the target and the 'keeper warms up by stopping balls knocking over his beer, or whatever he had in the large ADIDAS bag that he kept putting between himself and the photographers!

The match kicked off in dry weather, cold and crisp enough to make sure the players keep running about. BOBY pile on the early pressure and fail to score. In fact to be honest they didn't look like scoring all afternoon. The Lutonesque performance was sealed when Captain Peaky rival Wotshisnameov missed his tackle and the previously erratic striker slipped past BOBY's Grobelaaresque keeper. 1-0. Bollocks.

BOBY held out until half time. It was too cold for a beer so we had a coffee instead. Coffee is called 'kava' here. It's a brown sludge with a bit of scummy water on the top. Don't drain your cup! The inch deep of coffee grounds are unpleasant!

The second half is better, BOBY have had their pep talk and they attack constantly, in fact they are so confident they leave old Peaky-ov to guard the young nineteen year old whizz kid, soon to piss off to Wopland striker. Sparta 'keeper, punts ball upfield Peaky-ov is left for dead and striker lobs o ut rushing Brucie-ov! 2-0. The third came soon after, at least young super boy let one of his team mates score this time! Although, unselfishly he had two shots blocked before letting his fellow striker bang the ball into the net. The little git.

The trip home was like my trips home from Old Trafford and White Hart Lane last year, except, I was stuck with 47 miserable Czechs instead of riding DR BIG home in the rain, alone!

Next week we're at home to some crap literally called Danube Wednesday! What a wank name for a football team! And then away to Slovakia for a match with Nitra. Should be fun! Let's hope the generous hand of Mr. BOBY digs deep again.

This is your Czech correspondent saying 'na shledanou' until we meet again!

Paul 'DR BIG' Devall

The Competition Page

Our Tale of the Sea competition in issue 14 attracted a record number of entries, and we would like to thank all 4 of you. Joint winners with 3 wrong (according to the official list of answers which makes less sense than their entries) were Les Miller of Kempston and Steve Smither of Letchworth. Well done, both of you, the prizes are in the post. The official list of answers are as follows:-

Brighton, Orient, Hull, Crewe, Forfar, Wednesday, Arsenal, Motherwell, Doncaster, Bolton, Oldham, Fulham, Stockport, Bury, Falkirk, Chester, Lincoln, Montrose, Dumbarton, Luton, Portsmouth, Coventry, Newcastle, Blackburn, Ayr, Hearts, Leeds, Preston, Blackpool.

For this issue we have another competition, the idea being simply to get the clubs names from the cryptic clues provided. Entries to the usual address, closing date 31 March, and again judging is by the seriously strange Mr. Nick Gazeley.

Clues as follows:-

1. HEAVY WEIGHT TOILET
2. WILD DOGS
3. PROFESSOR OF ROLLERS
4. GLASS MANSION
5. MALE MEADOW
6. ANIMALS CAR
7. DIRTY WATER
8. EXPENSIVE FURNITURE
9. PUSH A WEIGHT
10. MALE ALTOGETHER
11. STEEL CITY DAY
12. ALWAYS ONE HUNDRED
13. FAMOUS FOR BUNS
14. NOT AN EASTERN DISH
15. B.L. MANAGEMENT WILL SAY IT
16. NEWSPAPER T.V. RENTAL CO AREA
17. WHERE WOMBLES MET MCENROE
18. BLEAK EXTRA
19. DETECTIVES NEED THEM
20. FAMOUS FOOTBALL BROTHERS
21. VEHICLE SURROUNDED BY WATER
22. OPPOSITE OF DULL OFF
23. COTTON FACTORIES OWN BARRIERS
24. WHAT BAMBER MIGHT SAY
25. LOCK THE DOOR
26. LOYAL LEISURE AREA GUARDIANS
27. COWS PRIVATE LAND
28. SMASHED UP CARS FOOD
29. THEY PUT THE X IN SAVINGS
30. FAR EAST CONNECTION
31. COWBOYS BOOTS HAVE THEM
32. COLLECTION OF ARMS

Tales of Woe

Now then, I happen to know that one of our editorial staff and I both share this memory very well. It goes back over 20 years, but dear old Keith, his memory lapses every now and again. It was the 1970/71 season (my first season as a regular), the fixture Town v Carlisle United who were at that time, and until 1973/74 when we stuffed them 6-1, a bogey side for the Town. On this occasion we had no chance of burying the hoodoo, us with McDonald, Givens, Ryan, Read, Moore, etc. and playing for them that great cricketer Chris Balderstone. Well, suffice to say that with about 10 minutes left Uncle Albert and myself having finished our quarter of aniseed twist and with the Town 3-1 down decided to go for the bus (Oh, for the benefit of hindsight).

All was uneventful until we walked into the house to the comment "I bet that was a good game". I thought they were taking the piss, but at 9 years old you don't say that, so I said "they lost". Back came the reply "Oh no they didn't, it was 3-3". I would like to place on record that I was not a happy Hector.

As for old Keith, he left to do an Evening Post (sigh "those were the days") round. He too missed them.

Since that day I have always stayed to the final whistle. Others amongst us, I fear, have not. Got any stories to tell? Let us know.

CLIFF RICHARD

NOW THROW US ALL OUT

Luton Town used to be a friendly family club, but any pretence that that may still be the case finally died on Saturday 20 February 1993.

During the game against Charlton Athletic 14 members of Luton Action were forcibly ejected from an executive box for which they had paid a total of nearly £600.

Their offence was to refuse to give up what the club described as a banner, but was really only 10 pieces of card which spelt "KOHLER OUT!" when held up together. It is likely that the message was the problem rather than the pieces of card.

The clubs action was foolish in the extreme, as it makes it absolutely clear that opposition to the M.D. will not be tolerated in any shape or form. Of course we all knew that the club will go to extraordinary lengths to prevent legitimate protest, but the ejection of fourteen supporters aged between 8 and 60 does seem to be over the top. These people cannot be faulted for their support of the club, having splashed out £40 each to watch the game and make their feelings known.

The stupidity of the action taken was compounded by the involvement of the police as well as stewards in numbers that would not have been

seen in major punch up in the terraces. Perhaps they feel they have to justify the charge of £1.10 per supporter that the club has to pay. If that is the case they should bear in mind that this was a domestic dispute which did not involve any violence or threat of violence, and that the police role should be to mediate.

What we have to ask now is what the club are going to do next, having made it clear that opposition is not permitted. Will they bring the thought police into the Kenny end and throw out everyone who thinks the wrong things about good old D.K., or just play behind closed doors to be on the safe side.

The only answer to this has to be to show our feelings clearly, as happened when prompted by the box.

Sing it loud and clear: We want Kohler OUT!



KOHLER OUT