

MAD AS A HATTER!



A LUTON TOWN FANZINE

Issue 24

Dec 94

STILL ONLY 50p

PLEAT DECIDES TO STAY



MAD AS A HATTER!

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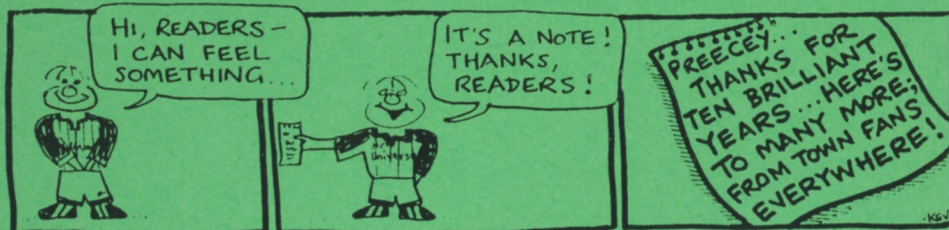
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PREECE'S SHORTS



EDITORIAL

Since the last issue of Mad hit the streets there has been a remarkable amount of publicity about Luton Town. Most of it has revolved around the managers position, and the ambitions and aspirations of David Pleat. It does seem that these matters are now settled, and Pleat is staying here at Luton. Speaking to fellow supporters, I gained the impression that most felt that Pleat should stay, regardless of their feelings about him as a manager. The biggest surprise of the whole episode was getting a phone call from the Luton Town chairman, to ask what the fans felt about the manager's possible departure.

Another tranche of publicity concerned the proposed Kohlerdome, a new home for the club at a location to be decided (not that it's any secret). We have waited a long time for any news of this and although the planning application stage has not been reached, this was welcome. Some of those opposed to the new stadium are suggesting that the existing Kenilworth Road ground should be redeveloped. It is clear that these are people who have not stepped inside a football ground for many years, and have no appreciation of how poor our ground now looks in comparison to most others in the division. To improve the ground significantly would require the purchase of many houses around the ground and that process alone could take many years. If we are realistic, the only way ahead is a new stadium, at a new location, and it will be up to us, the supporters, to give the proposals the backing they need to come to fruition.

The best publicity, of course, has been the results. Continuing our remarkable away form, and one quite outstanding home result, have led us into a position where we talk about play-offs rather than relegation. There's a long way to go yet, but we've waited a long time for a season like this, and a modest cup run would just set it off nicely. As long as we get drawn away there'll be nothing to worry about!

Several of the goals this season have come from David Preece, who seems to be enjoying one of his best seasons with the club. It is, of course, his tenth season, and there can be few players more deserving of a testimonial. As yet we have heard nothing of any arrangements for a testimonial match or any other events. Let's hope things are being organised behind the scenes.

And finally (as they say on the News at Ten), we at Mad as a Hatter! would like to take this opportunity to wish all our readers a very happy Christmas and a prosperous New Year. Cheers!

Oh no! Not a half term report.

Juergen Sommer: If someone came up to you in the street and pointed out plainly that Jim Leighton's career to date had been exceptional, you'd piss yourself. If that someone then cracked the punchline "well, more exceptional than Sommer's", your pants would start to dry fairly rapidly. Against Burnley and Bristol City Juergen has admittedly cost us six points and dented our promotion hopes (!!). A good performance on TV v Stoke nowhere near made up for the mayhem he caused beforehand.

Effort: 60%

Attainment: D

Julian James: In recent years has become the prime target of abuse by many fans. Last season, Jules improved and became an important member of the team. This season our blond bombshell, in my eyes, has been the best and most consistent player in the side. Very strong tackler with a lot of heart, he always gives 100%. Not a Rob Jones, certainly not a Mel Sterland.

Effort: 90%

Attainment: A

Marvin Johnson: Looks like a clown, defends like a Tottenham full back and attacks like a Brazilian, Marv provides all of Kenilworth Road with the unexpected. His form this season has been good, and has looked a capable defender, with the skills of Barnes (*Err, John or Bobby? - Eds*). I've heard many a fan say that a tenner in the main stand wasn't a bad price after seeing Marv waltz down his left wing. Believe me Sir, I wouldn't burn my season ticket for that.

Effort: 80%

Attainment: B

Trevor Peake: I still hear a few mindless thugs behind the dugout every home match shout out to Peaky to "give up, go home, and put your feet up", but Trev has had 3 seasons with Luton, and has played better every game. Looks so calm, and his experience makes up double for what he lacks in pace. Still another good season in him yet (3 years on!).

Effort: 90%

Attainment: A-

Mitchell Thomas: 'Spider' as he is affectionately known, has been playing superbly this season and could have been our leading goalscorer if his five half chances against Bolton had all gone in. In the last few years Mitch has beefed himself up a bit, and his present role patrolling the left side of the field has been a success. Less skilful than Hughes and less clever, but more consistency which is the key to Mitchell's successful season so far.

Effort: 85%

Attainment: B+

Gary Waddock: Very much an Alan Harper, possibly better. Tackles a little harder than Alan did, that is about the only difference. If he does stay, will be invaluable as a member of the squad. Haven't seen him have a bad game or a quiet one yet, you always know that he is doing his job at the back of the midfield. Keep it going.

Effort: 80%

Attainment: B

David Preece: Another good season so far (he must be due a bad one soon), Mini has provided the Town with a player who always gives his best for the cause. It is true to say that when he plays well, the whole team does, as he is constantly bringing players into the game. Occasionally seen shooting at Juergen to see if he is awake, which just underlines the fact about bringing players of all positions into the game.

Effort: 99%

Attainment: A-

Paul Telfer: For the first few games was almost anonymous and not the same hustling hard worker many fans came to know. Recent performances have shown old form, which bodes well for the 2nd half of the season. Gets through a hell of a workload on the right hand side, and over the last year, Paul has definitely become the Town's hard man. Always looking for a bit of trouble, I won't forget his challenge on Hurlock last season at Millwall in March. The ref missed it, but it was a two footer on Hurlock's shin, and Telfer then simply got up and picked up the ball and threw it at Hurlock's head. And you're supposed to be hard Hurlock?

Effort: 85%

Attainment: B

Ceri Hughes: My favourite star, but recent events coming to light have shocked a few supporters. Pleat has made no secret of the fact that he will not stand in his way, but I would line up an army in his way. Last season, around January/ February was his best patch. This season his role has changed giving him a more central role. Why the new role is a mystery since his skills and trickery on the left side rank among the best, a similar player to Otto. Perhaps, if we continue to play well, his ideas on Luton and leaving may change (*injury, of course may have changed his mind already - Ed*).

Effort: 75%

Attainment: B-

Scott Oakes: Perhaps the least influential player this season, Scotty has lost the confidence to do what he does best, to go past players. Does he remember his goal against Derby last season? Did he video it to show his grandchildren? Obviously not. Teams now look at our team sheet and see 'S. Oakes' on the bench, and they are scared. "Have they just bought Maradona?" they ask. Perhaps Scotty would play better on drugs too.

Effort: 70%

Attainment: C-

Dwight Marshall: Started of the season a bit slowly, unaware of his position or role in the side and perhaps looked overpriced at just £150,000!! However, his recent form has suggested that he may be a bargain buy. Embarrassed John Dreyer so much up at Stoke that it embarrassed me to say I used to support Dreyer, and his pace also caused Middlesbrough many a problem. The Hartson Marshall combination, when firing on all cylinders could be one of the best in the division. Ask Bryan Robson for a second opinion.

Effort: 85%

Attainment: B+

John Hartson: When his career kicked off last season, he looked slow, lazy, and a clone of Dixon. Aggressive, yes, Eric Cantona not. More recently, performances, particularly against Stoke and Middlesbro', have shown that John can be an exceptional player with a good touch for a big git. It's no secret that Joe Kinnear's Wimbledon are very interested in him and John, if anybody, would be suited to their style. If his form continues, expect Sam Hamman to sell his shares in Arab oil for a Welshman who fights to win.

Effort: 80%

Attainment: B+

Kerry Dixon: Much as with Oakes, teams wonder who we have up front when they see Dixon moping around on the bench (*it is at this moment that most defenders are first flattened by the leaping John Hartson - Ed*). But Town fans know that left back is his best role - that is "left back in the changing room". Still shows glimpses of his Chelsea days but close your eyes and you've missed it. Considering he was free, nobody can really complain, though I'd love to swap my wages for his.

Effort: 70%

Attainment: C

Others: David Greene looked good last season, lost it a bit this season. Aaron Skelton could be good in a few years time, has the potential, but not ready yet. Des Linton, as Andy Gray once put it last season "cannot be underestimated", but will now find it hard to get back in the team if Waddock stays.

And that's about it. Williams and Thorpe remain as the first reserves for call-up, but my question is why buy Fred Barber? Even if he is a fairly good goalkeeper, all we are doing is paying his wages, and the fat man only gets in my way on a Saturday afternoon, 'cos there's no room on the bench, so he sits in front of me!!

More reports come February!

Tony Allbones

This article was written in October, indeed at around half term, so much may have changed by the time you read this.



Above, Marvin thunders into action against Bristol City. Below, A menage a trois in the net at Stoke. Preece, bottom of the pile, has just scored the winner.



SHORT CUTS

From the Mirror, a comment which belies their unerring accuracy.

Off to Luton. "David Pleat was brilliant. But the attitude there amazed me. I'd come from a club where lads on £200 a week would lay down and die for each other. At Luton, players on £1,500 a week didn't seem bothered."

From the Herald & Post, 10/11/94, another unsurprising item.

Luton denied by 10-man Oldham

It's the Mirror again, date unknown, making an interesting observation, about us.

sharpen the game up! Get it Kev.' The Luton goalkeeper requires treatment after a goal-mouth scramble. 'Look at that ponce. He's 6ft 5in and he's gone down like a bag of shit.' yells Downes, before having a go at the lines

DAVID WOODS Luton 5 Middlesbrough 1

The Hatters picked the perfect day to start playing Bring Me Sunshine before the teams run out.

That great comedian and big Luton fan Eric Morecambe would have been proud of them — particularly 19-year-old striker Hartson, who shone brightest of all.

This one comes from The Guardian, it's Steve Claridge on his time at Luton. But somehow it isn't very surprising.

ANGLIA have yet to confirm that they will show Luton's home Division 1 match against Derby on Sunday, December 11 live.

Central and LWT will show the game and Anglia are expected to follow suit.

The Daily Telegraph, 14/11/94, go for the Misleading Headline of the Year award.

ATMOSPHERE

A COMPACT ground but the one side of hospitality boxes — usually fairly empty — spoil the atmosphere. Good for big cup nights. Luton's home fans tend to sit and watch in silence.

Wally Downes, assistant to Dave Bassett, on 'big' Juergen.

ALEX FERGUSON was at the Wolves v Luton game on Saturday to watch his son Darren play. So David Kohler, the Luton chairman, could not resist asking Fergie if he would be interested in the manager's job if it became vacant at Kenilworth Road. Before Ferguson could answer, however, a Luton director chipped in: "Don't worry, Alex. You couldn't handle the pressure."

Above from The Guardian, 12/11/94.

And talking of Mikes, the Luton announcer lacked something — like any kind of football knowledge at all. Just who are Middlesbrough United, Walsall Town and Scarborough Town?

All club names courtesy the man on Luton's PA.

MILLWALL TOWN

MIDDLESBROUGH UNITED

STOKE ROVERS

NOTTM ATHLETIC

TRANMERE CITY

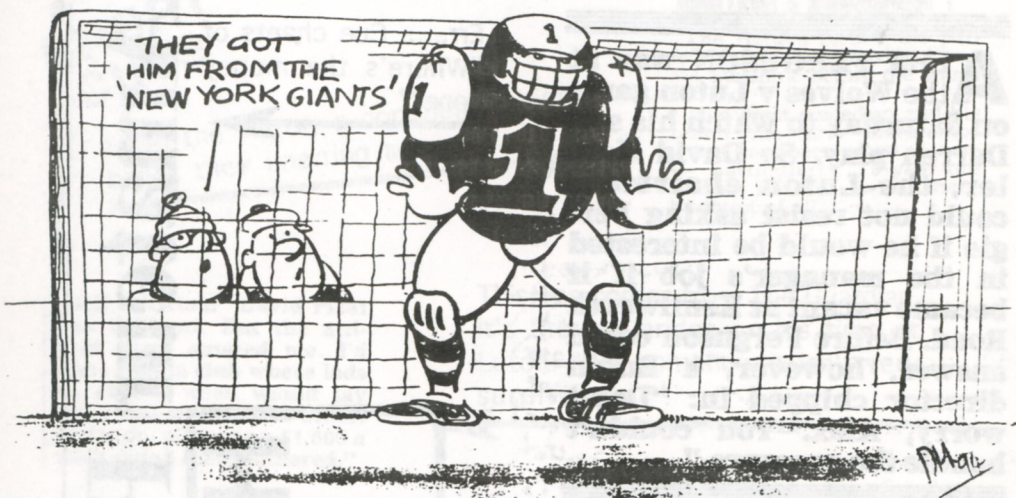
Above items from issue 37 of West Brom fanzine "Grorty Dick". Rings rather true, doesn't it?

Err..... Cue chants of "Where's the money gone?"

Couldn't resist it!!

Hatters take sting out of Hornets

Amateur Pleat gets job done



This cartoon was originally printed in "The Hatter", the Luton Town matchday programme for the match v Orient, 20 September 1980. It shows an amazing degree of foresight for Luton Town.

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LUTON KEEPER IN BRIBE SHOCK!

Important information has just reached the "Mad as a Hatter!" headquarters regarding Town goalkeeper Juergen "twice as crap as Kasey Keller but still went to USA '94" Sommer. We have evidence that Mr Sommer accepted bribes to fix matches earlier this season from a Far Eastern betting syndicate - namely the Mecca Bingo Club in Basildon.

Our spies are understood to have planted a tiny microphone under the table at the MacDonalds restaurant in Harlow, where a meeting took place between Mr Sommer and a Mr E Mann, a member of the bingo club on August 24th this year.

The conversation went like this:

Mann (speaking in a lurid Essex brogue):

So, Mr Sommer, are you willing to deliberately concede a goal in order that our little err...., 'group' can make a quick buck?

Sommer: It all depends on the fee.

Mann: Well, we thought that a Hamburger and small fries might be to your liking.

Sommer: What? Are you kidding? I'll want much more than that if I'm to make it look as if I'm doing it on purpose.

Mann: You've made it look natural before. Look at all the cock-ups you made last season.

Sommer: Yeah, but they weren't intentional.

Mann: You mean you really didn't mean those?

Sommer: Ahem. Can we get back to the matter in hand?

Mann: Or NOT, in your case! Huh, huh, huh!

Sommer: Okay, okay, which match are we talking about?

Mann: Burnley at home. They've only just been promoted and are there for the taking. We predict a 3-1 victory for the Town.

Sommer: Great! I'll just wait until we get 3-0 up and then let in a back pass or something. Nobody will suspect a thing. Buy me a Big Mac, large fries and a large cola and the job is as good as done.

Mann: But haven't you already got a large Kohler at Luton?

Sommer: A Cola, you idiot. You know, the fizzy drink!

Mann: Oh, I see. Right, that's excellent. If we could meet here again on 28th September, I'll give you my next set of instructions.

This time we set up a hidden camera inside one of those disgusting potted plants that MacDonalds insist on growing. At 9.30 pm the two men are spotted shaking hands and sitting down to talk.

Mann: So, here we are again, Mr Sommer. I must say that I have mixed emotions about the whole affair. We lost a few grand on that one.

Sommer: What can I say? Because those pillocks at the other end couldn't score in a brothel at Kenilworth Road, I thought I'd better let my goal in early to see if it would gee them up. It didn't!

Mann: Yeah - crap, weren't they? But you were great! The way you came right out to the edge of your box and gave it straight to the unmarked Adrian Heath was pure genius!

Sommer: Thanks - it was rather good, wasn't it?

Mann: Right - now we're talking Bristol City. They've lost their last five matches, and with your attack being about as effective as a nylon condom, a goalless draw is on the cards. Let one in and me and me mates are in the money.

Sommer: Same fee?

Mann: You bet!

Sommer: No - you do! Fwah, fwah!!

Three days after the match, back in MacDonalds.

Mann: Brilliant, Mr Sommer, we're rich, rich, rich! And it's all thanks to you! It was brilliant. The ball is trickling around in front of you and although you have every chance of picking it up, you casually leave it alone and Hey Presto - it's 0-1!!

Sommer: Nothing easier! Can I have my fee now? I'm starving!

Mann: Indeed you can! In fact, I'm so pleased with you, I'm going to throw in an Apple Pie as well.

He flings the pie into the air. Juergen leaps as high as he can, catches it and accidentally drops it onto the floor. Or did he do that on purpose? This one could run and run!

Russell Baldwin

Editor's Comment: We would like to stress that the above article is pure fiction and we would not for one minute consider that Juergen Sommer is involved in any form of untoward behaviour, or illegal activity.

WANTED

Luton Town programmes (home, away, reserves) and memorabilia. Anything considered, but the older the better. Also thousands of programmes for sale. Please contact: Nick Albone, 4 Jacobs Close, Potton, Sandy, Beds SG19 2SG.

Luton chairman ready for a stretch inside



Mihir Bose

THE WONDER of the World Cup, football played in an indoor stadium but on real grass, could be coming to a motorway junction near Luton. Michigan's Pontiac Silverdome, which featured the only draw Brazil suffered in this year's tournament, was acclaimed as an example of American ingenuity. David Kohler, chairman of Luton Town, believes he can do better. Kohlerdome, the name he has given to his project, will involve a new multi-purpose indoor stadium costing £35m, near the M1, that will seat 20,000 with a moveable grass pitch.

Getting a grass pitch inside the Silverdome was a huge exercise and meant bringing in 2,000 hexagonal sections of grass on forklift trucks. It took three days to put in, three days to take out. Under Kohler's plan the pitch can be moved in in five hours and out in three. It will be divided into nine sections, each held on a steel tray weighing 350 tonnes, and besides grass will have the growing medium and the drainage.

But will the trays knit together? "This is where the design has been clever," David Kierle, the architect, said. "The grass comes together at the edge, and each tray is separated by a plastic mesh which stops the grass matting together. After you put the trays in all you do is roll it, cut it and mark it."

The Kohlerdome has had the seal of approval from the Sports Turf Research Institute, whose research officer, Dr Stephen Baker, said: "Luton have solved the grass problem, now it is a question of engineering, moving the trays in and out. They will have to provide an area the size of a football pitch to store the trays in natural conditions so that the grass grows."

The trays will be carried in and out of the stadium on four hovercrafts which can be manipulated by four people instead of the dozens required at the Silverdome. The grass pitch itself will be seven feet above the ground which, Kierle said, "will allow workmen to move it and make the drainage connections. The technology is

regularly used by Boeing and British Aerospace."

Any plan to play football in an indoor stadium would require FA and League consent and Kohler, who presented his plans to the Football League last week, will meet the FA tomorrow. Jimmy Hill, a director of the League who witnessed the presentation, said: "We are very open-minded. It could solve a lot of problems and there was certainly no resentment on the League's board."

If everything works, Kohler expects his dome to rise in three years and he says it could open up the possibility of ground-sharing. But apart from possible planning hurdles there is the essential conservatism of football fans. They are just getting used to seats; can they cope with central heating on top of that?

The article above is taken from the Sunday Times of 23 October. Anthony Reid, who sent it to us, wonders if this represents a ray of hope in the search for a new home. Unfortunately, since then there has been lack of activity following the flurry of publicity which followed the foundation of the opposition group FAST (Fight Against Stadium Transfer). It would seem that progress has not been quite as David Kohler anticipated, but this is, we hope, only a hiccup.



Above, Juergen congratulates team mates while a ball boy waits for him to drop something. Below, Jules in action against Middlesbrough.



Letter from America

Almost four months to the day, and a 15th World Cup apart, I was again sitting at a small café in Boston's well known North End. This is the distinctly Italian section of Boston and one of the city's 'must be' places on the day of a big European football match involving the 'old country.'

On this afternoon the match in question was the UEFA Champions League Group A contest between reigning European champions AC Milan and a side many considered to be the future heir apparent to Milan's throne, Ajax Amsterdam.

As stated, four months ago along with Frank Dell'Apa (football writer for the Boston Globe) and Simon Kuper ("Football Against The Enemy") I sat at the same small table in an extremely crowded Cafe Paradiso on Hanover Street, and witnessed, via satellite, AC Milan's 4-0 total destruction of Spanish champions Barcelona to give the Italian domestic title holders their second consecutive European Champions Cup trophy.

Now, on a gorgeous mid-September afternoon, Frank and I had returned to see if 1) AC Milan would start this seasons' European campaign a bit complacent and 2) was Ajax, with all their accompanying hoopla, for real.

For this particular match the answers would be summed up as 1) no and 2) yes. Though the weather was of dreadful proportion, it rained equally on both teams and while the Italians could find no relief the Dutch home side persevered with clinical precision (albeit what the rain would allow) and were well worth their 2-0 margin of victory.

But I digress. The purpose of this story is not to tell an already known tale. No, it is to show the outside world (or at least the Luton Town followers) that the honourable profession of being a football supporter and living in the United States is not an oxymoron.

It is fairly easy in the city of Boston to follow a national side or a particular nation's top division. One only needs a small amount of area geographical knowledge, ethnic manners and enthusiasm. That and the ability to sneak away from work for midweek matches what with international time changes and all (the next afternoon we watched as Inter Milan narrowly edged a determined Aston Villa 1-0, in a UEFA Cup first round match) and rising early on weekends.

Closed circuit satellite transmission of matches the world over are beamed into Boston's cafes, bars and social clubs on a regular basis. Granted, the

average American is completely unaware of this but, then again, American football followers are anything but average. Americans, like myself, who master only one language yet still follow world football are an even rarer breed.

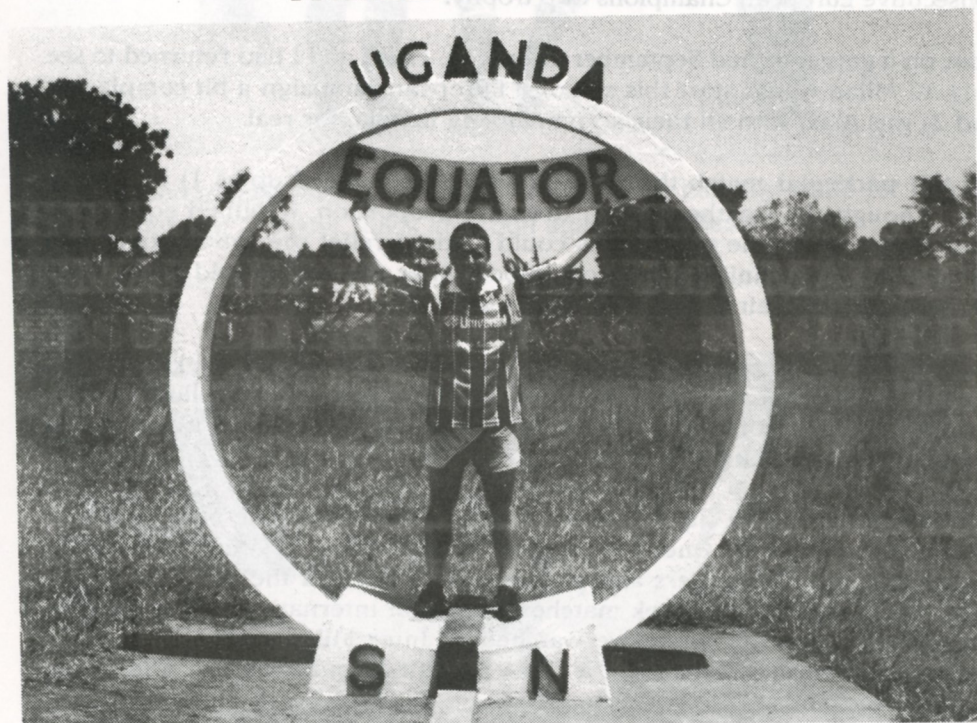
Boston is a football hot-bed. And, yes, I say that with a straight face. Venture into any of the city's many ethnic neighbourhoods on the day of an important match and you can feel the anticipation in the air.

And while England's Endsleigh League Division One has yet to cross the Atlantic through the wonders of orbital gadgetry, well, the North End's cappuccino and cannoli's are first class.

Ah, the price we devoted football supporters must pay.

Brian Surette

Hatters Abroad



Hatters in the hot spots more like! This issue we find Tim Grose, showing the colours with, metaphorically, one foot either side of the centre circle.

"Mad" Merchandise



Newly in stock at "Mad as a Hatter!" we are pleased to announce the 1974 shirt. In glorious Orange, Blue and White. 100% Cotton and made in England, with an excellent embroidered L.T.F.C. "football" badge, in fact just as modelled here by Jimmy Ryan. Currently available in two sizes - L and XL - this ideal Christmas present can be yours for only £25.00 (plus p & p). In the words of Tim Kingston, a "quality garment". If you are a high flyer, you'll need one.

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TOP OF THE (AWAY) FORM

It's not often I mention this, but we do rely on you the readers to send in match reports, so if you fancy writing one, just pop it in the post to the usual address. There is no limit on the length of reports, but we feel that up to about half a page works best (that's around a thousand words), so get scribbling.

24.09.94 MILLWALL 0 TOWN 0

Boring, boring.....

It is a well known fact, to those of us who watch football, that goalless draws can be exciting. Unfortunately, this wasn't one of them. It was the sort of game where you might feel sorry for the neutral. However, for the biased visitor it was a great result, and with some better passing we might even have snatched a win. Highlights of the day were the Millwall fans booing Marvin after Spiders 'strong arm' challenge, and the guest beer in the pub before and after the game - Hatters Mild! "A pint of Hatters, please!" Yes, not a bad day.

K.F.H.

01.10.94 TOWN 0 BRISTOL CITY 1

Fizzle, fizzle, phut.....

Just how or why our most reliable player, David Preece, failed to score with a seemingly EASY chance after 3 minutes is totally beyond me. And how many shooting chances does Dwight Marshall want? Kerry Dixon tried hard and had a great effort saved, but got subbed for his efforts. For the third time this season a goalkeeping cock-up cost us dear - another OPPORTUNIST goal, Pleaty? Give it a break! The opposition are queueing up for Sommer to keep dropping the ball - and he's obliging. Yet another crap referee, obviously in cloud cuckoo land, failed to do his job, and 3 penalty appeals (good ones too) went unnoticed.

The Major Oak

08.10.94 STOKE CITY 1 TOWN 2

Cheers Tumble!

Virtually every armchair neutral must have had this down for a home win! None of us had reckoned with the worst match of Dreyer's career being his first match against us after leaving. The home fans must have been a tad suspicious about where Tumble's loyalties lay, he was that bad.

Stoke, unusually for a live TV appearance, seemed for most of the game comparable with the Town at home; inept, uninventive etc. The Town on the other hand with Hartson winning nearly everything in the air, and Marshall being Tumble's worst nightmare, were a handful, and fully deserved the points. We did worry though, when Tumble got the red card, whether he had done that deliberately to get Stoke back in the game; probably knowing how badly we

always play against 10 men! Of course that was when we started to be up against it. Sommer redeemed for his 'flap' in the first half with that unbelievable quadruple save from Carruthers.

As for the celebration for the winner - the mass bundle into the net - Preecey looked even more manic than when he leapt onto the fence at Cardiff, and the four on top of him weren't that far behind in the delirious stakes! Mind you, nor were we on the terrace..... I've never seen a bloke look so happy when being substituted. Nice one Mini!

Objét

15.10.94 HAPPY HATTERS 5 BATTERED 'BORO 1

More please.....

The Town stormed Middlesbrough in the first half with an own goal, which would've been a great goal had a Town player scored it (*it wasn't bad for a Watford reject! - Ed*). A brilliantly crafted 2nd from Dwight Marshall, and a 20+ yard Preecey blockbuster. 'Boro were shell shocked and that wasn't all! A fine move resulted in Marshall's second, and John Hartson blazed the fifth, past a keeper who didn't see it, and an exodus of 'Boro supporters began - after 65 minutes! Luton eased off and 'Boro scored a consolation, but it was all too little, too late. If Town can do this more often, then there is NO ONE to stop a promotion drive. Mr Pleat has earned his reprieve, but results must continue.....

The Major Oak

22.10.94 BLUNTED BLADES 1 MEN OF STEEL 3

Jingle Bells (again)!

What can we say? Another super away day, this time on a lovely pitch in three-quarters of a stadium. It could have been so different though, as United threatened to swamp us in the opening 20 minutes. Fortunately they had only Blake's poorly defended goal to show for their early enthusiasm. However, once we had drawn level (somewhat fortuitously) Town took complete control of the game. The second half performance was probably our best half this season, with two excellent goals from James (Yes!) and Dixon. This "comeback" would certainly not have taken place in previous seasons. The only blade that looked sharp was the one being aimed at the United board and Harry Bassett.

Steve Folliot

29.10.94 TOWN 0 BARNSELEY 1

Another attack of the killer B's

Our recent good form had to end I suppose. We were always going to lose to a crap team, as everyone knows the Town only play well against the top teams at home.

Fair play to Barnsley though. They seemed more up for it than us, not giving us an inch to carve out a half decent attack for most of the game. Taggart decided to

stick around for 90 minutes this time, unfortunately for Hartson (and us). Some of the Town's passing when we finally got forward was atrocious to say the least. The net result was only one decent shot in the entire second half. Another inspired substitution by Pleat, Oakes on for Marshall, when there were others on the pitch who had long outstayed their welcome.

So far now that's defeats at home to Burnley, Bolton, Bristol City, and now Barnsley. What next? GrimsB???

At least there are no more teams beginning with the letter 'B' to come to Kenilworth Road (now I've put that in we'll get Brighton in the Cup). What's the next excuse going to 'B'? If, heaven forbid, we lose at home to W*****d, I suppose a tenuous link could come into play. Well, Hornets are similar to 'B's aren't they??!!

oBjét

01.11.94 TOWN 1 GRIMSBY TOWN 2

The last of the killer B's?

This is starting to get very silly. Away form that is beyond our wildest dreams, and home form that is beyond our worst nightmares. What the hell is going on? At least in this game we looked like we were capable of winning, and did score, but the visitors knew our home form, and the match was lost the second Peakey gave away a daft free kick. He was lucky to stay on the pitch, but if a losing goal is all our luck brings, then he probably should have been sent off, after all 10 men often play better than 11, as a certain manager might say.

It has to be said that the Town play was some of the best seen at home this season, but if it can't be converted into goals, what good is it. A good goal by Scotty, just wasn't enough, but it did cause a visible increase in the teams confidence. Until that free kick, that is.

Ken Ross

05.11.94 WOLVES 2 TOWN 3

Wolves foxed by happy Hatters

Totally refreshed after our customary session in the best 'away' pub in the country, we took our seats in the magnificent Molineux. Even allowing for the Town's super away record, none of us could have anticipated what was to follow. After a very bright opening we survived an early double scare from a very out of sorts Bully, but then took complete control. Having spent the last two games with 3 or 4 players making an entire hash of every free kick, up pops Mini to execute an exquisite curler into the far corner. Spurred on by a noisy and comparatively sizeable Town following, we tripled our tally 10 minutes into the second half through Marshall and Dixon. We then played our best football of the season thus far as Oakes hit the side netting from a magical move. The match then threatened to turn following the strange substitution of Hartson for Dixon. The unlucky "Original Gravity" Marvin then brought back memories of Cambridge

away two years ago, as we just hung on for our wonderful 3-2 victory - and Wolves first home defeat of the season. A thoroughly deserved tremendous win. Can we play the return match at Molineux as well - and keep the gate receipts??!

Steve Follit

12.11.94 OLDHAM ATHLETIC 0 TOWN 0

Town held away from home.

At one stage it looked like this match could be between two manager-less teams, but Pleaty put paid to that theory, by deciding not to ditch his tracksuit for a desk in North London.

The Manchester weather ensured that the pitch was slippery and the supporters were wet, but the Luton contingent were not quiet. This was a somewhat different match compared to the previous week.... Lot's of graft and more than our fair share of good fortune - the woodwork, the goalkeeping errors, and Peakey somehow staying on the pitch for the third game running. Still, plenty of grit and a useful point we wouldn't have gained away from home last season. "Will we ever lose away?"

S.F./K.F.H.

19.11.94 TOWN 2 PORTSMOUTH 0

Home, Sweet Home win

There seemed to be a slightly higher level of confidence about prior to this game, perhaps due to the lack of any sort of 'B' in the oppositions name (superstitious, us?). Any doubts were eased by the sort of goal we've been looking for at home, namely an early one. Dixon put it away nicely, and many of us may have felt it was downhill all the way from there. In truth, Portsmouth were disappointing, as was their support with the Oak Road barely half full. Still, it took an inordinately long tie for the second goal to come, but it was worth it when it did. A storming run from Jules, a good pass to Dixon who responded with a fine cross, straight back to Jules whose shot, against the post, was hard enough to give Preece a decent shot when the ball got to him on the 18 yard line. It has to be said that Preece is certainly making the most of his scoring chances in his testimonial year, a fact that only a cynic like me would percieve as being linked. Juergen left his usual tricks until late in the game, and anyone wondering how Pompey failed to score would be well justified. The only disappointment of the day was the result from Sunderland, keeping the old enemy immediately above us, but we know that won't last, don't we?

Ken Ross

Watford	2 (2)
Hatters	4 (3)

THEY THINK IT'S ALL
OLIVER!

PLEASE SIR,
I WANT SOME
MORE.

MORE CASH
TO BUY NEW
PLAYERS.

WHAT!

RIDICULOUS!
ALL THE MONEY
IS NEEDED FOR
MY NEW PARISH
PLEASURE DOME!

I'LL LOOK FOR
FAME AND FORTUNE
IN LONDON

NOW SON, WE NEED
TO SMARTEN YOU UP
A BIT WITH A
SUIT.

A SUIT!

WHO WANTS
A MOUSE
THAT GOES
CHEEP?

COMPUTER
WITH MOUSE
GOING
CHEAP

WHITE
ARSTRAD
LANE

I DO!

SO LONG SUGAR,
I'M OFF BACK TO
THE WORKHOUSE.

RAA.

Nov '94

LONDON WAS LITTERED
WITH THE UNEMPLOYED

SORRY OZZIE
NO SPARE
CHANGE

THERE WERE ALSO
TEMPTATIONS ---

PSST! WANNA
BUY A CHEAP
SATELLITE
DISH?

GOSH IT'S
THE ARTFUL
SUGAR!

CONSIDER YOURSELF
AT HOME, CONSIDER
YOURSELF ONE OF
THE FAMILY.

THE STREETS WERE STILL
FULL OF THE UNEMPLOYED

SORRY RON, I
CAN ONLY GIVE
YOU A SPARE
CHANGE STRIP!

MEANWHILE IN FAGIN'S DEN

MONEY MAKES
THE WORLD GO
AROUND

IF I CAN GET A SMALL
FORTUNE SELLING OFF
YOUNG PLAYERS, THINK
WHAT AN OLD COACH
WILL BRING IN!

COME AND MEET THE
GANG, THERE'S BILL
SYKES AND
NANCY.

WHICH ONE
IS NANCY?

YOU'VE GOTTA PICK
A SPOT OR TWO BOYZ
YOU GOTTA PICK
A SPOT

YOU MAY
WELL ASK!

I'M BACK, AND I WANNA
BE THE ONE WHO WILL BUY
(PLAYERS) THIS BEAUTIFUL
MORNING!

OH SHIT!
THERE GOES
ALL THE LOVELY
COMPENSATION.

HAVE YOU
THOUGHT OF
A. VILLA?

ARE YOU
SELLING
TIMESHARES
NOW?

IS THE ANSWER YES OR NO
WILL HE STAY OR WILL HE GO?

ANOTHER EARLY FINISH, SO:
OLIVER, OLIVER, OH WHAT
A FRIGHTFUL BORE
YOU ARE!

RAVING MAD!!!

Dear "Mad",

Thought I'd drop you a line with a Middlesbrough fanzine Fly Me To The Moon, including the match report for the real drubbing you gave us. Thanks a lot for that.

Because we're a Middlesbrough fanzine you'll notice that I have not been as generous as I should have been in praise for Luton's brilliant performance. We were completely shell shocked I can tell you. But I must say that you played exceptionally well and if you hadn't taken the foot off the throttle God only knows what the final score could have been. But that's football as they always say on Radio 5.

This was my first ever visit to Kenilworth Road, you can't count the time the boys from Luton super pop combo Thrilled Skinny took our boys from Shrug up to see the rear of one of the stands. I was well impressed. Sadly my film decided not to develop otherwise I could have provided visual evidence of the most sympathetic stewarding I have ever come across. Rather than chuck out Boro's outraged fans (you know the West Midlands way) the stewards chatted and acted as agony aunts. At the end of the match as I was taking pictures three of them lined up to get in the shot. One of the key members of the team was a silver haired gentleman with the look of a Hill about him, whether it be Jimmy or Graham I'm not sure. Fortunately for him he didn't have the chin to match.

One thing I don't like is the fact that if the away end ever totally sells out then the front row is under pitch level and so far below the hoardings that you can't actually see the pitch. One thing I do like is climbing down the steps to the rear of the stand and being able to get a good insight into the kitchen and bathroom hygiene of the citizens of Beds.

Anyway, I won't thank you for beating us but thanks for a good day out. We still find ways to amuse ourselves "We're gonna win the league and now you're gonna believe us". Well maybe not but who knows? See you at Ayresome Park in April - could be a vital game.

All the best

Robert (Shrug) Nichols

Fly Me To The Moon, Middlesbrough.

PS: Have you or any of your readers any news or knowledge of whatever happened to Thrilled Skinny, the authors of Town fanzine. I haven't heard hide nor hair of them for many moons.

Dear "Mad",

Will somebody please let me know why the hell Mr Pleat persists in picking Kerry Dixon, the man is as slow as a geriatric snail, and as for his heading ability I could get higher on my old "Space Hoppa". He is blatantly playing out his career with us and has no loyalty to his club or country, for example milking the Chelsea fans applause in the Semi final without so much as an acknowledgement for us Town fans. As for loyalty to his country, the man has played for England yet still tried to brown nose Jack Charlton into picking him for Ireland for the World Cup. I mean, if anyone could have unlocked the Dutch defence it would have been our Kerry! I'm sorry to go on, but I just had to get it off my chest.

Paul Palmer

Luton

PS. My mate Ken reckons Juergen's crap too!

Dear "Mad",

I have been a subscriber since issue 1 and have always enjoyed the mag and with few exceptions have been on a similar wavelength with regard to editorial comment and humour.

As a genuine lover of football I must take exception to your sick description of Watford Football Club as "SCUM". I understand the intense rivalry but do not feel that gives anyone the right to print such inflammatory comments. This kind of intolerance is endemic of Nazi Germany in the 30's as well as Bosnia, and Rwanda in current times. That particular comment (think about it - I understand it was made in humour) does not belong within the covers of what, up to now, I have regarded as one of the finest of it's genre. Surely rivalry does not have to sink to these depths. Please try to see my point of view before you make some "smart alex" reply which you may feel entitled to do.

Maybe if you dug really deep into your inner self you would find some way of apologising to those you may have offended. As a lover of football with friends both Luton and Watford supporters (none of whom I would describe or have described as "Scum") I am most certainly offended. I cannot understand, in this world we live in, why we always have to see all the bad things in our neighbour.

Yours sincerely,

Stuart W Hogg

Queensferry, Lothian, Scotland.

It is difficult to know what to say in response to this, but I will start by apologising to anybody who was offended by our referring to them down the

road as "Scum". It was not the intention to offend any individuals, or to prompt any genuine hatred or worse. I am proud of the fact that we enjoy good relations with the Watford fanzine "Clap Your Hands Stamp Your Feet", and can play football together and enjoy a drink and a chat afterwards. The abuse is accepted as part of the deal of local rivalry, and I am sure that they would join with us in condemning those who seek to use football as an excuse for violence against persons or property.

Dear "Mad",

Re: Stoke City v Luton Town 9/10/94 - Anglia TV.

Having read in the LTFC programme of 13th September (Town v Bolton) that we were unlikely to see the Stoke v Luton match on Anglia Television, I wrote to the TV station pointing out that Anglia was the only station thousands of Luton supporters were able to receive; also the cost to visiting supporters with seats at £11 (no concessions), and the cost of the coach trip, and, in the case of OAPs, the arrival back at the Luton football ground after dark, and the fear we have of reaching our homes in safety.

On 28th September I received a phone call from Steve Aldhous, Producer, from Anglia (Norwich) giving me the news that the match on the 9th would be televised for Anglia viewers, also informing me of the new programme on Sundays at 2.50 - apart from FA Cup ties - with presenter Kevin Piper and Alan Brazil. He also wrote to confirm this.

Mr Aldhous concluded his letter saying "I hope you enjoy the new programme, good luck to the mighty Hatters, and thank you for your letter. I have since written a letter of thanks to him.

Yours sincerely,

Barbara Tripp (Mrs) OAP.

Luton.

PS: Maybe his reference to "mighty Hatters" could be construed as sarcasm, but as a Luton Town supporter I prefer to accept it as a statement of fact, and hope our lads start finding the net at our home games.

At the time of typing this (14/11/94) Anglia TV, who after the Stoke fiasco stated that they would always show any of the regions teams whose matches were being televised by other ITV regions, were unable to confirm that the home game against Derby will be shown on Anglia, even though it is definitely on London and Central. Some problem getting an act together in Norwich? Incidentally, Gerry "Norwich" Harrison is no longer with Anglia, and the mantle of Head of Sport has now passed to the aforementioned Kevin "Ipswich" Piper.

Dear "Mad",

Don't you just love Dwight? All of us down here in Devon knew he had it in him, except errh..... our manager. £150,000. Bloody good job Plymouth are doing so well this season, or we might be annoyed. Good luck for the rest of the season.

M A Howell

Plymouth.

Dear "Mad",

Sitting pretty, well nearly, 8th in the first division is, I think, above everybody's expectations. Let's hope we can push further up.

Anyway, I got home on Friday (18th) afternoon, looked through teletext for any news, transfers, etc. and the phone rang. It was the Luton Town Club Shop, who said that they had a cheque of mine there, and they wanted to know why they had the cheque, and had I received my merchandise? The cheque was for my Town replica away kit, which had arrived TWO MONTHS AGO. When I told the lady this, she replied "oh, I'd better cash it on Monday then". For God's Sake, if we want the club to become financially sound, then they had better start keeping track of stock, cash etc.

Incidentally, I heard Ian St John talking on Yorkshire TV, and he said "Vicarage Road is a difficult place to go." Ha, 4-2, 4-2, We beat the scum 4-2!!

Anthony Reid

King's Lynn

Interesting to hear your story about the shop, it may just be coincidence, but there has been a recent change of staff in there. Let's hope your experience was just a one off.

Dear "Mad",

I am a third year degree student conducting a study into "Racism in British football". I would appreciate members of ethnic minority groups who read your fanzine to write to me with their experiences of going to football matches.

Richard Felton

Room 20 Cedar Hall

Forest Court

Edge Hill College

Ormskirk

Lancashire L39 4QP

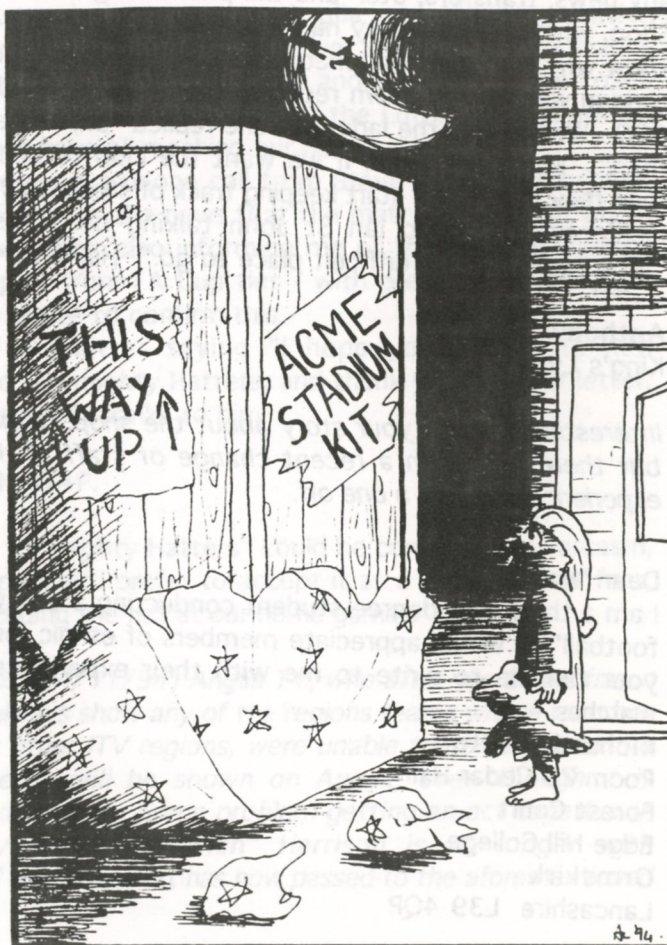
Dear "Mad",

I am a freelance journalist based in London and I am presently compiling a book on football supporters in Britain entitled 'Fanatics'. I need to find the most obsessive, passionate and craziest supporters in the country, no matter what team they support or in what division there team plays.

If any of your readers can help, I need them to send me any stories on memorable experiences, to just the plain stupid, crazy football memorabilia collections, a photograph of themselves or of something of interest related to football - just anything that says that they are football crazy!

Zak Walters
41 Cromwell Road
Hayes
Middlesex UB3 2PR

On the internet?
Join WHOSH
Worldwide Hatters on the Super Highway
email request-ltfc@robots.ox.ac.uk



L. T. F. C. WISH TO APOLOGISE FOR THE FOLLOWING:

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Middlesbrough	17	10	3	4	24	16	33
Wolverhampton	17	9	4	4	33	19	31
Bolton	17	8	5	4	30	18	29
Tranmere	17	8	5	4	28	20	29
Reading	17	8	4	5	20	15	28
Grimsby	18	7	6	5	25	21	27
Watford	18	7	6	5	21	22	27
Luton	18	7	5	6	26	22	26
Barnsley	17	7	5	5	16	18	26
Southend	18	7	4	7	19	29	25
Charlton	18	5	8	5	29	28	23
Sheff Utd	18	6	5	7	23	20	23
Stoke	17	6	5	6	22	24	23
Derby	18	6	5	7	20	19	23
Burnley	17	5	7	5	18	20	22
Swindon	17	6	3	8	24	28	21
Sunderland	17	4	9	4	18	16	21
Oldham	18	5	5	8	22	25	20
Port Vale	17	5	5	7	20	22	20
Millwall	18	4	7	7	23	26	19
Portsmouth	17	4	7	6	19	23	19
Bristol City	17	5	4	8	15	23	19
West Brom	18	4	6	8	16	25	18
Notts County	17	2	5	10	18	30	11

as at 21-11-94.

**REST ASSURED SHITFORD,
NORMAL SERVICE WILL BE
RESUMED AS SOON AS
POSSIBLE.**

Subscriptions / Back Issues

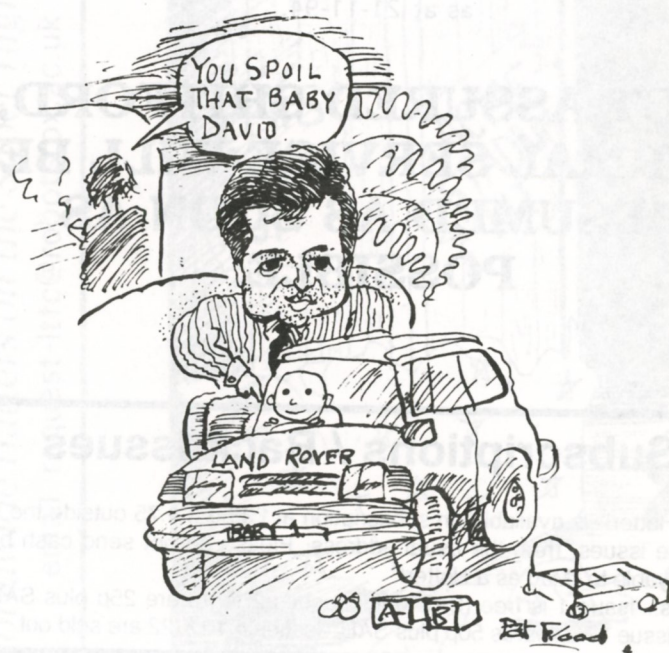
"Mad as a Hatter!" is available on subscription at £3.50 (£4.75 outside the UK) for the next five issues, from the usual address. Please do not send cash by post, cheques payable to "Mad as a Hatter!"

Back issues: Issue 1 is free (SAE only), issues 2 to 16 are 25p plus SAE (Sale price!) and issue 17 onwards 50p plus SAE. Issues 4, 10 & 22 are sold out.

WITH APOLOGIES TO HARRY ENFIELD ITS..... THE SELF-RIGHTEOUS BROTHERS

- Scene: A pub, two men sitting at a table, pints in hand.....
- Frank:Venables, I admire Venables. I admire any man who can break Real Madrid's legendary grip on the Spanish League. He'd be welcome to join me for a pint anytime.
- George: As long as he behaved himself, Frank.
- Frank: Oh, he'd have to behave himself. We don't tolerate bad behaviour at this table from anyone, not even Venables.
- George: Quite right, Frank.
- Frank: If El Tel was here with us now, if I'd just got a round in, the three of us sitting here, and he said to me "I've just picked Teddy Sheringham for England", I should say "Oi! Venables! No! Whilst I admire your coaching skills, your business acumen, your lovable rogue persona and your script writing skills, I will not tolerate your selection of such inferior players for one of the world's leading national sides".
- George: Quite right, Frank....

AC



Above, Hartson causing problems for Boro's defence, but this wasn't a goal. Below, The same match, Preece having a rest from the strain of all that celebrating.



The Magic Eye

For those of you who have been wondering what the design on Juergen's shirts is supposed to represent, we seem to have the answer. Apparently, it's one of those magic eye designs, where if you look for long enough you can see something else in the design. In the case of Juergen's top, if you stare at it for long enough you may be lucky enough to see a goalkeeper.

Department of Health

WARNING

**IF YOU HAVE RECENTLY HAD THE URGE, OR
KNOW ANYONE WHO HAS HAD THE URGE TO:**

- 1. WEAR A FOOTBALL KIT THAT IS
PREDOMINANTLY YELLOW AND
BLACK.**
- 2. WEAR A SCARF WITH THE
LETTERS W,A,T,F,O,R,D, ON IT.**
- 3. VISIT A PLACE CALLED
VICARAGE ROAD.**
- 4. CHANT "IF YOU ALL LOVE
WATFORD CLAP YOUR HANDS"**

**THEN YOU SHOULD VISIT YOUR DOCTOR
IMMEDIATELY, THIS IS A SERIOUS
CONDITION WHICH COULD CAUSE
PERMANENT DAMAGE.**

AR 96

As always we at "Mad" would love to receive your contributions, in any form, for future issues. Articles, cuttings, cartoons, ideas for cartoons, photos, holiday snaps, letters, poems, and piss takes, in fact anything at all, should be sent to the usual address, which is 292 Icknield Way, Luton, LU3 2JS. We look forward to hearing from you.

Book Review

Football and the Commons People

Before going any further I have to admit that I haven't read this book from cover to cover, but more skipped through, reading a bit here and a bit there. But it is the sort of book you can do that with. The essence of the book is that 30 MPs (Commons People - geddit?) have each written a chapter on their love of football. Sounds boring perhaps, but it isn't. Our old favourite David Evans is there, of course, defending all the controversial things done here at Luton Town when he was in charge. When he says "I was able to carry through several changes that helped Luton's cause" we might look around ourselves and wonder what he means. It is also interesting to find that the away fans ban was provided with it's excuse by the Millwall riot in March 1985 rather than it's reason (or to put it another way, it was planned before Millwall got anywhere close to Luton).

Elsewhere in the book can be found a wide variety of members from all sides of the house. The best known fans in Government, Major and Mellor, are missing, with Ken Clarke and Michael Howard flying the flag for the cabinet. Clarke's comments have already received wide publicity, while Howard explains his support for THREE teams. How can anyone that indecisive be Home Secretary? In addition, there's an Everton Fan picking a team of black players, a Bury fan on supporting Manchester United 'on the side', a bit like an extra marital affair. Others write of supporting their national side, or the constituency team, or seeing their team lose six cup finals!

Of those contributing, perhaps Roy Hattersley is the most predictable, but even he is writing about his parents newsagent! And no, I'm not telling you why. This book has been well thought out, and I will enjoy reading it in full over the next month or so. At £9.95 for 317 pages it represents good value, with the profits going to charity. A worthwhile book for a football fan at Christmas.

FOOTBALL AND THE COMMONS PEOPLE, edited by David Bul and Alastair Campbell, is published by Juma at £9.95, with proceeds to the Child Poverty Action Group. Available, by cheque/PO payable to **FANS v POVERTY**, from Gibson, 8 Cote Lea Park, Bristol BS9 4AQ. It will help the charity if you add something towards the cost (about £1.50) of p&p.

TOWN TRAVELS

Making a return to the pages of Mad, mainly due to the sudden influx of information from a couple of our forthcoming venues.

18.12.94 WEST BROMWICH ALBION

First thing to mention about this is that it's a Sunday game, but of course you all knew that already. It's not for TV, but for Christmas shopping. What this means is that there will be slightly less drinking time before the match, and none afterwards. Those of you who went last season will recall that getting a drink near to the ground is not far short of impossible as most of the pubs won't let you in, but, thanks to the Albion fanzine Grorty Dick, we are able to suggest a couple of possibilities. THE OLD GATE, Booth Street, Birmingham, is about 2 miles from the ground (use an A-Z to find it!) serving traditional Davenports ale. The WAGGON AND HORSES, Church Street, Oldbury is on the A4034, about 1 mile from junction 2 of the M5. The beers on sale are likely to include Everards Tiger and Old Original and Sam Smiths, plus other guest ales. West Bromwich High Street offers more options with the WHEATSHEAF (Holdens beers), OLD HOP POLE (Holt, Plant & Deakin), and ODDFELLOWS (Free House). To get to these leave the M5 at junction 1 and take the last Turning A41 (Wolverhampton, Dudley), at the first roundabout head straight on, at second roundabout left and left again, and the pubs are 200 yards down the road. Alternatively, park up by the ground and get a 74 or 79 bus to the pubs and back (these buses run every 5 minutes, allegedly).

Finally, the ground itself. West Brom have just told me that accommodation for away supporters is standing only, and that the terracing in question is not covered. So pray for good weather.

26.12.94 READING

I will have to own up to having absolutely no knowledge of the beer situation in Reading, but bearing in mind that it will be Boxing Day, this may not matter too much. It is worth bearing in mind that the ground is a long way out of the Town centre, and this will affect the number of pubs around. The availability of terracing for away fans is an absolute certainty, as Elm Park is probably the least developed ground in the division.

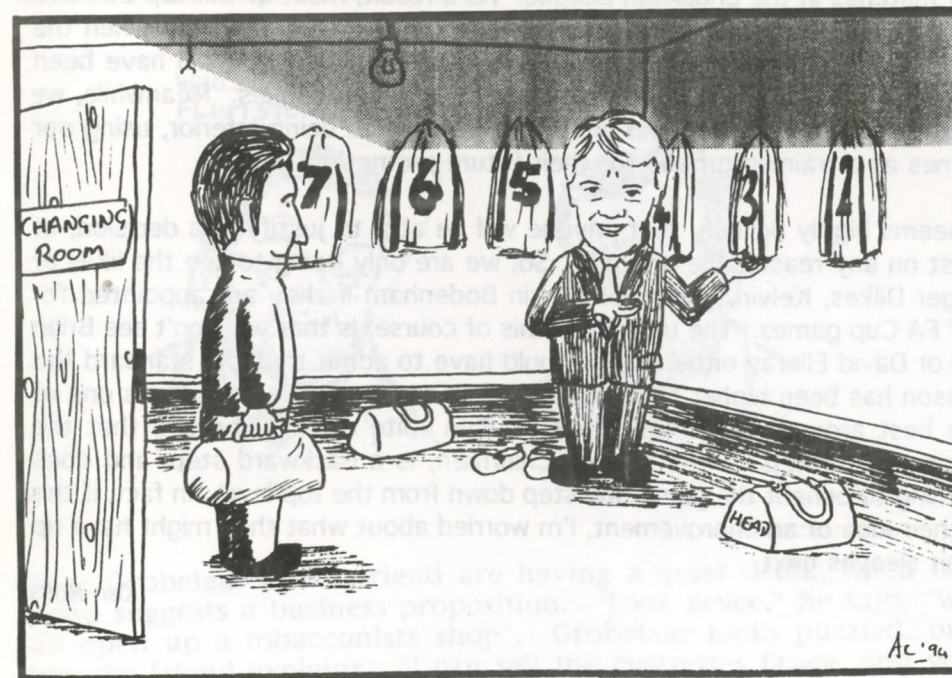
31.12.94 NOTTS COUNTY

One of the best grounds in the division and the best pies. Easy to get to, and plenty of good pubs in Nottingham. However, I have been asked to draw your

attention to that rarity, a pub which welcomes visiting supporters. So, without further ado, it's over to Chris Freer, the licensee:

"The TOM HOSKINS is a 'Good Beer Guide' listed real ale house, situated near to the Railway station, and less than 10 minutes walk from the Meadow Lane football ground. To find us, turn left outside the front of the station (away from the city centre), bear right at the traffic lights (next to the Queen's Hotel), and we're across the road on the right. By road, leave the M1 at Junction 24, travel along the A453 into Nottingham and then follow the signs to the railway station. There is parking around the pub.

The pub is owned by a small brewer, Hoskins, and we stock their beers plus guests from micro-brewers, including a resident mild. We also have satellite TV, a subbuteo table, lunchtime food, and we open again immediately after the match. We always welcome serious football fans (and real ale drinkers) from visiting football clubs, and with Hoskins Bitter starting at £1.25 a pint, we're a godsend to most."



Our shirts, like our club, have a permanent Pleat!

Referees - Who sets the standard?

In our last issue, Kaptain Kettle wrote of falling refereeing standards, and how they may be affecting the game in this country. Whilst the points raised may be seen as being valid, we have to wonder about the efforts made to improve things by our own football authorities. Efforts have indeed been made, and improvements may well be visible in Premiership games, but what of the Endsleigh League? Are those responsible really trying?

During the last summer, the FA and the Premiership drew up a list of the countries top 22 referees, and only those on this list would be able to officiate at Premiership matches. Fair enough, you might say, and indeed I'd agree as only 11 of those referees can be required on any given weekend. This should leave another 11 available to serve the needs of Division 1 and the top couple of games in Division 2 (assuming some games put off to the Sunday for TV). So, did the Endsleigh League agree to this? Not bloody likely. Instead they chose to bar the top 22 referees from taking control of any matches in the Endsleigh League. As a result, most of the top 22 have only appeared at 7 or 8 matches this season, and on a weekend when the Premiership has been cancelled due to internationals, they will have been found at matches in the Conference and its feeder leagues. Meanwhile, we have to watch referees who are acknowledged as being inferior, using our games as a training ground for their future promotion.

It seems highly unlikely that anyone will be able to justify this decision, at least on any reasonable grounds. So, we are only going to see the likes of Roger Dilkes, Kelvin Morton or Martin Bodenham if they are appointed for our FA Cup games. The up side of this of course, is that we won't see Brian Hill or David Elleray either, and I would have to admit that the standard this season has been higher than I expected (a certain Mr Heilbron looks one of the best around at the moment). But in spite of this I believe that the decision, reached by the League chairmen, is a backward step, and does nothing to benefit the game one step down from the top level. In fact, if this is their idea of an improvement, I'm worried about what they might have up their sleeves next.

Ken Ross

Further Grounds for concern

Having visited the rebuilt Wolves ground at Molineux, I was mightily impressed - and concerned that Luton Town may become an also ran. Not able to compete at the highest level, due to inadequate facilities, will be galling. Notice I said WILL be - not WOULD be. Let's explore the choices for 1996:

1. We get an extension (on the ground lease at Kenilworth Road) - very nice I'm sure but will it last? I doubt it.
2. We share a ground - who with, Watford? Other than share with a BIG club, with a lot of travelling, the facilities will not be there.
3. We move - but where to? What choices are there here? Only one at present.....
4. Luton Town F.C. FOLDS. Now who wants that?

There is no choice, we MUST move if we're to continue, even at this level. Now's the time for action, and positive work from everybody involved. I dare say there may be other alternatives, but they wouldn't match up to what Luton Town F.C. needs.

The Major Oak



Bruce Grobelaar and a friend are having a quiet drink, when the friend suggests a business proposition. "Look Bruce," he says, "we can open up a tobacconists shop". Grobelaar looks puzzled, but then the friend explains. "I can sell the cigarettes Bruce, and you can sell the matches!"



Above, Another away win on the way. Spider in action at Molineux. Below, It's those hands again, but it doesn't look like they've missed anything this time.



Soccer Magazine Hell

Whether it be a response to the recent World Cup, or an attempt by certain publishers to try and bring down that vast empire that is Mad As A Hatter! I don't know, but the new season has seen the launch of three new football magazines. So, armed with a three figure budget (£5.00), I wandered into W H Smith to check out the opposition.....

The most impressive looking of the trio is **FOURFOURTWO** (£2.10), "the 'quite remarkable' football magazine". With it's glossy cover and 130 pages this looks more like Q magazine than your normal football reading. However, if it looks impressive from the outside, the contents inside are every bit as good, with a wide variety of articles, many covered in considerable depth. For instance, November's issue included a 10 page feature on Kenny Dalglish, an 8 page interview with Chris Waddle, and a 6 page chat with someone called Pleat. Some of the lighter articles are also well worth a look, for instance an all time league table (31st in case you're interested, 18 places above you-know-who), and 90 minutes on the bench with one Andy King. Well worth the money, it took me the best part of a full day to read (*I hope that wasn't at work - Ed*). If magazines were football teams, this would be Newcastle United - slick, stylish and entertaining.

THE ONION BAG (£1.25) claims to be "the comedy football fanzine that gives it some wellie". This is a bit of a hit or miss affair - certainly where it hits the target it's quite funny, such as the articles in issue 4 on smoking footballers, football commentators, and a handy guide to interpreting David Mellor's 6-06 speak. Highlight was a sarcastic (made up?) letter sympathising with Mark Hughes and how awful it must be for him to constantly pick up minor injuries before internationals, and the even greater frustration when they clear up in time for his next league game. On the whole, though, it suffers from a lack of originality, we all know Iain Dowie's ugly and that Ian Ormondroyd's a donkey so it's hardly side splitting stuff. A Wimbledon amongst magazines - plenty of effort, some nice touches, but too often as subtle as a sledgehammer.

So to **C'MON REF!** (95p), "the funny soccer mag that sticks the boot in". This is a lie - as Victor Meldrew would say, it's about as funny as a kidney infection. Contents of issue 6, according to the cover, include an interview with Jurgen Klinsmann which turns out to be a straight potted biography with a few quotes from his parents. We're also promised an Endsleigh League feature which turns out to be, wait for it, a two page spread of various action shots featuring, surprisingly, Endsleigh League clubs. I could probably write for an hour doing a hatchet job on this apology of a magazine, but why waste any more paper than the 48 pages they've already wasted? Oh go on

then - this "funny soccer mag that puts the boot in" devotes a whole page to League tables and lists of top goalscorers that's probably a week out of date when the magazine hits the stand - Hilarious!! (*If only someone else had thought of it first!*) A picture of Justin Edinburgh having treatment to an area adjacent to his backside. Side-splitting!! A photograph of a (previously) topless girl, with a shirt airbrushed on to "represent" a particular club. Uproarious!! The rest is just a pile of steaming crap. No prizes for guessing which club this reminds me of, but if you need any clues we hammered, smashed, whipped, slaughtered them 4-2 on The Glorious Seventeenth.

Right, that's sorted the newcomers, what of the more established magazines? **90 MINUTES** (75p) is still the best of the weekly magazines, but that isn't saying a lot. Once excellent and not dissimilar from FourFourTwo, it now resembles a slightly more adult version of old favourites **SHOOT** and **MATCH**. Whilst on the subject, what of the dynamic duo? Of the two Shoot does at least attempt to provide something by way of reading matter and accepts that there is life outside the Premiership - unfortunately the last copy I saw featured a pin-up of a side who lost 4-2 to their local rivals not so long ago. A useful dartboard, I suppose. Strictly for kids. Match, on the other hand, is so feeble, a child of three would probably reject it, unless he was the sort of child with a Ryan Giggs bedspread, the latest United kit (until the next one), and so on. Premiership pap for the educationally challenged.

Moving swiftly on to monthly magazines, the one you're most familiar with is probably **MATCHDAY**. Now the official magazine of the Endsleigh League (the first since League Football in the early 70s - Does anyone else remember that? I can feel another article coming on.....) it does at least give some coverage to the 70 clubs usually forgotten by the media, so it's not without some merit. That said, being an "official" journal, it's usually about as controversial as a Trevor Brookin' analysis. That leaves us with **WORLD SOCCER**, **THE FOOTBALLER** and **TEAM TALK**, which I've only really flicked through as they all seem to be aimed at the anorak brigade - particularly Team Talk which is usually full of groundhoppers tales of the South Midlands League Reserve Division 2 (should they issue programmes?) and the convert to non League from League football (at least one per issue on how much better it is watching football in the Rutland County League Third Division (North East) Reserve Section). World Soccer will appeal to those whose lives aren't complete without a regular update on progress in the Second Division (B Section) of the Slovakian League. Finally, The Footballer, a magazine concentrating on the history of the game in a series of astoundingly dull articles (*but not totally without merit as Roger Wash, official statistician to LTFC, is its editor*). Probably worth a read if the Town

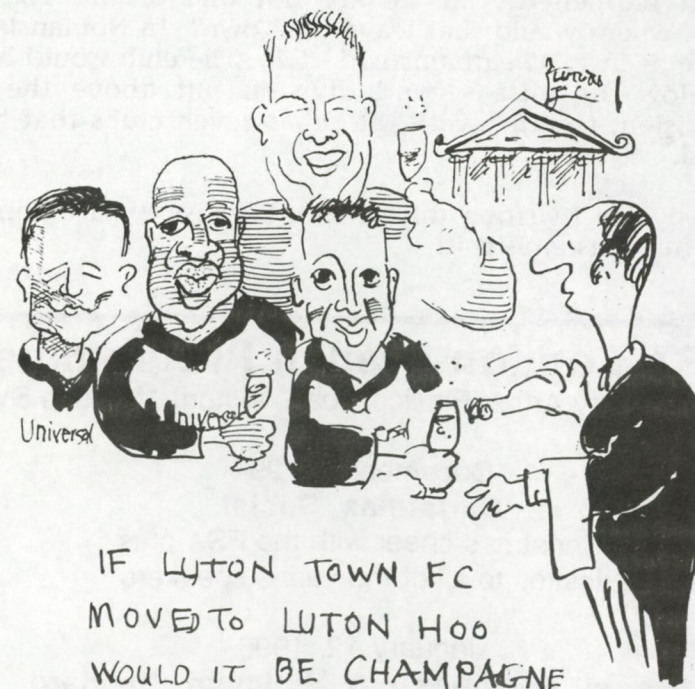
are featured, or if, like Fred Trueman, you believe everything was better in the old days.

Contain your delight, readers, for this article is nearly over (for those of you who've got this far - well done!). For obvious reasons, I haven't even bothered to look at the plethora of "club" magazines clogging up the shelves in Smith's, but I'm sure if you want to read even more about the mighty Reds (Barcelona, ha ha) then you'll enjoy them. Just think, the 50p you've spent buying this copy of Mad has already saved you a fortune.....

A.C.

For Sale

Luton Town 1990-91 Pro-Set Football Cards. Full Team, Framed (14"x11") & Mounted. Ideal Xmas Gift. £18.00 (inc £3 p&p). J. Bousfield, 2b Lake Avenue, Rainham, Essex, RM13 9SE.



IF LUTON TOWN FC
MOVED TO LUTON HOO
WOULD IT BE CHAMPAGNE
AT HALF TIME INSTEAD OF TEA?

BREAKAWAY

Recently, in the national press, there have been circulating rumours about a possible second "elite" division. According to Mr Vic Jobson, chairman of Southend United FC, "16 clubs currently in the top division of the Football League will resign on December 16th and join the Football Association league set up". The FA and FA Carling Premiership have responded by saying that they would not support these 16 clubs. So that's the end of that then? I think not.

With the financial losses very severe, for any premiershite team that is relegated to the first division, sooner or later the FA will face demands from clubs currently in the Premiership to set up another league below them, so that the losses are less severe.

Next question is whether our beloved Town would be one of those breakaway clubs. I would hope so, as we were one of the clubs that founded the Premiership in the first place (I mean, we were at the table for the talks, at the end of the season we went..... Well, you know what happened). If we are not one of the 16 clubs to breakaway, where would that leave the Town? In Nomansland (and not the one over at Wheathamstead - Ed). The club would be in dire straits, below the elite second division but above the current second division, together with the other seven clubs that had been left behind.

Anyway, why am I writing this article, because we are going to get promoted this season as it is!

Anthony Reid

FSA London Branch Programme

Venue: Ebury Arms, Pimlico Road. Victoria, London SW1

December 8, 1994

Christmas Social

Christmas cheer with the FSA plus
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January 12, 1995

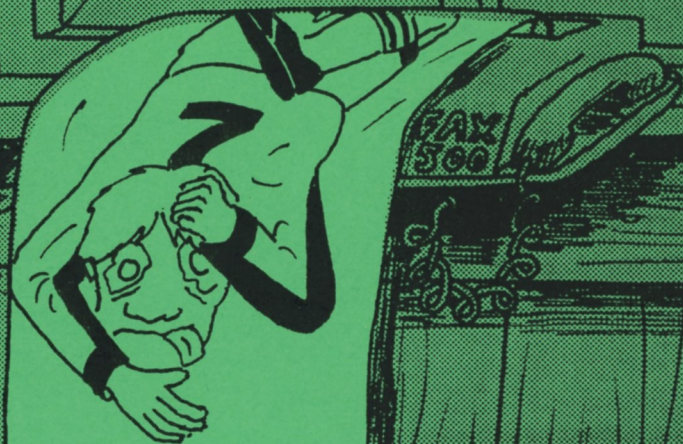
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Guest Speakers

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ROGER MILLER &
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No 1. Handball
Maradona.





DAVID
Sorry I couldn't
be there in
person, but
here's the
defender you
asked for.

SANTA!