

MAD AS A HATTER!

THE LUTON TOWN FANZINE



Issue 31

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**TERRY GETS
THE CHOP(PER)!**

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EDITORIAL

Well, it's that time of year again. The time when we look at our league position and conclude that, as ever, we will need an incredible run in the second half of the season to make the play-offs, let alone get promoted outright. That this season started with such high hopes makes the current situation all the more disappointing. A host of new signings and a new manager have not led to the success we expected and hoped for, and many fans are now seriously contemplating the dreaded drop into Division Two next May. Only time will tell whether these fears come true, but on recent form it does seem rather likely.

Whilst Westley and McGiven shoulder the blame, the finger must also be pointed in the general direction of the board room for failing to see what is going on. It is rumoured that a showdown between Kohler on one side, and the players and coaching staff on the other, is what led to the Tranmere victory. If this is true, it should indicate that the coaching staff/management are unable to do the job themselves, and that change is overdue, but still Westley is given more rope to hang himself, so much in fact that his feet are still on Terra Firma.

But, in the season of goodwill, I will wish Terry and Mick a very happy Christmas, and a prosperous new year. I believe that they can turn things round, and that during the next four months Luton Town will become the scourge of the First Division, beating every team who they play, and that we will witness, at Grimsby, the start of a cup run to rival that which took us to Wembley a couple of years ago. Westley will be hailed the country's brightest young manager, and McGiven will be in demand at all the top clubs in the country. The Town will be acclaimed as the best footballing side outside Newcastle, and will score goals galore. Vilstrup, Oldfield, Riseth, Gavin Johnson and Guentchev will be the subject of multi-million pound transfer bids, Alexander will win caps for England, and Kohler will give away his shareholding in LTFC. The ground will be packed week in, week out, due to the sparkling football and reduced admission prices, and *Mad as a Hatter!* will struggle to find anything to moan about. In fact it is all so good that I don't know what I'm looking forward to most; the rest of the season, or Santa Claus coming down the chimney to deliver everything I asked for in the letter I posted to him!

We would like to wish all readers of
Mad as a Hatter!
a very merry Christmas and
a happy and prosperous New Year.

No place like Dome??

There has been much talk of late regarding the future home of Luton Town Football Club. With the 'Kohlerdome' planning application referred to a Public Inquiry, and no decision likely before early 1997, it would seem that David Kohler has decided to look elsewhere, or at least investigate other possibilities. Most publicised has been the fact that he has been having talks with the authorities in Milton Keynes, over the siting of the 'Dome in the new city. The advantages of this are that the planning rules in MK are less stringent because of it's New Town status, and that the local authority may well be willing to donate the land for the development. Kohler has tried to diffuse the alarm that these talks have caused, by claiming that the 'Dome being built in MK would not mean LTFC moving there, but it seems unlikely that he would build his dream stadium, and not take the football club to use it, as a stadium needs regular use to guarantee the publicity that will bring additional business.

Such an action has been discussed at length for many years, and it is clear that quite a number of Town fans would accept this as a last resort, and continue to follow the team. However, there are still a very substantial number of fans who could not contemplate continuing to follow the club if it was based in MK, even if it were a last resort. For these people the status of the club is important, but the status they look for is that of being a Luton based club, rather than one necessarily playing at the highest level. Which side is in the majority is difficult to tell, but the view held by those who would continue to support the club is "better MK than no club", whereas those opposed to MK take the view that "a move to MK is the same as having no club".

The reasons for DK looking to MK are complex, and are not just due to the planning application going to a public inquiry. The fact that he has not been able to acquire the J10 land from Luton Hoo, and their preference in dealing with Wyncote, who also propose a stadium in their plans for the site, have not been helpful. However, we have heard on the grapevine that funding of the 'Dome would also be a problem, as National Lottery money would not be as readily available as DK has claimed. This, if it is true, is because the Lottery money would not be available to a private development, but only to one with community involvement in the overall scheme. I don't doubt that the reasoning is a hell of a lot more technical than that, but that's how I understand what I've been told. How the funding problem makes MK preferable is not clear, apart from saving the cost of the land.

As far as the Wyncote proposals are concerned, it is perfectly understandable that DK thinks his own scheme is better. However, it is

difficult to see why discussions could not take place with Wyncote over their scheme, and perhaps even to join in the 'Dome scheme. The former would at least establish the status of the club in the new site should the 'Dome application be rejected, while the latter might just break the logjam over the acquisition of the land. Wyncote clearly see some merits in the 'Dome scheme, as their plans did not include a hotel until one appeared in the 'Dome application.

As far as MK is concerned there is already opposition there to the club moving, and this will grow if the prospect becomes more realistic. Whether new support would be generated is a moot point, but the history of non league clubs in MK does not exactly show promise, and with perhaps half, or more, of the existing support refusing to travel it is difficult to see how the clubs situation would be improved. The other option, obviously, is to remain at Kenilworth Road. We all realise that the ground is outdated, and seriously cramped, and we have been told for the last 15 years or more that the club cannot survive without moving. Yet it continues to survive. Some improvements have been made, but they have mainly been cosmetic, with the need for new building being overlooked in favour of the determination to move elsewhere. While this is undoubtedly the preferred option, the timescales involved would suggest that ground improvements started some years ago would have become worthwhile, and it is still not out of the question that something could be done now. With the current lease on the ground ending next summer, David Kohler has said he will be looking for a new lease of at least five years, perhaps even ten. If the club is likely to remain at the current ground for that sort of period of time, then some redevelopment is surely essential, even if that length of lease is simply to cover further possible delays in relocation.

No one will argue against the need for a new home for the club, but if all else fails a redeveloped ground at the present site, holding perhaps 12,000 to 15,000, is a solution which will avoid the splits that currently exist over MK. Much of the funding could come from the Football Trust, and with the local council owning the site, and more community involvement in a redeveloped ground, the Lottery money might just become available to help out.

K.F.H.



Our centre half is grabbing all the headlines, even those in The Sun!!

Living proof! After all the delays with leg injuries and several bouts of 'flu, Darren Patterson finally manages to make a home appearance, dispelling doubts about his existence.



Downtrodden and Derided

The "Fast News" paper, The Herald and Post, often contain within their pages the latest thoughts of Chairman Koh; threats made to test the water, obligingly accompanied by vox pop opinion from the man on George Street. On the Milton Keynes issue the result was 2-1 in favour of the Town staying in town. Hooray! Meanwhile the letters pages of the local press are occasionally infiltrated by councillors who have a "new" idea re the Kohlerdome, and the occasional crackpot who has come to the conclusion that Luton doesn't deserve it's football club. It's quite easy to deride and discount these letters and daft opinions when they appear, but over the years they seem to have worn down the spirit of, that increasingly rare and downtrodden breed, the Luton Town supporter. The saddest and most worrying opinions, expressed in the latest Herald MK story, came from Supporter's Club member Phillip Francis, who was "philosophical" about the clubs situation; he wanted Luton Town FC to stay in Luton but, if it came to the question of the club moving or going out of business, "what choice is there?" However, Phillip was adamant in his opposition to the club, if it does go to MK, changing it's name (in order to keep up with the reality of it's leaving Luton) — thus missing the point entirely. Personally, if the club moved, I would campaign that no mention of Luton be included in the name.

But what makes fans like Phillip even entertain the thought of watching a bastardised version of their old football team in a different town? Where's the spirit of '84 that saw supporter power fight off the same move a decade ago? The fact is that that spirit is still very much alive, but needs focussing if and when the need to battle for retention of professional football in Luton is fought. There are, of course, fundamental differences in the situation of '84 and now — the effects of which seem to have made supporters like Phillip Francis give up hope. These include:

Size of Fanbase. "This football club is bigger than one man" I've heard David Kohler say. Whether or not he actually believes that cliché is arguable (but what do you reckon?). A football club is as big or as small as the fan base it has at any one time. If you look at the history of Luton Town during the past twenty years there are more than a few episodes which could clearly account for the loss of local support. In 1976 when the club were close to folding, the campaign to save it heavily relied on supporters goodwill and cash. The effect, apart from saving the club, was to unify the supporters and club (at the time of Happy Harry Haslam and Eric Morecambe) in search of a common goal — a spirit which survived long enough to see the club promoted to Division One in 1982. Those who had fought for the club must have felt betrayed by the first MK bid (*many never returned to Kenilworth Road*). The David Evans regime saw others leave under pressure of policies they couldn't

agree with. David Kohler's leadership, although apparently friendly and understanding toward fans, has re-opened the MK wounds. And, we shouldn't forget, the team are playing awfully. Pundits talk about "hardcore" support, but the fact is that even this number of apparently diehard fans is made up of individuals who have a breaking point after which they'll say enough is enough — that there are better things to do on a Saturday. In the 80's LTFC probably had a hardcore support of 7000-8000. Now it's 4500-5000. The number will rise and fall as fortunes change. We don't have the fans we had, but then we haven't got the players we had (and wouldn't be allowed to keep them if we did). Supporting during the hard times remains a lot harder than in the glory days. Don't let anyone tell you you don't deserve your football club.

Direction. If David Kohler's ambition from the outset was to rehome LTFC at MK then he would immediately have incurred the wrath of the club's supporters. That he has tried, and continues to try, to secure the junction 10 land leaves supporters with a dilemma. Kohler isn't, necessarily, *all bad*. This of course is true but, in mentioning the possibility of the MK move, he has shown himself wildly out of touch with what supporters feel. It's hard to dislike Kohler, he's an affable chap with a good line in public relations — he makes time to chat to supporters. On the other hand — applying the instinctive wariness of chairmen and their motives — it would seem very dodgy to trust the bloke 100%. His egotistic "Kohlerdome" plan for junction 10 would be good for Luton Town FC but, as a businessman rather than a football fan, anything he does should be viewed with caution. After all, (and Mr Kohler will love this analogy...) the Germans thought Hitler was the best thing since sliced bread back in the 1930's when he rejuvenated their economy. The question for Town supporters remains — if and when it's a good idea to protest. The time for action is.....? Who can say? And, in the meantime, some supporters believe their peers don't care anymore. Some believe that now is the time to voice dissatisfaction. Some would wait until the public enquiry is over. Some point the finger at Lucy Philips' bloody-mindedness at Luton Hoo. Doubts in the minds of different sets of supporters exemplifies another, and perhaps most crucial, point.....

Effect of Fragmentation. Now, there's a subheading you wouldn't normally expect to read in a football fanzine. What I'm on about is the multitude of different supporters' groups at our small club, that have started over the past six or seven years. Each one professes to have the best interests of the club at heart and each one doubtless means and believes it. The rift, if memory serves, started back in the early 80's when it was believed that the official Supporters Club was "in the pocket" of the football club, and therefore pro-MK. Since then we have along with the official Supporters Club, the Loyal Luton Supporters Club, The Bobbers Travel Club and other less

defined groups — including the group which produces this, and other now defunct, fanzines. Having all these different groups needn't be a bad thing and in many cases is no more or less than a progression of the group of friends from the school/street/pub with whom you normally go to matches. When members of a group start finding fault and imagining sinister undertones in the other supporters groups, it starts getting unhealthy — not for the football club — but for the supporters themselves. It's all a bit boring, not to say damaging, to keep hearing tales and snide comments between Town fans.

If and when a campaign to save football in the town starts it will have to be via an umbrella group, incorporating members from all the other groups, making sure that the goal is a common one and that there is no infighting on other issue. If it comes to the crunch, and "LTFC" desert the town, those of us who will refuse to go with them must be together in what we plan to do about it. Fragmentation at that stage would lead to the supporters, and Luton itself, ultimately losing professional football.

So, if we want to make sure that Luton Town stays in Luton town we've got to be vigilant. Remember that there are supporters who feel exactly the same way, and start coming round to the fact that we've got to be together on the relocation issue.

Tim Kingston



Mid-Season Turmoil: Sack the Boss

Come on Kohler, we've given Terry Westley enough chances to prove himself as our manager now, and time and time again he has picked a team that plays, well let's face it, completely crap. Let's go through the players one by one:

Ian Feuer In my view a world class keeper, he has kept scorelines from moving into double figures (remember Stoke) but can't keep saving us every time if he has a shit defence playing in front of him (again remember Stoke).

Trevor Peake Plays his heart out in every game for the Town, but now he's old he's lost what pace he did have. Although he is no longer captain, isn't it strange that when we're losing, he's the only one talking and trying to lift the other players. Isn't that supposed to be the captains job?

Marv Johnson Marv still has silky skills of old and looks good on the pitch occasionally, but you have to ask yourself is he better paying as part of a three man defence or as part of a four man one?

Steve Davis For a centre back, plays brilliantly up front and has proven himself to be an asset to our team, one of the very few who are. Not sure if he should be our captain while Trev is still around.

Gavin Johnson One word describes this person — joke. He just doesn't have a clue out on the pitch. Ipswich must be laughing to off load him on us. Has been with (Un)McGiven far too long as he prefers to play the backwards game (the best example being against Stoke when he was one-on-one with the keeper; instead of shooting and possibly scoring, he turned around and gave the ball away).

Graham Alexander Not worthy of wearing a Town shirt and doesn't deserve to wear one again after disgraceful performances against Oldham, Stoke, Charlton etc. (the list could go on and on). As he came from Scunthorpe, what did you expect? But his ability to play shit week in, week out is second to none.

Scott Oakes Everyone wanted him to return from injury but since he has, he hasn't done one sodding thing. Prefers to pussyfoot around the park for 90 minutes rather than play football. Many a time he has not been noticed as even playing, wonder if he still reckons he's worth £2 million plus?

Ceri Hughes Plays for himself rather than the team, and is another one who hasn't done a lot this season. However, when he does try, he's bloody brilliant. Has the handicap of being Welsh, but we can't all be perfect, can we?

Johnny Vilstrup Or is he Lee Dixon in disguise? Many a person has come up with that comparison. Westley shows his incompetence superbly with this player, by playing the man with the hardest shot in Denmark in a defensive midfield position — pointless. And doesn't even give free kicks to our free kick specialist.

Richard Harvey Plays in a funny position for a left back but that isn't his fault, it's Westley's again. Even though he's out of position, he plays reasonably well but his crosses can let him down.

David Oldfield What he's doing back here no-one will ever know, but at least he's consistent — consistently crap that is. Somehow won the game for us

at Ipswich, but hasn't done anything else. Hopefully, like Alexander, won't play too many more games for us.

Dwight Marshall Hasn't proved himself this season as yet, but that's probably to do with playing out of position. Mr Westley, he plays as a centre forward down the middle, not wide right as you seem to enjoy playing him.

Vidar Riseth The Norwegian hasn't had enough time to prove himself yet, but at this early stage in his Town career, doesn't look like he's quite the transfer coup Westley is trying to say he is.

Julian James Has hardly played this season but must be feeling pretty bad about himself if Alexander is keeping him out of the side at right back (Stoke again). But, while Westley persists in the three man defence, there doesn't appear to be room for him.

Bontcho Guentchev Penalty specialist Botch-up is basically shit. Came from Ipswich and is another one who's been with McGiven too long. Is an expert at passing to the opposing goalie from two yards out, when it would be a lot easier to score, and, unless it's a penalty, he's not going to do that.

Gary Waddock Hasn't played a lot this season so not a lot to comment on. Last time Mad said he wouldn't score for us, he scored that very match. So, Gary, it's a pity you'll never score a double hat-trick for us (hint, hint!).

John Taylor 'Super-John' is injured with a back problem, but has done well to play for us through the pain in some games.

Wesley Snipes Or is he Mitchell in disguise? Should keep to doing what he does best — whatever that is. Hopefully, has played his last for Town, but with Westley's erratic ideas on team selection, who knows — he might be centre forward next week.

Des Linton Someone that Andy Gray cannot underestimate the strength of (remember Newcastle (h) in the cup run?), but has been injured recently, so hasn't figured much in Westley's plans.

Kelvin Davis Out of favour now we have Feuer in the team, but in his performances this season he has given gifts to the opposing players (eg. Norwich, Perugia, Genoa). Still young and now has a four-year contract so he's bound to play a lot more for the Town yet. Good player but needs more experience.

As for others, Juergen Sommer and Rob Matthews did the right thing by moving elsewhere; Tony Thorpe, Jamie Woodsford and Paul McLaren have played the occasional game for us; Darren Patterson has got over his injury and should now start playing regularly for us and Stuart Douglas played a stormer on his debut against Oldham.

Looking at the list of players, there are some who have the ability to play well if they played to their full potential, so it must say something about the management if we keep losing all the time. It's time for a change Kohler, he's had enough chances. I should blame McGiven for this point but both seem to be encouraging a Watford style hoof the ball and chase it (except we don't bother

Luton losers

The last column I wrote was crap, the few before that weren't up to much, and this one is unlikely to be much better, although I reckon I'll get the hang of it sooner or later.

In the meanwhile I expect the boss to keep paying me and you to keep reading the rubbish uncomplainingly - indeed, I think you should really pretend to be enjoying it and congratulate me on the quality of bilge I'm turning out.

Of course, if I were actually living up to the preceding two paragraphs I would expect to be sacked *post haste* before what few readers were left had given up the ghost.

So why is it that week in, week out when I go to watch football matches I read programme notes by managers saying that the fans should ignore the team's recent poor performances and get behind them regardless of the way they're playing, because sooner or later it'll come right?

It is because the managers expect to take the credit when their team wins but don't want the hassle when they don't. And I write with special reference to Terry Westley of Luton Town, the team I follow. To date we've won one of the 11 games. The team looks like a bunch of strangers chucked together on the day of the match and sent out on to the pitch without being told who should play where.

Not Mr Westley's fault though, of course. I know that because he's said so in the programme notes - the same ones which urge me and fellow long-suffering supporters to stick with them, it'll all come right in the end.

Not until Mr Westley departs, it won't.

GRAHAM SHARPE
(William Hill Media Relations Manager)

chasing the ball) instead of the passing football that we're renowned for, and it's getting to us fans. Westley also doesn't have a clue what he's going on about: he says we're capable of being a top six side — everyone else knows we haven't got a chance of that, unless it's in the second division next year. He also said that once our main players are back from injury, we'll start showing our potential. So, tell me Mr Westley, now that all our players are back (except John Taylor) why aren't we showing this 'potential', why are we still putting in dire performances (second half of the Oldham match) and why do half the players run around the field like headless chickens, not wanting to touch the ball on the occasions that we actually have it. Having said this, let me lead you into a chorus which I hope DK will hear:

"We want Westley out, say we want Westley out!"

Beatle

The article below comes from a racing/betting magazine entitled "Odds On" and we are indebted to its writer, Graham Sharpe for supplying it to us.

Led's Grotty Christmas Grotto

With Christmas very much upon us (*more than Led thought when he wrote this - Ed*), now is the time to wish goodwill to all men and to offer gifts. Well, what with the season going from bad to worse — from having to watch the dross that Luton turn out week after week to off the field activities such as breaking down on the M3 at midnight after the Bournemouth debacle — I am not the person to come to looking for goodwill. However, being a half decent chap, there are a number of gifts that I would like to offer a few people.

- | | |
|------------------------------------|---|
| Clive Goodyear | A packet of Elastoplast. Judging by the endless list of injuries this season and the time it has taken for some of them to be overcome, the treatment room appears to need all the help it can get. By doubling the resources available to Clive, this gift will prove invaluable to the plight of the treatment room. |
| Mick McGiven
Trevor Peake | A one way ticket to Bosnia. 'Nuff said!
A wheelchair. This will improve Peakey's mobility no end in his twilight years — I'd like to see some speedy little winger try to get past Trevor when he runs the gauntlet of getting mown down. Also, we've wanted a new <i>Chairman</i> for years!! (I apologise heartily, but I couldn't resist it). |
| The NIMBYs | A lovely big Luton Airport flight path straight over their houses. |
| Iain Feuer
Mitchell Thomas | A permanent contract.
Now, the particularly delicate situation of reserve team obscurity that Spider now finds himself in can be improved in only one tangible way. This is why I feel that, for Christmas, Spider should be given at least a tiny bit of talent in order to enhance his career opportunities. |
| Bonzo Guentchev
Glennnda Roeder | See Mick McGiven.
After great deliberation over whether or not to send him an incendiary device through the post, I came to the conclusion that it would be more painful if he just carried on watching Watford every week. |

These gifts are sent with my best wishes in the hope that the New Year will bring with it renewed hope and, heaven forbid, perhaps a bit of luck.

Led



Dwight Marshall, for a change, celebrates an early goal against Tranmere, whose midfield seem to be blaming the defence. Below, it's that man Oakes again.



Diary of a Luton Town Supporter, 21/11/95

- 16.45 Bust a gut leaving work to get home, grab the necessary and head towards W**ford with friends.
- 17.45 In my friends car heading towards St Albans discussing which pub to hit, where will all the other Luton supporters be?
- 18.15 After detouring around and through central St Albans, pubs empty of Luton supporters, head towards W**ford.
- 18.40 Arrive at The Old Red Lion in W**ford, have a few drinks, talk to a few other Luton supporters at the bar.
- 19.15 Leave The Old Red Lion and head towards W**ford FC. Traffic is abysmal, the police seem more involved with waving their hands about than effectively directing traffic.
- 19.40 My friends and I are pissed of to say the least, as at this time we are still in the car trying to find somewhere to park.
- 19.45 Find somewhere to park and head towards the ground at an alarming pace.
- 19.55 Arrived at ground, only one turnstile open for us, what a surprise!!! Finally get in, only to find we cannot get seated as there are too many people standing behind the seated area allocated. My friends and I then decide we will go into the Upper stand so we can at least see some of the first half. The Shitford steward won't allow us up the stairs at first, another guy and a kid are trying to do the same as us. After explaining to an unusually understanding policeman that we just wanted to watch the match, not to cause any trouble, he persuades the steward to let us into the stand. The steward makes me take off my scarf which goes back on as we run towards the seats, which seem to be just a little bit empty?? Just about 100 seats each??
- 20.11 After winning a corner the fabulous Steve Davis scores a headed goal that had e and my friends jumping in the air for joy. Then, when W**ford get a rather disputable penalty —what a dive!! — we are rather distraught and pissed off. As they go to take it, comments were made like Feuer will save this, no prob!! and I agree. Uncannily he does and me and my friends do another jig for joy.
- 20.30 Half time arrives, and a severely pissed of W**ford supporter decides we are annoying him, his comments are "You shouldn't be in here", upon my reply of "Well, the steward let us in, we are not doing anything", he sounds off with "You're cheering and clapping, I'll get you removed". Of course we were cheering and clapping, it's always an event scoring against scumbags like them. Three W**ford supporters in front of us told us not to worry about the old git, he was always complaining. One of them went to stick up for us by having a word with the steward, who then told us no worries, we could stay where we were.

We then spotted Des Linton in the seats to our right and I went to get his autograph, as I like Des. I asked him why he was not playing, he was extremely diplomatic, when I presumed he was totally fed up with the situation. Then, as I waited for my friends to come back from the toilets, I was accosted by another Shitford fan telling me I shouldn't be allowed in, but in words not fit to repeat.

20.45 Out came the Town, hopefully we can get another goal and keep the scum quiet.

We notice that a few W**ford supporters are sitting behind us including the arsehole that spoke to me at half time, I think they are waiting for us to react to anything. Certain comments are voiced, including "let the bastard die, and good one Moralee", this when Julian James was elbowed, do I think they were trying to incite us, well yes I do!! But we were good and did not react to them at all.

21.24 A mistake of monumental proportions by Trev lets them in and after hitting the post on the first attempted shot, that little shit Kevin Phillips (incredibly lucky little shit I might add) puts in the rebound. That's when I think the scumbags behind us probably realized we must be Luton supporters, and the old git in the next row started pointing at me in delight (I think he's more delighted that we are totally pissed off, than that Shitford have actually scored). I point towards the pitch, saying "Why don't you watch that". After that he actually leaves the stand!! The W**ford supporter in front of me actually says to me "That's probably the only way they were going to score".

21.32 After the referee blows for full time (I'm surprised he can make out the time on a little watch with his eyes!!) we leave the ground.

21.40 After returning to the car extremely pissed off that Shitford got a point not deserved, we proceeded towards a decent town, Luton, one of the group shouting "lucky bastards" out of the moving vehicle at the W**ford wallies.

Jackie

SUN RATINGS

SOUTHAMPTON: Beasant 7, Dodd 6, Benali 6, Venison 7, Hall 6, Monkou 6, Le Tissier 6, Magilton 6, Watson 5 (Widdrington 4), Shipperley 5, Heaney 5. Subs not used: Grobbelaar, Bennett. Booked: Benali, Heaney.

QPR: Sommer 2, Yates 5, Maddix 5, Ready 5 (Gallen 4), Bardsley 8, Brevett 5, Barker 4, Wilkins 5, Zelic 5, Dichlo 6, Sinclair 6. Subs not used: Osborn, Holloway. Sent off: Bardsley. Booked: Dichlo.

REF: R Dilkes (Lancs) 5.

The goal Le Tiss did score was not so much down to his brilliance as to the incompetence of American Sommer.

Bluntly, the Yank is a plank - and Wilkins looks a big-time loser for splashing £600,000 to bring him from Luton earlier this season. Surely, Som mistake, Ray.

Like he did most of the day, indecisive Sommer flapped wildly at Le Tiss's dead-ball effort, taken wide on the left, and it finished in the net.

BOTTOM!

A word of congratulation to all of you who spotted the deliberate error in the last issue. Of course, you were all right, and we did indeed lose 3-1 at Reading. I apologise to anyone who was offended by reading a scoreline which flattered the Town more than was deserved, and promise that, sooner or later, I will make a mistake that has the opposite effect, just to balance things out you understand!

08.11.95 CESENA 2 TOWN 1

Eventually we arrived at the ground (the bus driver got lost), and it took 10 to 15 minutes to get the tickets — they seemed surprised to see 10 desperate Luton fans. Then off to find a bar. Several Vodkas later, off to find the club shop. Couldn't find it, and it wasn't in the phrase book, so went in.

It was a bit of a shock to find the ground with two tiers of seats in all four stands when I was expecting a tip. Anyway, when the game kicked off there were about 20 to 30 Luton fans in the "crowd". During the first half both teams played possession football, ie: hadn't a clue in the penalty area. Cesena hadn't, they scored from 30 yards out.

It was time for the bog, then I saw the club shop, so I went and asked for a badge. The young lady in there repeated "Badge? Ah, Roberto Baggio! He play for....." So I said no (maybe she's his agent?) and she gave me the next best thing, a scarf. Huh! Who needs Baggio when we've got err...., Graham Alexander?

The second half started the same, until Oakes got the ball and ran with it (yes, it did happen) and crossed it to (I thought Stuart Douglas, and I wasn't the only one) Marshall to head home from the edge of the area. Then as Luton got a corner, Kelvin went up, they got a dodgy free kick from it. Kelvin sprinted back to the edge of his box only to see the ball, chipped from the halfway line, sail over his head and into the net. Well, at least we have been consistent in this silly cup.

On the whole the team were unlucky really, Cesena were the worst Italian side so far I've seen in the cup, so it was back to Rimini to find a bar.

Dayoff

11.11.95 TOWN 1 YET ANOTHER CRAP AWAY KIT FC 1

A game of two halves.....

The debut of 17 year old Stuart Douglas was the highlight of this game. After being nobbled by Gerrard early on in the game, 10 minutes later he proceeded to kick the crap out of the keeper while making it look like a shot — he even got applause for it. He scored with 5 minutes of the half left, after Marv had headed the ball down for him to smash into the top corner. Half time came and the Town/Douglas got a standing ovation as it looked like we were back on the right track after humiliating performances against Stoke, Charlton etc. Were we bollocks.

We came out for the second half and tried to sit on a one goal lead. What had Westley told them in his half time team talk? "Right lads, we're one goal up so obviously we've got this game won. This will help push us into the top six in the table. Don't bother going forward in this half, just defend. And you Douglas, I was appalled by your performance, you were far too good for my team. You'd better have an average/less than average half or you'll be straight off to be replaced by David Oldfield." So, the Town players took in this information and played like we have done in previous performances.

65 minutes came and Ian Feuer made a world class save to deny Oldham. After thinking he had done enough to stop them scoring, the defence let him down again by standing and watching Halle put the ball in the net, past a stranded Feuer. Oldham then threatened to take all three points with numerous attacks which split our defence in two (well, one and a half as we only play a three man defence). Oldham should have scored but their forwards seemed to be as good as Gavin Johnson is up front. We came to life in the seconds minute of injury time when, on a rare venture into the Oldham half, we got a corner. Ceri Hughes 20 yard screamer was somehow saved by Gerrard who tipped it over the bar.

The referee was again a joke; what is the point of being so insistent about the stretcher rule when it's one of our players down but as soon as an Oldham bloke gets injured, you allow him over five full minutes of on the field treatment, then let him get up and continue playing without even booking him, you bastard. You need to learn the rules before you officiate in games.

In concluding, the first half held out hope for us long suffering Town fans, but the second produced the same old crap we've been used to week in, week out.

Beatle

PS: Did anyone else realise that for the second week running, the bringing on of David Oldfield coincided with our opponents scoring (in this case it was one for Oldham, the previous week it was four for Stoke). Funny that, isn't it?

18.11.95 TOWN 0 BRUM 0

Westley out, Westley out.....

I must confess that I wanted us to be thumped in this game so Mr Westley would have been out of a job by 5pm, but we held our own in the match — but failed to score as well. In fact, over the whole 90 minutes we had only one credible shot that got on target and troubled the keeper, and that was Hughes's effort. Apart from that our attack was very, very weak and needs strengthening somehow. Terry Westley was already preparing his excuse ('anyone's to blame but himself') when the Brum beat our defence, but Ian 'Sign him up' Feuer made yet another world class save by pushing the ball onto the bar with only two minutes remaining, to keep our one point safe. Unfortunately, the draw probably keeps Westley in the job until Christmas, when we really need a change of manager now.

Beatle

21.11.95 THEM 1 US 1

You'll never beat the Luton!!!!

Beforehand, a point would have been very well received. Sadly, at the end, it was all a bit disheartening and not just because of the result.

Trying to get in was a bloody nightmare. I think it's fair to say that no-one, myself included, expected 3,000 or so Luton to turn up, although to find only 4 turnstiles open was a total farce and just to wind us up a bit more, where were the programmes? All I can say is..... I HATE WATFORD!

Overall the game was poor, but with so much at stake (and not just local pride) maybe that wasn't surprising. Pushing Stevo up into midfield worked well, but it was so good to have Jules back in defence. Be brave Terry, and stick with it!! Why Steve Davis is playing with a shower like Luton is beyond me, he is literally head and shoulders above everybody else, and so he proved on 25 minutes. A rare good corner and a storming header.

I can't say too much about their penalty as I was AWOL, but it was a cracking stop by Ian "Sign him up" Feuer. It also shut up those idiots above us.

Chances were few and far between in both halves, but I thought we had it in the bag. How stupid of me! Could you see W*?!=xd scoring? NO, nor could I. Poor old Trevor, what was he doing? He will probably never make a mistake like that again. Even then it took two attempts to score and all of a sudden the W*?!=xd masses woke up. Lucky sods!

To say I was gutted was an understatement. Quite simply Luton cannot throw away many more games like that. The opposition were as bad if not worse than Luton, and that is really saying something.

ROLL ON EASTER.

J.S.

25.11.95 BARNLEY 1 TOWN 0

Nice to see us keep up our 100% record in South Yorkshire since our fall from grace. Four games, four defeats. This was another awful, forgettable match punctuated by Redfearn's goal (or was it Rammell's) for the Tykes midway through the second half. Marshall missed a gaping sitter in the first half which looked easier to score than miss. Towards the end the "Westley out" chanting reached its most vociferous level yet, and the incompetence of our wonderful managerial duo was highlighted in injury time when, after winning a corner, our yellow giant Mr Feuer set off up the field to take up a position in the Barnsley box only to be waved back by Mr McUnforgiven. The journey home by train rounded off the day nicely — a missed "connection" in Sheffield then a lengthy delay in Leicester meant we arrived back in Luton a mere five and a half hours after the game ended.

Steve F.

02.12.95 TOWN 3 TRANMERE ROVERS 2

Only time will tell whether or not this was a good result. In the short term it was undoubtedly a very welcome three points, but as a defeat might have brought about a change of manager we will have to wait and see whether or not this proves to be something of a pyrrhic (look it up!) victory. Whatever, it was still a welcome bit of early pre-Christmas cheer and if the team had shown the same spirit, commitment and flair more often this season, we wouldn't be in the dire position that we currently are — and all achieved without Captain Marvel (instead we had Captain Marv), Uncle Trev, and, for a change, Patterson. Marshall ran himself into the ground and deserved the hat-trick that the woodwork twice denied him, whilst Thorpe looked more like the player he'd promised to become a couple of years ago. Paul McLaren also deserves credit both for the cool finish for the winner and then for his celebrations afterwards. You could gripe about the defending not being of the highest standard, and point to Tranmere's assistance by missing a number of gilt edged chances, but I'd rather watch games like this every week than the dour, negative crap we've had to put up with for most of this season. The only downer was that this was Ian Feuer's last game on loan — I for one hope that we can come up with the cash to make the deal permanent, and that it doesn't become another Steve Sutton type situation. Anyway, each win this season has been greeted with the assurance from TW that the turning point of the season has been reached and that things are looking up — well, on the previous three (count 'em) occasions this hasn't happened and if it doesn't happen this time I don't think TW will be telling us again.

A.J.C.

10.12.95 TOWN 2 WOLVERHAMPTON WANDERERS 3

This was what we had all been waiting for, the match which would prove whether or not the victory over Tranmere had been a false dawn. Sadly, it went a long way to proving that it had been. Two changes to the side were enforced, with Kelvin replacing Feuer in goal, and Stevo replacing Jules in defence. It was the latter which seemed to be the source of most problems, with the defence having what could politely be termed an off day. Steve Davis is, undoubtedly, a class player, but seems to lack the positional discipline needed in a struggling side, with his tendency to wander off into the midfield so often. As a result of this Marv seemed lost for most of the game, apparently not knowing where the hell Davis was going to pop up next. But the result rested on more than this, particularly the fact that the passing (to feet) football that had brought success against Tranmere seemed to have been abandoned as soon as it had been discovered. The two brief spells of decent football brought the Town's two goals, but it wasn't enough. Wolves always offered the greater threat, and if Bull had scored, when it was easier to do so than to miss, late on, that would have wiped out the Town efforts to get an equaliser. Two of Wolves' three first half goals came from free headers, and whilst Feuer might have prevented one or both due

to his height, it would be unfair to blame Kelvin for either. In short, the result was what was deserved on the day and the performance was a disgrace, especially by the defence. As someone put it after the match, we are bottom of the First Division, and entirely on our own merits. Someone has to carry the can for this, and Westley and McGiven, it has to be you. David Kohler has shown immense patience in you, and for no reward. It cannot continue like this, and so you must go. Bye bye Terry.

Finally, a round of applause for the Wolves fans who risked making the journey when a postponement looked a possibility for the third year running. If you had stayed at home, no-one could have blamed you.

K.F.H.

LTFC COMPUTER SPELL-CHECK SQUAD

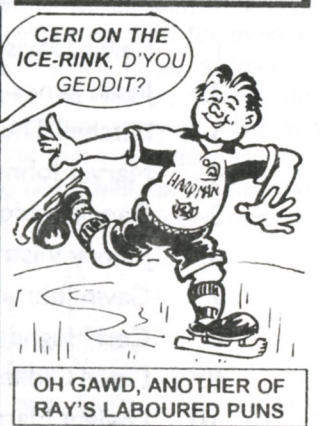
1.	Kelvin Davis	CLEANING DEVICE
2.	Julian James	DUELLING GAMES
3.	Mitchell Thomas	MIGHTY THONGS
4.	Marvin Johnson	NERVING TENSION
5.	Gary Waddock	GREY WATCHDOG
6.	Johnny Vilstrup	JINGLY FLUSTERS
7.	Gavin Johnson	GOLFING TOWNSMAN
8.	Ceri Hughes	ZERO HASH
9.	David Oldfield	DEVIATE OUTFIELD
10.	Dwight Marshall	DIRTY MARKS
11.	Bontcho Guentchev	BIONIC GENITALS

SUBS

Fred Barber	FIREBRIER
Darren Patterson	DRAWING PATTERNS
Graham Alexander	GRIMY ISLANDER
Tony Thorpe	TEENY THERAPY

MANAGER	Terry Westley	UTTERLY WASTED
PHYSIO	Clive Goodyear	CHIEF GOAT-HERD
M.D.	David Kohler	DEVILLED KILLER

WHATEVER HAPPENED TO BOBBIN DINO?



RAVING MAD!!!

Dear "Mad",

Two very disgruntled Town supporters are this morning (8/11/95) reading Brian Swain's match report on the Stoke performance. It occurred to us that HELL TEL, apart from being a complete a*****e, has no idea about picking a team. We were told that because of an injury to super Marv, the Town would have to play in the "unfamiliar" formation of 4-4-2. This, we thought, couldn't be too bad. James at right back, Peake and Davis in the middle and Dickie Harvey on the left. Spot the deliberate mistake. Now, we are not the Julian James fan club, but what has the man done wrong? By far the best right back at the club (since Timbo), and one of our most consistent players over the last few seasons, he can fill in at most positions. I'm sorry, but Alexander isn't good enough to clean Jules' boots. Also we understood that continuity breeds success. HELL TEL has used no fewer than 24 players in the first 15 games (not all enforced by injuries or suspensions), and rewards good performances (Gary Waddock v Charlton) with being substituted, and then completely overlooked for the squad against Stoke. The way HELL TEL is going we will be relegated by Christmas and, worse still, the scum might get more than one point off us for a change (sorry for being so pessimistic). The late Harford years were bad, but at least he won us a trophy and nearly a couple more. It's our belief that if Saint Jim had not been sacked for the dreadful sin of keeping us in the top division, we would not be in this situation, and we think most fans must feel the same. Bring back Saint Jim and sack HELL TEL. Get rid of the crap, Guentchev (but who would take the penalties and maybe score), G. Johnson and McGiven, and a few other players, Mitchell. Get the Kohlerdome in, and see us win the second division championship in style next season (or will it be the 3rd division play-offs)!

HELL TEL OUT!

Yours totally p****d off,

Gav & Pat.

Dear "Mad",

Back in this seasons first issue (issue 28) I had a letter printed in which, amongst other points, I said Terry Westley couldn't really be judged until Christmas. I was wrong, unfortunately. The jury are not so much out as telling the judge to put his black cap on. As I write I have just seen the Oldham shambles and the Stoke City debacle is still fresh in my mind. Westley and his entire Ipswich Town entourage must go now. TW comes across as a very nice man but he has been guilty of incredible naivety, and that's probably not enough, on it's own, to succeed in management in the 90s it seems. You could blame Kohler perhaps for trying to get a manager on the cheap.

Changing the teams pattern of play is OK if you've got the players capable of pushing up a la Rob Jones or Le Saux, but Dickie Harvey or Alexander the (not so)

Great??? It would be funny if it wasn't tragic. Dicky is a reasonable enough defender and always does his best, but Alexander is the man who put the C**t in Scunthorpe. Guentchev must be the worst player ever to put on a Luton Town shirt, especially as his arrival was treated as the second coming by TW & Company. We've all got a list of piss-poor players (Spiring, Carr, Money and Stein's second spell), but Bontcho (pronounced Botch-up) takes the Bulgarian biscuit. Neither Oakes nor Hughes have done much more this season than flounce around the pitch admiring their reflections in the executive box windows. The money wasted on Oldfield could have gone towards offering Preecey a better contract and perhaps we might not be in this mess. Yes, there are some good points; Feuer is top class, Steve Davis has quickly settled in and looks the part, and Trevor Peake (noticed how much he resembles Homer Simpson these days?) belies his age. But it comes to something when a player on loan, another only here a couple of months and one the same age as I am are the few exceptions to the rule.

So, Westley (and McGiven) must go. Who to replace him? Mike Walker? Mick Harford and/or Andy King? How about Gary Mabbutt as player/manager? Only time will tell, but we are sinking fast and a new face is needed at the helm. Kohler's next move will be to give Happy Harry the job — stranger things have happened — Watford got to an FA Cup Final after all!

Gerry Callaghan,

Stevenage.

PS: News has just come through that Graham 'Turnip' Taylor has quit. Next stop Luton? Please, no, God.

Dear "Mad",

Yesterday, before another boring load of rubbish I bought *Mad* for the 1st time, and may I make a few — more in fact — observations.

Page 2 — notice no female contributors (for Nicky Bush read Nicola - Ed), and you all sound so young (*gosh, really?* - Ed) — unless "a bewildered Old Fart" is one. I'm an old fart - female - very ancient, been attending matches at Kenilworth Road for about 60 years on and off, in between youthful love life, marriage (to a non sporting hero), child, etc. etc.

Editorial — Cannot quite agree with the continual slugging of DK. Whilst feeling that his intentions are not always "Kosher" for LTFC - but who else is there? Do something positive man (*Who? Me?* - Ed). I hear that Cliff Bassett is worth a few more millions having sold U.S.A. I have written to Matthew Harding suggesting that having apparently lost the Chelsea battle with Ken Bates, that if he wanted a challenge one is awaiting him here at LTFC — no ground, no players worthy of note — that is where his future lies. Awaiting reply.

Editorial 2 — TW. Agree he is not the ideal choice and the players bought are a disaster. Hope we can keep Ian Feuer, but goodbye to most others. Graham Alexander - why persist with him, USELESS. G. Johnson is better, when he gets

chance. Vilstrup may be OK — Davis has his moments but give me Peake anytime. Patterson — cannot comment, not seen enough. Taylor — a bit slow and possibly, like me, too old. Riseth — not impressed, and any others I've forgotten so can't be any good. Don't quite know why Oldfield and Bontcho are slagged so, they're better than the above mentioned. Oakes — that hat-trick against West Ham went to his head and he hasn't played well since. Perhaps he should grow his hair as Phil Gray and John Dreyer!

Page 5 — Didn't see the T**s lady from Middlesbrough last season — the only game (home) I missed - son went off to work in Brazil that day and I had to go to Heathrow — I can identify with the lady though, being a bit that way myself. I love my football, and why shouldn't we come? And a few glares from me does keep the language at bay.

Page 8 — More slagging of David Evans. I got on well with him. He was always willing to sort out queues and talk to me. Don't think I like Tim Kingston.

Page 10 — Why didn't we persevere with David Greene and Tony Thorpe etc. Didn't like David Pleat, and was glad when he went — don't like returners (ie also M. Thomas), although I'd love to see one S. Foster having a go at management at LTFC. Did you see Ricky Hill yesterday signing autographs?

Got son and grandson's away tops at last — then son in Brazil said his wasn't right size so had to change it.

Hope you can read all this drivel — writing on my knee whilst enduring Norwich/Ipswich match — husband snoring upstairs!

That's all for now folks (hooray!!). A further contribution for next *Mad*.

Love and Kisses,

Margaret Cousins
Biggleswade.

Dear "Mad",

After being labelled a Town fan for some 25 years I find the events of the last few years totally distressing. Why can't we get someone to run this football club that cares about the club, also a manager that's got the slightest clue about what he's doing.

Even if, as is probable, Terry Westley (who?) does get the push, who in their right mind would want to come and run a football club in such disarray? I know Mick Harford would be a popular choice, along with Steve Foster, but with Mr Kohler not willing to spend money (not £50,000 to £100,000, but real money!) I can see us getting further into the mire. Last time we had a chance to remain in the big time, we blew it, just scraping through for five or six seasons and finally succumbing when the chance of some financial reward was on the horizon. With the prospect of Premiership 2 on or just around the corner, we must get a chairman and a manager that want to fight for Luton Town.

Let's be realistic now, Luton Town in the Premiership is about as far away as an England manager that knows what he's doing. Don't get me wrong, I want to see

Luton in the top flight, but unless we see some major upheaval in the next couple of years, I really fear for the state of our club.

Yours in deep depression,

S. J. Brinklow,
Camberley, Surrey.

Dear "Mad",

As a founder member of "Frampton Hatters" (membership 2) we took a following to Stoke — I will be interested to read Mad's comments on that debacle. Why have they still got terracing and our bit at the back of the Kenilworth not anything?

Anyway, keep up the good work. Enclosed (*elsewhere in this issue*) is a poem written two years ago after a crap performance against Tranmere, 0-1 at home. We didn't have a clue then and there were calls for Pleat's head at the game — months later we were at Wembley playing Chelsea — I am forever an optimist!

Frampton Hatter,

Bill Church

Frampton-on-Severn, Gloucestershire.

Stoke still have the terracing because, under the Taylor report recommendations, they are given 3 years to go all seater after being promoted to the first division. So, unless they receive an exemption or get relegated, they will not have terracing next season. Ed.

Dear "Mad",

May I plead with you in asking just what on earth is going on this season? Why are we struggling so badly?

I was prompted to write after reading in the magazine '90 minutes' that apparently Terry Westley still believes we can make the play-offs because it is a tight division and the players have got what it takes!!! OH yeah!! Well, Terry, when are results going to start to fulfil this belief? We've only won 3 times this season in any competition in over 3 months!! Clearly promotion form this (not)!

You have been more fortunate than most in having money to spend and, to your credit, I fancy Steve Davis was, is, and will continue to be a superb signing. Shame about the others though! On the Scott Oakes saga, get over £1 million for him plus Guy Whittingham — a proven goalscorer at this level.

I have refused to join in 'Westley out' chants or even support them because I'm prepared to give Mr Westley a fair chance for the team to really gel, but time is running out — fast.

Unfortunately, not only does it appear that we're in for another disappointing season, but relegation is a very real possibility. What happened to all the pre-season optimism? I, for one, thought we had a real chance of promotion one way or another. Does Mr McGiven still think he has nothing to prove? Ipswich were relegated as a direct result of his negative crap tactics and the same is happening

to us. Why don't you sod off to Vicarage Road (or Old Trafford) and take Guentchev with you.

Yours deeply frustrated,

Tim Davis

Aberystwyth, Dyfed.

PS: Why are our shirts so expensive?

Dear "Mad",

Apologies for not writing sooner, but with our atrocious start to the season what has there been to write or boast about! The only good thing has been Steve Davis, but when the Embassy Snooker Championships arrive next April, we're gonna have one big gaping hole at the back! Though to be honest, Marv and Trev are both still playing well. Our defence (if lacking in pace) is not our problem. It is our inability to find the net that is very worrying. Dwight's composure sometimes is found wanting, though his pace and effort are there for everyone to see. But it's the efforts of Bontcho and Mr Oldfield that cause concern. Perhaps Guentchev needs a lucky goal (sums it up really!). But both do not show desirable enough attitudes such as Davis, Marshall and Marv, to help our "no win" situation. I'm positive Oldfield has more to offer, as his goal against the agriculturalists showed, and if the crowd might just get off his back (though they have no reason to) he may flourish more. The loan keeper has been superb and he would like to stay here for sure. The fans, importantly, have taken to him. I spoke to TW before the West Brom game and asked him for a valuation of Ian Feuer. He said "About 250 to 300 thousand", which seems about right. I asked if we could buy him for that price. He explained that no offer was good enough for West Ham. Feuer is better than Sealey (their no. 2), but it's something to do with the three foreigner rule (Miklosko, Rieper and Robbie Slater). If Feuer is on the bench, then one of those three has to drop out. See the problem? Anyway, good win at Ipswich, let's hope for a win against Charlton and a belated kick start to the season.

Tony Allbones

Bedford.

PS: We've just been beaten by Charlton. Shit. We're in it.

Dear "Mad",

Thanks for printing my letter in issue 30, it came as a shock to see it in print. If Luton keep on losing I think that the team should be put in stocks so the fans can throw rotten fruit and veg at them, to tell them they are shit. Terry Westley should get out while he can still walk, otherwise he might get beaten up by angry Town fans who are unhappy at where the club is going. Let's just hope he can do the right thing and quit. Why, oh why the board gave him the managers job I'll never know. He is just a crap manager who doesn't coach the team that well. Luton must get rid of him now!!!! If not we will be down after Christmas with the

Christmas trees. The Town need a decent goalkeeper, defence, midfield and attack — the whole bloody team, it's no good just buying midfield players when we need to score goals and win matches.

We lose too many games in the last 5 minutes which is not good as fans expect the team to win with the last minutes remaining and not lose when we're in the lead.

Is David Kohler really selling the club or is it to see who makes a bid to see what he can get? The board must act to get rid of Westley, or we will be down in the 2nd division playing the likes of Swansea, Wycombe and York.

Westley Go!!!!!!

P. M. Ryan (Mr Angry Luton Town Supporter)

Calne, Wiltshire.

Dear "Mad",

I am a dedicated Town fan living in Hong Kong, and until last season I hadn't seen them play. I was unbelievably surprised, however, to see them on local TV when we did so well in the FA Cup a few seasons back.

Now being at college in Surrey I am able to see them play — which is still a real treat for me. However, I have not had the guts to go this season and be forced to witness an almost certain 1-0 defeat to teams we should be beating 2 or 3-0. Can our current form (if there is any) all be down to a crap manager? If so, why hasn't the logical thing been done to kick him out?

Matt Turk

Dorking, Surrey.

PS: If Kohler and his cronies are thinking about relocating in Milton Keynes, why doesn't he look further afield — like Hong Kong! There are at least half a dozen of us out there!

Dear "Mad",

I have been watching Luton since 1985 when I was 6, and this season so far has been the worst, not in terms of league position, but the way we are playing (if you can call it playing). LONG BALL springs to mind.

I would blame Kohler, McGiven and Westley. First of all, Kohler for taking the cheap option and employing Westley. Although he called it a brave decision, stupid springs to mind. I was fully behind Westley until I heard that Mick "all out defence" McGiven was his appointed assistant. I have spoken to Westley and he seems a very nice bloke, but being a nice bloke doesn't mean he's a good manager, and he definitely doesn't seem a good manager. Some of his ideas and signings are good, but were his signings spotted by other people? Steve Davis and Ian Feuer are, without doubt, class players and I can't see Davis being here too long. Alexander, Vilstrup and Riseth could and hopefully will be good players. Oldfield and Gavin Johnson do work hard but, to me, haven't got much in the way of skill and speed, and as for Bontch "Bulgarian Tossplot" Guentchev he just

doesn't work and try, he is just a lazy git! I would much rather see someone with plenty of enthusiasm for the game such as Davis, Douglas or James. I would like to see McGiven sacked and Westley sent to Wednesday with Pleat, or put back as Youth team manager as the youngsters got on very well with him. I have a lot of time and respect for John Moore who is a superb coach and manager, which is shown by his list of achievements (unlike Westley who, don't forget, did play for Diss Town, WHOOOOO!!!), eg: highest ever Town position (7th Division One), and nearer the present time the way the youth team are playing. So, I would like to see him as assistant manager or first team coach under somebody like Mick "God" Harford or Ricky Hill. Why, you may think. Well, Harford as he still cares about the club, lives in the area and still comes and watches the team regularly, and I think he would put at least a thousand more on the gate each week, if not more. Ricky Hill because he has managed before and, although only in America, he won the league, and got voted manager of the season (twice).

Anyway, enough of what I think!

Yours faithfully,

Elliot Kenyon,

Flitwick, Beds.

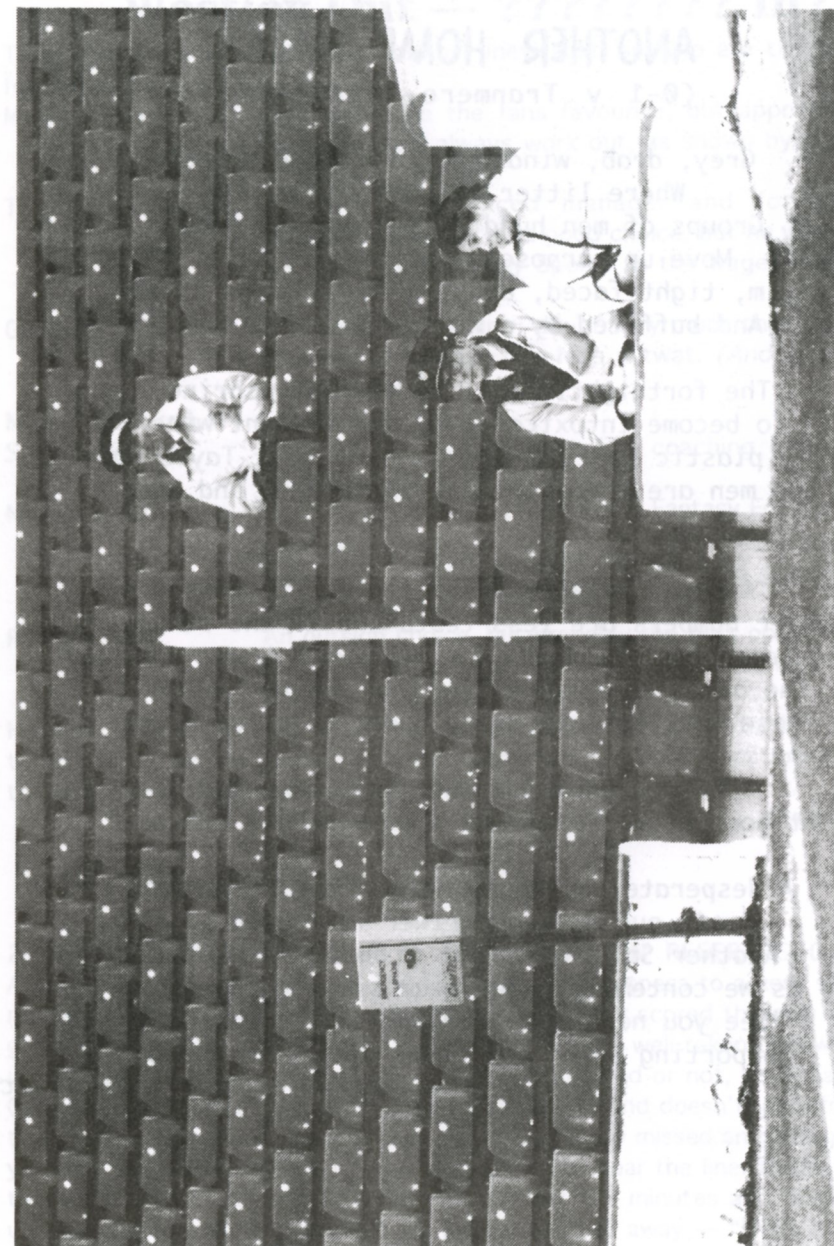
Book Review:

Gladys Protheroe — Football Genius!

Simon Cheetham — Juma Publishing £5.99 p/b

Oh dear. It's difficult to know where to start with this one. It's certainly original, being the story of a woman who, upon the death of her footballer husband, becomes involved in football management, harking back to her childhood memories as a spectator at, I kid you not, the old pigsty itself, Vicarage Road. Basically, the plot involves Gladys rising through the ranks to become England manageress and, in her later years, adviser to the great and good (?). So, if you want to know who was behind the World Cup victory of 1966, or who fell out with Sir Alf in 1970 over a certain substitution, or who was with Bobby Moore when he didn't steal that bracelet, or who was the master of English football since the war, then this book is definitely for you. I know it's only supposed to be fiction, and a fairly light hearted attempt at that, but the overall impression I was left with of this book is that it's pretty sad — a somewhat unlikely cross between Barbara Cartland (her first and, hopefully, last mention in Mad) and Brian Glanville. Oh, by the way, the author confesses to being a scummer so if I haven't put you off this book already, that should.

A.J.C.



Aaahh! The wide open spaces of Oakwell. The St John's Ambulance Brigade await the call, although they appear to have fallen out. But why an emergency telephone by the corner flag? Are they expecting to sign a Brazilian striker at Barnsley?

ANOTHER HOME DEFEAT

(0-1 v Tranmere, 11/12/93)

Grey, drab, windswept, terraced street
Where litter billows and meet
Groups of men huddled against the rain,
Move up purposely, supposedly sane.
Grim, tight faced, dodging fast food's litter
And buffeted by a wind, raw and bitter.

The fortnightly call to the holy shrine,
To become intoxicated by a different wine.
Empty plastic seats predominate in post Taylor age,
The men are there to vent their fury and rage.

A muted roar greets their teams,
Another relegation battle so it seems.
Their numbers are less testament to the struggle
As the team sheet reflects the managers desperate juggle.
The atmosphere robbed by the planners blight,
Those soulless executive boxes an awful sight.

"Do you know how much they are paid?
At home with Grandstand I should have stayed!"

A desperate baying emanates from the crowd,
As our ageing striker is fouled.
Another Saturday night filled with gloom,
As we contemplate our team's impending doom.
"See you next week at Southend in the Cup,
Supporting Luton you never know your luck!"

Bill Church

Westley Out — ????????? In?

Terry Westley's sacking is now almost inevitable, so who are the possibilities for the managers job?:

- | | |
|----------------|--|
| Mick Harford | Mick would be the fans favourite, but appointing a local hero does not always work out, as shown by Ossie Ardiles at Spurs. |
| Trevor Francis | A fairly experienced manager and former England international would be a good choice, but he would probably not want to leave Sky Sports as the wages must be a lot higher. |
| Graham Taylor | If we got the Turnip, I doubt very much that he would last long because, basically, he's a twat. <i>(And wouldn't he be popular!! — Ed)</i> |
| Mick McGiven | See Graham Taylor. |
| Steve Foster | Another old favourite who has coaching experience with Brighton and the Town. |
| Mike Walker | Good coach but can tend to play Fantasy Football like David Pleat, and probably wouldn't be tempted to leave his skip hire firm. <i>(And as he's an ex-W**ford goalkeeper, he's hardly ideal material for the job — Ed).</i> |
| Ricky Hill | An outside choice, but probably the best option because he had over ten years at the club and has also been a coach in the USA for a couple of years. |

However, I would not get rid of Westley altogether. I would offer him the chance to go back to his old position of Youth team manager, and tempt John Moore back to the position of 1st team coach.

The Mystical One

22/11/95 TOWN RESERVES 1 SOUTHAMPTON RESERVES 0

A less than packed Main Stand and Enclosure were witness to a very strange, not repeated very often, event. Yes, Botch-up Guentchev scored the only goal of the game and it wasn't even a penalty. Actually, it was a well taken goal which ended up in the roof of the net. Still, no matter if he scored or not, I still hate the git. Oldfield demonstrated perfectly why he shouldn't, and doesn't, play for the first team with a crap game for the reserves. He somehow missed an open goal from 2 yards by kicking the ball so it spun away as it got near the line. Kelvin Davis kept the result intact with two fine saves in the last ten minutes and Guentchev was unfortunate to stay on the pitch for kicking the ball away — "What's the matter with you ref? It should have been a red card not a yellow one! Again our attacking midfielder Johnny Vilstrup was played in the wrong place, this time at left back!!

Beatle

OWN GOAL

Another glorious own goal by the Hatters comes as no surprise, but still somehow we expect them to show signs of learning. On this occasion it was the Saturday before the Wolves game, December 9th, a mere two weeks before Christmas. So, with all the commercial acumen we expect of our favourite club, the Ticket Office was closed for the day. Only the day before a big match after all, so why do anything to encourage the casual supporters? But, to make matters worse, the Club Shop was also closed. What better timing could be imagined, than to keep out potential customers so close to the festive season? All that was needed to show what was thought of such people was a sign saying "Go and spend your money elsewhere, we don't want it."



Jayne, Peter and Ceri Bulkeley pictured at Disneyland, California, with the "Mad Hatter". Surprisingly he hadn't heard of the famous Hatters, but was put right on that. At least, as those of you reading this in glorious black and white can't see, he is dressed in an appropriate combination of Orange, Blue and White, even if he is a touch overpriced!

SHORT CUTS

Normally, we would condemn violence at football matches, especially by the Police. But, on this occasion, we feel we can make an exception. After all, it couldn't happen to a nicer bloke, could it?

Magno	.....	7
Coca Cola Cup		
Sommer	.....	2
M Johnson	.....	2
S Davis	.....	2
Oldfield	.....	2
Alexander	.....	2
Marshall	.....	2
Taylor	.....	2
Guentchev	.....	2
Harvey	.....	2
Thorpe	.....	(2)
Thomas	.....	1 (1)
James	.....	1
Hughes	.....	1
Waddock	.....	1
Matthews	.....	(1)

Goals
Marshall and Marvin
Johnson 1 each
Assists
Steve Johnson and
Alexander 1 each

Luton News - Oct 18
1995

Truncheon cop attacked me on pitch, says Watford star

By MIKE LEWIS

WATFORD striker Kevin Phillips last night claimed he was attacked on the pitch by a truncheon-wielding policeman.

Phillips rushed on to celebrate Watford's Coca-Cola Cup victory at Bournemouth on Tuesday night.

The Hornets had pulled off a dramatic penalty shootout win and Phillips, out of the side with an injury, went to congratulate his team-mates.

But as he walked back towards the dressing rooms, he claims a uniformed police officer struck

him twice across the shoulders with a truncheon. Phillips, Watford's joint top scorer last season, had large bruises on his shoulders.

We've had Marvin and Gavin, and in the past, Rob Johnson, but Steve must be another Westley signing who's slipped through the net.

2 Division One

Birmingham	4	2	0	12	6	14
Millwall	3	2	1	10	9	11
Grimsby	3	2	1	9	7	11
Stoke C	3	1	2	14	9	10
Leicester	3	1	2	11	9	10
Tranmere	2	3	1	13	8	9
Norwich	2	3	1	11	8	9
Reading	3	0	3	9	9	9
West Brom	3	0	3	9	10	9
Sunderland	2	3	1	6	5	9
Wolves	2	3	1	4	3	9
Derby Co	2	2	2	8	9	8
Oldham	1	4	1	8	8	7
Charlton	1	4	1	4	4	7
Sheff Utd	2	0	4	9	9	6
Huddersfield	1	3	2	6	9	6
Ipswich	1	2	3	9	9	5
Port Vale	1	2	3	9	10	5
Portsmouth	1	2	3	8	11	5
Southend	1	2	3	6	12	5
C Palace	1	1	4	6	11	4
Barnsley	1	1	4	5	12	4
Luton	1	1	4	3	10	4
Watford	0	3	3	7	11	3

It seems that no matter how hard we try, we still can't get to the bottom of the Current Form Table.

Below, this seems to be a case of mistaken identity.



■ NO WAY AHEAD – Ken Charlery of Birmingham beats Luton's Gavin Johnson to the ball

TOWN TRAVELS

For the avid readers of this column, I will start by apologising for its non appearance in issue 30, which was due to me being a bit pushed for time, and a lack of space. But it's back in this issue, with all you need to know for trips to Palace, Port Vale, Norwich and Leicester.

Starting with the Palace game on Boxing Day, this game has now been changed to a mid-day kick off. That will undoubtedly make travelling more of a problem, although there will be a train service between Luton and East Croydon, with Thameslink running a Sunday service. Although it's always nice to think that the roads will be quiet because of the holiday, last years experience going to Reading suggests that this will not be the case. Drinking before the game will be near to impossible, and after the game, there are problems with knowing which pubs will be open, and what hours they will be keeping, so I don't think I'll bother suggesting anything here. The ground at Selhurst Park has been made all seater since our last visit with a new stand where the terrace used to be. With Palace having traditionally been one of the most expensive grounds, don't expect any favours on the financial front.

The trip to Port Vale on December 30th looks like being a very important match for the relegation places. The ground has been improved and we will be located in the new Hamil Stand, with seats priced at £8.50. The nearest railway station is Longport which is a mile or so from Burslem town centre. Stoke station is about 3 miles away and you can use buses 23, 24 and 29 from Stoke to Burslem. The choice of pubs is fairly limited with many not admitting away fans, and the number choosing that option has apparently increased since last season. The VINE INN, Hamil Road, does allow away fans and is close to the ground, but don't quote me if the doorman says no! For families (new feature this) the MOORLAND INN, Moorland Road is a Whitbread family pub.

The draw for the third round of the FA Cup did us a real favour, didn't it? We all look forward to the opportunity to visit somewhere different, and what do we get? Bloody Grimsby!! Blundell Park in January is hardly the nicest of places, and they've been a bit of a bogey side for us in recent years. In fact the only good point is the chance to taste some of the best Fish and Chips in all Christendom, which will be found at Hobson's fish and chip shop on the Grimsby Road, quite close to the MacDonalds, just outside the ground. The only pub deemed suitable for away fans is THE LEAKING BOOT, Grimsby Road, which older supporters might remember as Darley's Hotel. It's a huge place, with Ward's and Vaux beers, food, and is suitable for families. There are doormen on matchdays, and a police presence. The more adventurous might want to wander down the Cleethorpes seafront and try WILLY'S, 17 High Cliff Road, and try the beers brewed on the premises.

Next, we visit Norwich on 20th January. Of course, it will be no surprise if the match is changed to the following day for the benefit of Anglia TV. Rail travel will be difficult if it is a Sunday game. The ground is of course all seater, and away

fans are housed in the South Stand, the only part of the ground not yet modernised. It will cost £10 for a seat, unless we are classed as a Category A match! (Rumour has it that we are, and seats will cost a staggering £21!!) Entrances are handily placed adjacent to the Barclay Stand. The nearby CLARENCE HARBOUR pub, Carrow Road, is said to be popular with the noisier element of away support. Those seeking a quieter sanctuary, might try the COMPLEAT ANGLER (sic), Prince of Wales Road, just across the river from the station (it's an S&N pub), or the COACH AND HORSES, Thorpe Road, a free house which houses the Chalk Hill Brewery. Families might try the FLOATING RESTAURANT, Corporation Wharf, although whether this is any good for those just wanting a beer must be doubtful.

Finally for this issue, Leicester. With the railway station so close to the city centre, there is little point in recommending pubs in that area, other than to say that some may not be welcoming to football fans of the Luton persuasion. THE VICTORY, Aylestone Road (Everards), is one nearer the ground that might be worth trying, even if the name may seem a little inappropriate. For families, I'm afraid that I don't have any information available. One extra bit for the car drivers to think about — if the rugby team are at home on the same day, parking will inevitably be rather more difficult.

K.F.H.

All Downhill...

Eight years ago we had a Conservative government, Helen Daniels was in Neighbours, and Luton Town were a top ten team with Wembley as a second home. Sadly, one of those statements is no longer true in 1995. They were the greatest years in the history of our club. We had one of the most acclaimed centre back partnerships in the First Division in Foster and Donaghy, some of the most skilful attacking players in Hill and the Steins and, of course, many a Luton fan's hero in Mick Harford. Those were the days when we could STAND in the Kenilworth and watch gleefully on as we'd thrash the likes of Liverpool, Arsenal and, of course, W**ford on a regular basis. A home defeat caused a stir throughout the country. Teams feared coming to Kenilworth Road. . . .

But WAKE UP, nowadays losing by less than five away is a triumph. We get excited over signing a 30 year old Bradford reject, and Kenilworth Road is, by the looks of things, about as frightening as Terry Westley's half time team talks. Surely though, this is going to be the way of all small clubs from now on. Once they drop from the Premiership they don't have the resources or money to climb back, the gap just keeps widening. But who of importance is going to notice (or care) as the Premiership is at it's healthiest, with great football, week in, week out. The future's bright, but it's certainly not Orange, white and blue. Town fans who saw those great seasons in the 80s have seen the best for this club. It's all downhill from here. Until I win the lottery, that is.

Bobby Payne



Scott Oakes in action against Tranmere. Note Captain Marv lurking in the background.

CONTRIBUTIONS

Mad as a Hatter! welcomes contributions from readers, whether they be in the form of articles, match reports, anecdotes, cartoons, press cuttings, poems or whatever. While we cannot guarantee that everything sent in will be used, most will, so please send anything to us at the usual address. As there will be another 3 issues this season we need plenty of material.

EXILED HATTERS FAN?

If you are an exile, you'll want to keep up to date with what's going on at Kenilworth Road, and with Hatters Matters you can do just that. Hatters Matters is a monthly newsletter designed specifically for the exiled fan, and provides all the news that you won't find on teletext.

To subscribe for one year (12 issues) send a cheque for £5 (payable to Hatters Matters) to: Hatters Matters, 292 Icknield Way, Luton, LU3 2JS. Or just send an SAE for a free sample copy.

HatterLeague Update 2

The HatterLeague is well into mid-season and at the time of writing, twelve weeks of action was already behind us. For the first eleven weeks of the season Cieran Dee of Hatfield held strong at the top, but after the stunning performance against Tranmere, I (Chris Lennon) was able to knock Cieran off the top and take the lead with a superb total of -23 points. At the other end Patrick Sammon of Luton hauled himself off the bottom for the first time this season and now has -100 points. He was replaced by Barry Gell of Leighton Buzzard who has scored an amazing -101 points.

Everybody is still in minus points due to the abysmal form of the Town this season. With every manager having the handicap of having no goalkeeper playing for them, since the start of the League, with Ian Feuer keeping out the rest, managers are struggling to score plus points, especially when the Town aren't scoring many goals. But, with Feuer unfortunately gone, Davis (or maybe even Barber) might get their chance in the HatterLeague. However, the latest standings after 12 weeks of the HatterLeague (v Tranmere (h) 3-2) are:

Pos	Manager	Team Name	Pts
1	Chris Lennon	Of Course I Picked My Team In September	-23
2	Eamonn McTague	Peakey's Bald Patch - The Glorious Return	-25
3	Cieran Dee	Hatfield Hatters	-27
4=	Gary Keane	Marvellous Marvin And His Mates	-28
4=	Richard Saunders	Crapheads	-28

And the bottom 5 managers:

143	Steven Dumpleton	Select VI	-89
144	The Wallabys	The Ducks	-91
145	Edna Durbridge	The Swingers	-92
146	Patrick Sammon	Very Soon To Be Homeless FC	-100
147	Barry Gell	Whoops "Bubble" Hear Come The Spoons	-101

The players points so far in the HatterLeague are as follows:

Code	Player	Price	Pts	Code	Player	Price	Pts
<u>Goalkeepers</u>							
01	Kelvin Davis	0.6 m	-26	03	Fred Barber	0.2 m	-26
02	Juergen Sommer	0.4 m	-26	04	Nathan Abbey	0.1 m	-26
<u>Defenders</u>							
11	Julian James	0.8 m	-12	16	Steve Davis	0.6 m	+7
12	Trevor Peake	0.6 m	-10	17	Mitchell Thomas	0.3 m	-26
13	Marvin Johnson	0.5 m	-1	18	Ben Chenery	0.2 m	-25

14	Des Linton	0.5 m	-19	19	David Greene	0.2 m	-25
15	Richard Harvey	0.4 m	-8				

Midfielders

22	Scott Oakes	0.5 m	-8	26	Aaron Skelton	0.2 m	-26
23	Gary Waddock	0.5 m	-7	27	Ceri Hughes	0.4 m	-3
24	Tony Thorpe	0.4 m	-16	29	David Oldfield	0.5 m	-5
25	G. Alexander	0.3 m	-8				

Strikers

31	Dwight Marshall	0.7 m	+8	33	Jamie Woodsford	0.2 m	-24
32	John Taylor	0.7 m	-23	34	B. Guentchev	0.5 m	-12

Rob Matthews, obviously, has scored -26 points.

With 147 managers in the League we cannot possibly print the full table in every issue, so we will be just sticking with the top and bottom. So, if you're somewhere in the middle at the moment, don't worry, you could get a mention soon if your performance gets better or worse.

Anyway, the 25 available players (excluding Frank Bruno and the little short bastard) were all picked at least once! Kelvin Davis is the most popular player appearing in 120 teams, followed closely by Richard Harvey (110) and Steve Davis (102). At the other end of the list, Jamie Woodsford, Ben Chenery and Nathan Abbey were least popular, each being picked only once.

In due course (that's code for when we get around to it) we may have a competition for the best and worst team names in the HatterLeague. There probably won't be a prize, apart from the kudos of getting a mention.

If you really want to know what a 'winning' team looks like, this is Chris Lennon's selection that currently heads the rankings:

Player	Price	Pts
Fred Barber	£0.2 m	-26
Marvin Johnson	£0.5 m	-1
Steve Davis	£0.6 m	+7
Scott Oakes	£0.5 m	-8
Ceri Hughes	£0.4 m	-3
Dwight Marshall	£0.7 m	+8
	-----	---
Total	£2.9 m	-23

We have to be fair and own up to the fact that we got the points system wrong from the word go, but it is easy to see this with the benefit of hindsight. For

us, it is just embarrassment that at the end of the season, the way things are going, zero points will look like an incredibly good score. But to try and improve things we have decided to allow the luxury of a transfer....

And now, The HatterSwap!!!

Since the HatterLeague started, there have been numerous additions to the squad, which has rather stuffed up our vision of the competition. So, kind souls that we are, we have decided to allow you to change a couple of your players if you wish. Subject, of course, to certain conditions:

- 1 You are allowed to transfer only TWO players.
- 2 The total price of your team must not exceed £3 million, and must still conform to the original rules.
- 3 The transfers must reach us by Friday 12 January 1996, and all transfers will be effective from Saturday 13 January 1996.
- 4 Confirmation letters will be sent out only if the transfer application is accompanied by a stamped addressed envelope.

Subject to the above conditions, you can use any players from the original squad (see above) and the following additional players:

GA001	Ian Feuer	£0.6 m	MA005	Paul McLaren	£0.3 m
DA002	Darren Patterson	£0.4 m	SA006	Vidar Riseth	£0.5 m
MA003	Johnny Vilstrup	£0.4 m	SA007	Stuart Douglas	£0.4 m
MA004	Gavin Johnson	£0.2 m			

Any additional signings by LTFC will not be available for the HatterLeague. We have included Ian Feuer on the off chance that the Town succeed in securing his signature on a permanent contract, although at the time of writing that does look a little unlikely.

Please send your changes using the HatterSwap Transfer form below, or a photocopy of it, or a handwritten version:

Name: _____ HatterCode: _____

Teamname: _____

Players Out			Players In		
Code	Name	Price	Code	Name	Price

PLEASE DON'T FORGET TO INCLUDE YOUR STAMPED ADDRESSED ENVELOPE

POETRY CORNER

*There was an old player called Peake,
Determined to stop a goal leak,
When beaten for pace,
By an opposing ace,
To the goolies he'd give a hard tweak!*

*A virile young player called Hughes,
Was subject to fits of the blues,
When floored by the boot,
Of some hard nosed foul fruit,
It was red that he got for his views!*

*A panther like striker named Dwight,
Would train at the Kenny all night,
His speed on the play,
Would take him away,
On Saturdays right out of sight.*

*A midfield colossus called Gary,
Would 'ack, trip-up, and harry,
When he came from behind,
Some axes to grind,
Some forwards were scared they'd not marry.*

*A ball playing genius called Oakes,
Could outpass and outshoot other blokes,
His skill on the ball
Delights one and all,
"Beam us up Scotty" cheer us folks.*

*A business tycoon called Dave Kohler,
Determined to outdo Motorola,
Put Town up for sale,
Which set up the wail,
"What's become of the Dome on a roller".*

COME ON, LADS:
WINNING ISN'T EVERYTHING:



IT'S HOW YOU PLAY
THE GAME THAT MATTERS.

