

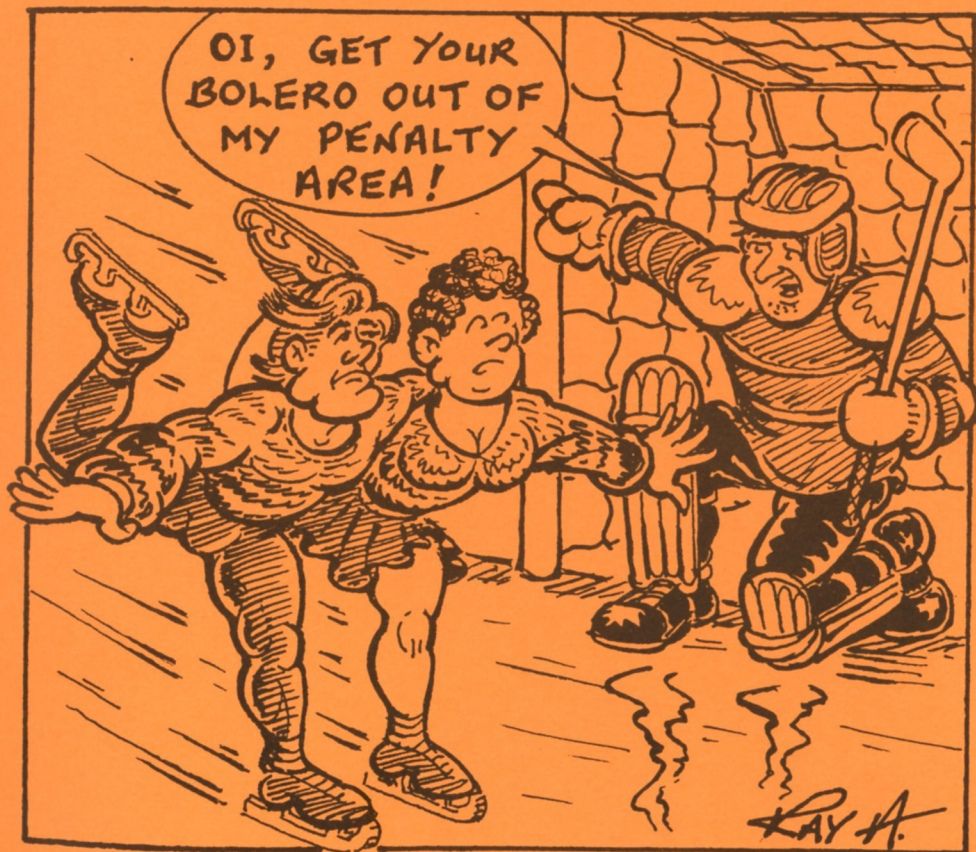
MAD AS A HATTER!

THE LUTON TOWN FANZINE

Issue 39

Feb 97

PHEW-UER * * WHAT A FREEZER!



MAD AS A HATTER!

THE LUTON TOWN FANZINE



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Action photos: Gareth Owen.

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THE LUTON TOWN SHOP at ASDA, Wigmore Lane, Luton.

EDITORIAL

At the start of the current season, the Town lost three games on the trot, and we all thought we were in for another season of struggle and embarrassment. But then things were turned around and we had a marvellous run, losing only one of the next fourteen matches. Confidence boomed amongst the supporters and all the talk was of promotion, until we started getting a few home draws, and some away defeats (all by the same 3-2 score — at least we're consistent). Now, after the latest such defeat, at Bristol Rovers on their borrowed ploughed field, some fans are starting to talk of another season in this division. Let's be realistic now, we'd already lost six games this season, and another isn't the end of the world. We haven't lost ground on Brentford, and we still hold second place, with sufficient time to overhaul them long before the end of the season. OK, I don't want to be overconfident, but let's not be too pessimistic.

It was good to see Gary Waddock return to the Town side at Bristol, as he has been badly missed, and with Paul McLaren returning and Ceri Hughes coming back from suspension we look to be coming back to full strength. All we need now is for Paul Showler to come back and keep the useless Bulgar on the sidelines where he belongs. Congratulations, incidentally, to the referee at Bristol for sending off Bontcho, and saving us from having to continue with fewer players than we started the match.

More congratulations, this time genuinely, to the youth squad on reaching the quarter final of the FA Youth Cup. And doing it in some style, with a 5-2 victory away to Sunderland. John Moore's team are also top of their league, and some credit for this must be due to the number of goals scored by the prolific Liam George, who got a hat-trick at Roker Park. The next Cup hurdle for the youngsters is a home tie against the winners of the replay between Manchester United and W*tf*rd. Hopefully the club will make the most of the opportunity such a tie presents to allow the fans to support the youngsters and perhaps see some of our future stars in action. After all, if the tie turns out to be against the Manics, there will be potential for a more than decent attendance at the game, and it will be important to ensure that the Town side get the support they deserve.

Finally, it has to be mentioned. It will soon be ten years since we were beaten by the harmless 'ornets in the M1 derby. Draws notwithstanding (fine word that!) our record is superb, and we hope it will continue, and although it comes a bit hard to me, I quote the assembled masses at a Tory party conference a few years back when I say:

"Ten more years, ten more years!!"

COME IN NO 13 — YOUR TIME IS UP

While observing the Shrewsbury v Town match myself and a group in front of me were hurling abuse at Kim Grant, his lack of pace and his general lack of interest. At one particular point, after Kim 'The Snail' Grant had failed to get on the end of another ball which would have been easy prey for the likes of Marshall and co., his fan club behind us reacted to our ridicule by shouting that we were a bunch of wankers, and that he could never have got to the ball. For all those who defend him, and even for those who are fans of him, let us study the question "Is Kim Grant crap, or what?"

For the defence:

1 He is an *International*!

With almost two hundred footballing nations in the world representing El Salvador, Honduras, or in this case, Ghana will never have the same edge as running out at Wembley in an England shirt or lifting the World Cup with Brazil. The likes of Darren Patterson (Northern Ireland) and Bontcho Guentchev (Bulgaria — those well renowned stars of the last World Cup) really don't give the "international" star a good name. In fact for "international" read "cheap buy".

2 He has scored five goals already this season

Fair comment, but how many more chances has he wasted? When was the last chance you saw him create or score a quality goal? His tap-ins from the six yard box could have been taken by any striker. His ability to miss from the easiest of chances was shown in the Auto Windscreens game where he rounded the keeper and then got tackled before he could get the ball over the line. So, he might have looked OK for the first two games after his purchase, but since then....?

3 £250,000 — You should get what you pay for

Just think of what you could buy for such a sum. Two or three houses, a whole showroom full of cars, half a million copies of *Mad as a Hatter!* and probably most of the scum team. All of which would prove more use to me, and more than likely to the club, than Kim Grant.

4 But he's a real favourite with the crowd, isn't he?

In a word, no! Since the departure of our friend Scotty Oakes has one player been such a scapegoat for the weaknesses of our team? I don't hear any chants of "Kim Grant, he gets the ball and beats them all", probably because it's simply not true. If me and my friends sat any

nearer the pitch then we would probably not be responsible for our actions!

For the prosecution:

After the lack of evidence in his defence, we barely need to look at the case for the prosecution, but for those who do here are a couple of further points:

1 We need the money

So we may not get exactly what we paid for him (but then again we never do), but then with the cashflow crisis arising from the weather and with Fotiadis heading back to fitness, the time may finally be right to cut our losses and to sell him.

2 He rarely makes the first team anyway

Fotiadis, Douglas or Oldfield would be as good an attacking change as Grant. Sometimes subs feel they have something to prove, but I haven't noticed it with him yet.

So there you have it. Don't get me wrong, I'm not one of those fans who gets on players backs for the sake of it. However, I love this club, and when I see players who are not giving 110% then it makes me mad. Now we have the likes of Feuer, Davis, Waddock, Hughes, Showler and co. who give their all week in, week out, we should have even less time for the likes of Kim Grant. My article last month pointed out just how many strikers we have waiting in the wings (Fotiadis, Douglas, George, Woodsford etc) so perhaps we could make up the deficit created by our recent lack of home games. Still, it's only an idea!

Ian A.

It's not for me to criticise the views of contributors, but I have to say that this hardly forms the basis of a fair trial. In fact, after such a convincing case for the defence, I doubt the prosecution would feel the need to bother making a case. Perhaps we have amongst our readers someone who could redress the balance and make a real case for the defence? — Ed.

CONTRIBUTIONS PLEASE

Two more issues to go this season and we still need your help to fill them. Contributors receive a free issue of *Mad as a Hatter!* by way of thanks, so, to receive yours, get that match report, article, letter, cutting, cartoon or whatever off in the post to the above address. Deadline for issue 40 is 12th March (earlier if possible), and it will be on sale on 21st March, providing the editor can get his act together.

Black Day at Burnden Park

"A poem which probably reflects my pent up feelings over the racist abuse I have seen frequently over the years. Why Bolton stands out is difficult to explain after seeing Chelsea, West Ham and Millwall (among others) dish out some nasty stuff over the years fairly consistently."

I grew up at Bolton's Burnden Park
Late 70's, a car load out for a lark.
I had reached the grand age of twenty five
Bolton riding high, Town's hopes still alive,
Attracted a large, fiercely partisan crowd
Cheering on buoyant Bolton, Noisy and loud.
Town fans scattered all around,
Segregation was still not at every ground.

Ricky Hill was our emerging talent,
With a deft touch that was excellent.
Was gifted, young, vibrant and keen
Yet, was the focus of terrace spleen.
While ugly racist taunts are aimed at Hill,
He maintains his dignity and undoubted skill,
As the venomous baying cascades down the terrace
I note the faces contorted in Neanderthal grimace.

I winced, silent rising anger was my immediate reaction,
I blustered at my mates we should take some action
Looking around, decided discretion would probably be best,
What could be achieved now, by our futile protest?
The following years saw the game sadly in retreat
As hooligans and racists became a regular repeat
A malignant tide sweeping through, that just couldn't give a damn
That made Evans' ill judged ban, a part of the political flotsam.

Now years on I guiltily recall that October day,
Of an early ideal, that I easily, sadly..... betray
How many of us have let out an impotent sigh?
And yet so crucially can still turn a blind eye!

Bill Church (Frampton Hatter)

MISSING THE ACTION

Hello from Sydney, where it's raining. Six months in Australia seemed such a good idea on the way home from Grimsby in January. I booked it up after the 1-0 defeat at Port Vale which virtually condemned us to relegation. After all, it wouldn't be too bad missing games against Rotherham, Wrexham or Peterborough.

However, I miss football and Luton Town so much. Much more, I'm ashamed to admit, than my family and friends! I keep up to date with the scores but have you any idea how difficult it is to find out the Plymouth v Luton result at 4am on a Sunday morning 12,000 miles away? I've already spent a fortune phoning ClubCall. My family haven't realised yet that my phone calls home coincide with full time.

Anyway, to the results. What is going on? We're doing fairly well and promotion seems a possibility. My last game before I left was that wonderful 3-0 win at Shrewsbury. Since then, by the look of the results and reports I've received, we're doing well. I see the Stockport manager called us the best side his lot had played this season and we were the most entertaining in the 2nd Division v Peterborough. The 3-3 draw at Plymouth must have been fairly entertaining too!

The coverage of English football is fairly good — there's a weekly 'Match of the Day' type round-up programme, and all the results and tables are published in an excellent newspaper called "British Soccer Week" It gives all the stories, all the results and full team listings from every English and Scottish game. There are match reports on every game — more coverage of LTFC than you get in most British papers. The headline for the Luton v Bournemouth match was "Feuer on Fire" — is this true? I hope he's not doing too well or he'll be sold to some Premiership reserve side!

How was the derby game v W*tf*rd? Another draw — will they ever beat us? Probably not — I hope there was another excellent Luton following to out sing the little noise they made.

I've met a Wolves fan and pissed him off by telling him about their 1-0 defeat v Port Vale. We then had a long conversation about our hatred for Graham Taylor. I'm sharing a flat with a Preston fan — so beat them on the 19th please! (*That was the 19th November, incidentally. Sorry about the result!*)

I've also met a Luton fan! Actually he was the guy who searched my bags at Sydney Airport who supports the Town because he felt sorry for them

because "they were always near the bottom".

Anyway, that's my lot. Just to prove I still care about Luton Town. I feel like I'm playing truant missing all these games when I usually miss the odd one or two home and away each year. Anyway, I'll be back in early April to cheer on the Championship success! Come on you Hatters!

Ben Woodley

PS: Just seen the derby match report — how lucky can the scum get? 90th minute equaliser when we'd outplayed them — bastards!

SHORT CUTS

LIFEStyle

Compiled by BOB HAYES

NEIL REDFEARN-BARNSELY

FACT FILE

FULL name: Neil David Redfearn. **Born:** June 20, 1965 in Batley.
Family: Wife Sue, daughters Aimee, 8, and Lois, 2.
Parents: Dad Brian is retired, mum Joyce is a housewife.
Nicknames: Reddo, Redders.

FAV FILE

TV programme: People's Century. **Pop star:** George Michael.
Food: Vegetable pasta. **Drink:** Dandelion and burdock. **Film:** Braveheart. **Film stars:** Mel Gibson, Robert De Niro. **TV star:** Jeremy Clarkson. **CD:** Gold, by Prince. **City:** Leeds.

WHO did you pretend to be when you played football as a child? Allan Clarke, because he scored goals for Leeds United and England. Exactly what I wanted to do.

What was your first sporting memory? Running in the 1500 metres for Birkenshaw Middle School.

What sporting event would you pay most to watch? England in a World Cup Final.

What has been your biggest mistake? Signing for Watford.

Barnsley's Neil Redfearn (you'd never have guessed!), a man not too proud to admit his mistakes, even when they're really big ones.



BRIGHTON SAYS IF YOU'RE A FAN OF FOOTBALL BOYCOTT FOCUS DIY NOW





In case you've forgotten, or you missed the match, there were some chances during the M1 derby. This was probably Des Linton's scorchers just going over. And, for HatterLeague participants, here is the King of the Assists, shaping up to put another telling cross in. Keep it up, Scunny.



Mid Season Reports

At the writing of this report, Luton were currently 4th in the league and the first time since Phil Gray left we have a striker who is a real contender for top goal scorer in the division, that being Tony Thorpe of course.

I personally think that the main reason why we are in this position is the fact that Lennie is our manager. His appointment has been the best thing to happen to Luton for some time, he seems to get the team to gel into a good working unit, after the mistake of Westley, Kohler finally seems to have done something good for the club (*but don't quote us on that, David*).

Ian Feuer

This man is a god, he single handedly has saved us on many occasions, his shot stopping and all round goal keeping ability is world class. He will surely win the Player of the Season again, but will we be able to keep hold of him? Because if we don't we will struggle to get automatic promotion and even the play-offs.

Julian James

Has had a few dodgy games this season, perhaps because he does not have enough support on the right side, but is improving. Has done well when attacking but as with most players at Luton he does the hard bit (eg. beats the player) but gives the ball away.

Mitchell Thomas

Well, what can you say about this man? Last year he was one of our worst players but this season has been one of our best. He is brilliant coming forward, but whereas last season he was always out of position when attacks broke up, now someone is there to cover him. Our most improved player.

Steve Davis

Has played well after a bad start. Taking the captains armband from him was a good decision by Lennie because I think it was affecting his game. Brilliant in the air — no-one has the beating of him in our division. Along with Feuer has been our best player.

Marvin Johnson

Has played well although has looked a bit clumsy. When he loses the ball he always seems to recover well and get it back. Plays well with Davis and while they are playing so well Patterson has no chance of getting in the side.

Gary Waddock

When Gary does play you don't notice him but when he doesn't you do — as the Bristol Rovers match showed. In that match we needed his tackling ability and, although Paul McLaren played well, we missed him a lot. His ball

winning is the best in our division, my only criticism is that when he gets in a good shooting position he doesn't shoot and elects to pass instead.

Ceri Hughes

Ceri has calmed down a lot and this has improved his game. Our most skilful player (with Thorpe second), he must be in line for a Wales recall and, let's face it, they need him. Things can only get better for him if he controls his temper.

Graham Alexander

This man puzzles me. He plays a blinder in one game and then is terrible in the next. Took time to adjust to a higher standard of football last season, but has performed well this. The thing that annoys me about him is that he never looks up when he is running with the ball. Overall, a good season so far.

David Oldfield

Has beaten the boo boys (mainly Beattie — or should that be stumpy?) with a string of good performances. Holds the ball up well, and never tires when chasing the ball. Until injury stopped his good run he was playing really well, so let's hope he gets back soon for our promotion push.

Tony Thorpe

One word describes Tony this season — brilliant. He can score goals from anywhere, and it makes a change for a Luton player to top the scoring charts. Only complaint is that he likes to be flash and beat an extra player when he could have scored.

Paul Showler

Will not take on a player even if he has no arms or legs. Has weighed in with some important goals, but he must be the most negative player in the club, with his inability to attack.

Bontcho Guentchev

Has not played to his full potential this season and seems to spend most of his time on the floor. Should be our best player, but isn't.

Of the other players Dwight Marshall looks to have got all of his pace back and is firmly back in the team. Fotiadis and Grant will be able to get a few goals when playing, but it's disgraceful that Grant is always on international duty. McLaren looks like good cover for injured midfield players. Douglas looks like one for the future as well.

So let's hope that we will be playing 1st Division football next season and that Watford won't, because they will get relegated to Division 3, for old Turnip Taylor being a wanker.

Retardo the Clown

RAVING MAD!!!

Dear "Mad",

May I take this opportunity to thank you for a funny, but to the point, read.

On a totally different subject, regarding the souvenir shop (I know I may not have any room to talk as I only get to one or two matches a season), I would like to know why it costs £11 if I wish to buy anything from the shop.

In previous years I have had no problems on the numerous occasions I have placed orders. Fortunately enough, I was in Luton early last year, so I was able to go to the club shop and spend around £80 on souvenirs. However, when I received the 96/97 brochure I could not believe that if I purchase anything over £10 (i.e. a towel for £13) I would have to pay £11 post and packing.

I know you cannot do much about it, but surely it must be driving a fair bit of mail order business away.

Thanks,

Mark Devereau

Douglas, Isle of Man.

I asked about this at the club shop and was advised that within the mainland, these charges may be varied for cheaper/lightweight items, but it would seem that for 'offshore' addresses the charge does not even cover the costs of the transport, as it isn't generally the wonderful Royal Mail that is used. I would agree that it must act as a deterrent to some mail order business, and can only suggest that anyone stuck in this position comes to an arrangement with someone based in Luton to make the purchases and send them by cheaper means. Ed.

Dear "Mad",

Having received the latest issue and begun to read it, I noticed once I got to page 17-ish that one of the leaves is missing and in its place is a duplicate of one which already exists. The standard run of pages 16 to 29 now runs as follows: 16, 19, 20, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 25, 26, 29. Have enclosed the aforementioned copy in hope of a replacement with a full quotient of pages (or will I regret that as a rare collectors item slips through my fingers only to be sold in years to come for some highly inflated figure ££££££££)

Yours in anticipation,

D. A. Hylden

Harrow, Middx.

PS: Print this in your next issue if your pride allows!

Ed: No problem with pride, as it was a very rare occurrence. Something to do with leaves missing from the line, I understand!

Dear "Mad",

All my pre-Christmas hints seem to have fallen on stony ground, so I will have to buy my own seventies away shirt. I suppose it is my own fault for marrying a Scouser. There didn't seem to be any problem about getting a Liverpool shirt for my daughter. My brother did get me the family tree, which is brilliant, so Christmas wasn't completely wasted.

I read Tim Kingston's article on football songs, or lack of them, with interest. I don't suppose that many clubs enjoy great shafts of originality, but I do remember some songs from the sixties that were at least customised. For instance:

We all agree

That Read is better than Yashin

And Rioch is better than Eusebio

And (insert name of opposition, preferably W*tf**d) are in for a thrashing.

And, to the tune of The Kinks 'Autumn Almanac':

We go to football on a Saturday,

Rioch and Allen, all right;

We go to Oak Road to cheer the champions,

They are the ones in Black and White.

The lyric writers art was stretched to the limit in the Division 4 championship season with:

Sir Alf, Sir Alf, come see this Rioch boy,

Sir Alf, Sir Alf, come see this Rioch boy,

He is the greatest player that the world has ever seen,

And his name is Bruce Rioch.

The fact that Rioch went on to captain Scotland does not, in my view, in any way diminish this classic.

Sadly, I believe that singing is a thing of the past. Even the Kop is largely silent now, as football turns into a sanitised, commercial package to replace the vibrant living culture of the last hundred years..... (oh God, he's off again). Although the Dutch band at Euro 96, now being copied at Sheffield Wednesday was pretty good. Perhaps I'll borrow my daughter's saxophone for the Rovers match!

See yer,

John Clark

Bristol.

PS: The Swan with Two Necks has yet another new landlord, but appears to be returning to form. A bit like Lennie Lawrence taking over from Westley.

Dear "Mad",

A couple of issues have been bugging me, one for a couple of weeks, the other since the away performance against Bolton. The first being that just recently

Lennie has found the thousands of mussels (*sic*) that it takes to smile. Was he told to do this or has it come naturally. Last season and the beginning of this one he has looked so miserable, but of late he has managed to smile and acknowledge the fans, or is it that he, like us, is on a high at present. Even the picture in the programme has been changed to show one of him in a more happy pose. Well done Lennie (remember what happened to Ray Harford).

Next issue. What the hell happened against Bolton. In the first half we looked fine and went into the break with a 2-1 lead, so what happened at half time? Any other match Feuer would be ranting and raving at his defence for the mistakes made which lead to the feast of goals against us, but all he did was pick the ball out of the net, brush himself down and carry on. The players didn't seem to want to get into it. Marshall was taken off when it should have been Linton. Was this game deliberately thrown? If we had won, we weren't going to make a fortune out of a home tie against Chesterfield, and as LL quoted, the league is more important.

And lastly, a brief message to the players, with the exception of messrs Johnson and Davis. When your fans have travelled hundreds of miles, spent well earned wages, paid silly entrance fees to stand in an enclosure fit for blind supporters, and given up a day to watch you perform, even though we lost 6-2, and concluded our outing with chants of "We'll support you evermore", don't you think it would be a tad nice, at the end of a game, to wander in the direction of said fans and show your appreciation?

Mark.

Dear "Mad",

Being a Saturday afternoon footballer myself, I don't get the chance to see the Town as often as I would like. However, I still consider myself a Luton Town fanatic, something I will remain until my dying day.

Anyway, the point I want to make is "Thanks Lennie for turning it round". You see, living in Sleaford (near Lincoln), a well known bastion of Man United fans (half of whom have no idea how to get to Manchester, but still have the shirt), I have had to take more than my fair share of abuse. The majority of last season was spent receiving abuse as our results progressively got worse. 'Ha ha, you've lost again Dave', was a favourite saying. 'Going down by the look of it' another original. Well, I took all the jibes 'cause I figured the good times weren't far away.

So, here I am on 5th January with my team 2nd in the league and we're still in the FA Cup. But the best thing by far is the fact that those same Man Utd fans have, albeit grudgingly, had to accept that "they're going well this year, Dave". I now no longer dread 4.45 and Final Score — in fact, I look forward to it and it doesn't seem to matter too much if I lost the game I played in as long as Luton won. I suppose what I really want to say is thanks to the team and Lennie for putting a smile back on my face and giving me back a bit of 'football pride'. I'd

love to buy you all a pint, but if I bump into Lennie in a pub — the first few pints are definitely on me.

Dave Daniels

Sleaford, Lincs.

Dear "Mad",

Hi there!

Sometimes life is funny — we, as a Swiss rock band with an English singer, go over to England to record our album in a studio in Walsall (first touch of British land: Luton Airport followed by a good beer in a nice pub close to the railway station) and at the end we name our new thing "Mad as a Hatter"!

And now we find out that the Luton Town FC fanzine is called the same! Great, so we send you a copy of the album and T-shirt and hope you like it. In Switzerland there are for sure some new supporters of the "Hatters"! It's looking good anyway for promotion, but first we wish the whole Hatters family all the best and a good win in the derby on Monday.

We'll keep our fingers crossed on the other side of the Channel!

From Mad Hatters to Mad Hatters,

with best regards,

Christian Wiedemeier

Steve Whitney Band,

Würenlos, Switzerland.

This letter is not a wind-up. I have a CD and a T-shirt to give away when we can figure out a suitable competition to warrant such glorious prizes. This will probably appear in issue 40, but the review of the album, from our very own music consultant appears in this issue. Ed.

Dear "Mad",

It was interesting to hear on local radio the response of Watford fans as to why they only brought 1200 fans to Kenilworth Road, whereas we took over 4000 to their ground. The answer from almost every hornet who phoned in to offer an explanation was that they find the atmosphere around Luton's ground "intimidating" and are afraid of trouble. Surely we're not as bad as the mad Lions of South Bermondsey? Why do so many more of them go to the Man City game instead? "because that was a one off" came the reply.

Nothing to do with the fact that they feel safer walking around the back streets of Moss Side than visiting Luton?

Kev.

"Mad" Merchandise



Have you got one yet? Because Jimmy Ryan hasn't. The new '74 away shirt from Mad as a Hatter! is available now, in wonderful white, blue and orange. Made in England in 100% cotton with an embroidered LTFC 'football' badge, and definitely not a replica of the one modelled in the picture. Already modelled at Town games by a select few, this is now on general release, and can be yours for just £28.95, including post and packing, and comes in two sizes — L & XL.

The home shirt, as pictured, is still available, but now also priced at £28.95.

Another excellent product - Luton News

Please send me a 1974 home/away* shirt. I enclose a cheque for £28.95

Name:..... Size: L/XL*

Address:.....

.....

.....

(*Delete as appropriate)

Cheques payable to Mad as a Hatter!

Send orders to: 38 Twigden Court, Mount Pleasant Road, Luton, LU3 2RL.

Kenilworth Road Aerial Photo

10"x8" Aerial colour photograph

A visual reminder of the ground's character before the days of the Taylor Report (and before the Kohlerdome?)



ONLY £3.50

Two versions available — new (as above) and old (as in Issue 34). Special price for the pair - £6.00

Please send me the new/old aerial photo. I enclose a cheque for £3.50/6.00

Name:.....

Address:.....

.....

.....

Cheques payable to *Mad as a Hatter!* Orders to the address on page 2.

FA CARLING PREMIERSHIT....

It is widely believed that our own "Serie A" is now the best in the world with the likes of Vialli, Cantona, Ginola, Bergkamp and now Zola arriving on our patch. But, if you watch "Match of the Day" closely or watch Sky Sports instant replays carefully enough, you'll notice something else. And that is, there are a clutch of players who really are shit, no, worse than that. From stupid hairstyles to big ears, here is a compilation of those players on big money who, at the end of the day, really piss Andy Gray off on a Monday night.

JASON LEE

Starting with the cream of the crop is the ex-pineapple. To say that Skinner and Baddiel ended his career isn't really fair — he never had a career! Unable to find the net at the easiest of times, it's been a hard old struggle for our boy Jase. In a recent poll in angling magazine *Fishing Monthly*, anglers have complained that when trying to catch prize trout from the River Trent, they've been rather pissed off to find a Mitre Delta on the end of the line - on more than one occasion.....

VINNY SAMWAYS

Worth a staggering £2.5 million in Joe Royle's eyes about two years ago, the player with the biggest ears in football has never really contributed to our great game. Everton's sponsors "Danka" have reworded their logo across the front of Vinny's shirt — the D replaced with a W. Pretty appropriate. Always commented on by the media as a "hard worker". C'mon, isn't every shit footballer labelled a hard worker?

SAVO MILOSEVIC

Occasionally, England gets a decent import from the French, such as brandy, and even the Scots give us whisky, but so far, the Yugoslavs have been pretty tight. Well, they tried, and failed, to export us Milosevic or, as he's more affectionately known 'the little shit'. With the touch of a rather large elephant, and the skill of a Sunday league player, Savo has failed to impress. The story is that Brian Little bought him only on the evidence of an hours video. Was he watching a repeat of "Only Fools and Horses" and got Trigger?

GLENN HELDER

Moving on to Assnal, and isn't there some crap in their midfield, apart from the likes of Selly, Hillier, Morrow and their ilk (strength in depth, I like it!). The biggest donkey of the lot though, if he's still there, is old Glennda. Takes on 18 men, reaches the byline, and puts it over the stand..... at Brentford. One of the most frustrating wingers the world has ever seen. Recently spotted in the dole queue.

ANDREAS SILENZI

Complimenting a striker as crap as Jason Lee in a team is a very hard thing to do. Unless your name is Silenzi, cos you're just as shit. Had problems keeping inside because his nose was just the wrong side of the last man. Scored an important goal last season, away at Oxford in the league cup. It was a big game for him, because it was his only game. Always keen to take his two young sons fishing, but has problems when he walks down to the garden shed — he can't find the net.

CARLTON PALMER

Football's answer to Curtly Ambrose, it's strange to believe that this man has represented our nation at the top level. Another 'hard worker', who Graham Taylor always had a little soft spot for — a shame millions of us haven't. Also has those flappy ears that you just want to go up to and flick. Carlton was recently spotted scoring..... in a small nightclub just outside of Leeds.

PAVEL SRNICEK

One of the worst goalkeepers to set foot in the Premiership, Ladbrokes now offer odds on how long it will take him to concede his first goal. Most bets go on the first ten minutes. Obviously not aided by muppets like Peacock, Pavel does not make things easy for himself between the sticks. Most of the match it appears that the guy prefers using his legs, head, tits, anything to clear the ball, rather than his hands. If Newcastle fail to win the league again this year, blame Pavel.

VINNIE JONES

Possibly the biggest muppet at the moment in the Premiership, Vincent really needs a kicking from someone. It needs a midget, a Juninho type, to stud him across the kneecaps and look down at him and murmur "Take that, big man." Has had a transfer total of over £2 million in his career with various moves, and has played for the likes of Leeds and Chelsea too. Best moment was when Ceri Hughes dumped him on his arse a couple of months back on his home patch — twice. Possibly the greatest captain Wales have ever had....

JAMIE REDKNAPP

Recently won "Best Sportsman" award at the critically acclaimed (allegedly) Smash Hits Poll Awards, ahead of Shearer and Damon Hill. In fact, it's the only success the boy's had in his career. Without a doubt, the most overrated player in the Premiership who, in a similar fashion to our ex-Lutonian Oakes, pounces around the pitch, looks good, looks clean shaven, but generally does piss all, and has gained international recognition for his exploits! I must phone up the FA to see if they've got any spare places for the next England match.

KEVIN CAMPBELL

Around the late 1980's, a young, talented footballer emerged from Arsenal's

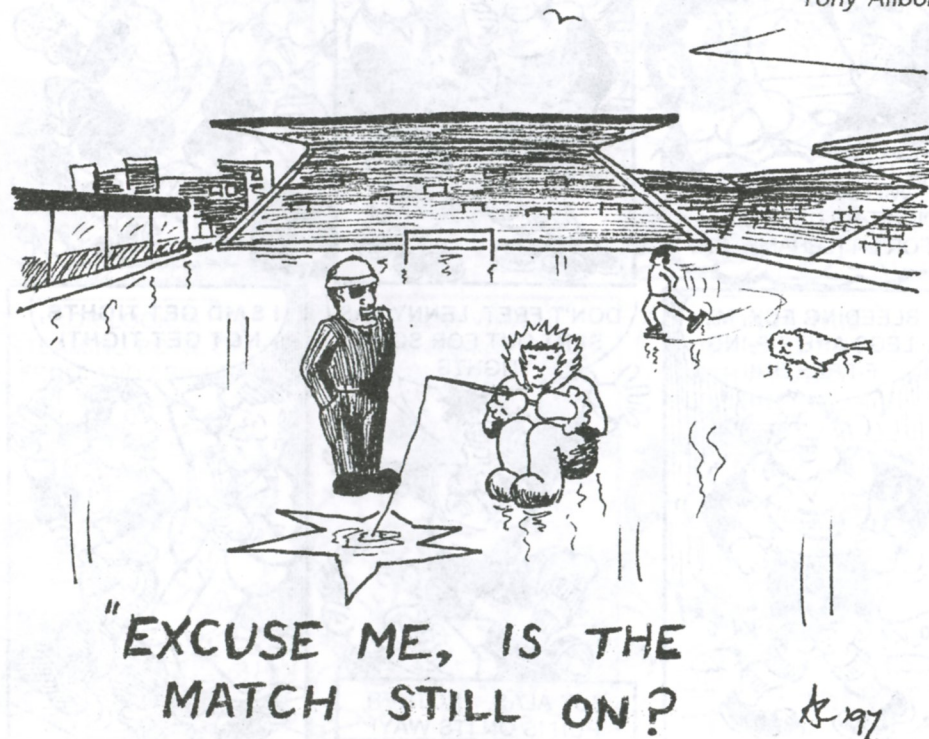
youth system. Destined to be the next Gary Lineker, Kevin Campbell had it all, and scored goals for fun. Pace, control, strength — the sort of qualities that make the better players stand out from the rest. So then, exactly what happened? His inability to find the net is frightening, as was the fee Frank Clarke paid to Arsenal two seasons ago — £2.5 million. Astonishingly, scored the Premiership's first hat-trick of the season, in August, against Coventry. But hang on, If Campbell doesn't know where he's going to put the ball, how the hell does Ogrizovic?

ALAN KIMBLE

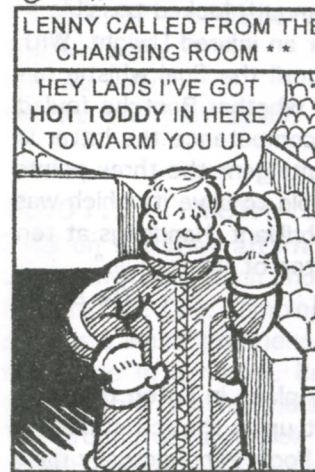
Not so famously shite as the aforementioned players, but still knocking on the door in my view. First spotted at Kenilworth Road about four years ago, when he played for Cambridge in the famous "hoof" match, when we won 2-0. He was the chief perpetrator then, and funnily enough, hasn't changed one bit now. With clearances, no, cultured passes, reaching regular heights of 30,000 feet, Heathrow control have had to drastically alter their planes flight paths. Likes to think of himself as Wimbledon's stud, but his latest girlfriend is a little miffed off that he can't get it up high enough, compared to what he can do to a football.....

Finally, others that could have made it, but may reach the required standard next year: Paul Beesly, Dave Beasant, Scott Oakes, Mike Whitlow, Curtis Fleming.....

Tony Allbones



Bobbin Dino in Only a Winter's Tale!



HOT AND COLD

26.12.96 GILLINGHAM 1 TOWN 2

Yankee number one.....

Having missed the Millwall match last week, this was the first ever Town game I've seen where we've gone top of the league (albeit for three hours due to an early kick off!). After Xmas hangovers meant we got off to a very slow start, Thorpe put us in front when he intercepted a back pass for goal number 17 of the season. However, one lapse let Iffy in to equalise a minute later — with a goal I can remember absolutely nothing about. 5 minutes after half time, Thorpe set us on our way with his 18th goal as he latched on to a pass from 'Assist God' Alexander. Tony should then have had another hat-trick, but hit his shot straight at Stannard. As the match wore on and Gillingham pressed more and more, we were begging Lawrence for fresh legs as another Bournemouth looked possible — and Lennie relented in injury time and put Oldfield on for an injured Dwight. With the points looking safe, you can never trust the Town until the final whistle has been blown, and straight away we gave away a penalty. Whether Bontcho fouled him or Hessen-'git'-thaler dived (even with Bontcho's incompetence the latter is more likely), I'm not sure — but for the big travelling contingent the three points looked lost. However, Butler hit it badly and Feuer was able to save it, which was nice. One kick up the park later and victory was ours — brilliant. Handbags at ten paces at the end as tempers flared, but sod it — "Luton, top of the league."

The Beatle

28.12.96 TOWN v WYCOMBE WANDERERS

Called off on the Friday (seemingly Kenny Road the only place in Luton that had frost) but by Saturday the rest of the town had caught up in the ice stakes — condemning us to an afternoon in front of teletext. The Pools Panel actually gave us a home win — wonders will never cease.

The Beatle

01.01.97 TOWN v BURY

Luton player in cheat shock.....

With the game being called off on New Years Eve, 5 Town players (Thorpe, Marv, Twatterson, Showler and Grant) decided to relax by playing pool down at the Riley's club in Leagrave Road — just happening to be on the two tables next to us. If only Kim played football like he did pool against Showler, he'd be brilliant. However, in the aforementioned match we witnessed a spot of cheating going on. Mentioning no names (other than Showler's), not just once but twice did he take an extra shot while Grant wasn't looking. Not wishing to grass Showler up or anything, but Kim, if you're reading this, you were done.

The Beatle '97

04.01.97 TOWN v BOLTON WDRS — Attempt one

Oh, what a surprise.

The Beatle '97

07.01.97 NORTHAMPTON v TOWN

Yep, you've guessed it....

The Beatle '97

11.01.97 BLACKPOOL v TOWN

Not again, but at least the postponement has given us the unusual feat of going through the whole of December and January not having an away league game on a Saturday — bet that hasn't happened for a while!

The Beatle '97

14.01.97 TOWN v BOLTON WDRS — Attempt two

Will we ever,

Will we ever,

Will we ever play again?

The Beatle '97

18.01.97 TOWN 0 WREXHAM 0

2.45 on Saturday afternoon and a decision to make. My other team, Wrexham, are in town and which end do I go in? It comes down to Wales against England, so I head for the Oak. Climbing those old back stairs nostalgia hits, looking out on the pitch is a weird experience. When you're used to the Kenilworth it's like watching the game in a mirror. Realise I can't remember whether the executive boxes came before or after the switch round of ends. Maybe it all happened at once.

The ground doesn't look too impressive from where I am. The tannoy is totally inaudible and I'm sure the seats are closer together than in the Kenilworth — no leg room at all. I can't see the clock or the scoreboard, that's probably no loss. Not a bad crowd from North Wales, especially as the trip falls between two trips to West Ham (the first a wasted journey).

Missed Grant crocking himself in the warm up. I'm too busy working out who's who for Wrexham — it must be two years since I last saw them, but there are only a couple of new faces.

Well, the game begins and for half an hour the Robins run the show. Good save by Feuer and a couple of close shaves. Nothing really at the other end. After that it goes a bit scrappy and Luton come back into it. Not a bad second half, quite end to end at times but Wrexham lacking a bit of sharpness up front and Luton unable to create much themselves. A draw is a fair result and probably what I'd hoped for, although I'd have preferred 4-4. If I'm honest, I'd have been more disappointed to see Luton score than Wrexham. Anyway, the worst thing Town could have done was take the lead — Wrexham are the comeback kings, 3-0 deficits a speciality.

A general point, the *Luton News* described the referee as having a good game. To me, probably the most impartial observer present, he was biased to the point of blatant cheating, although to be fair he did spot a blatant Bontcho dive late in the game. Maybe he was a total homer, or a high league position wins you favours. Either way, it's good news for the Town. Sign him up for a few more.

Tony Thorpe also stood out, he really pissed off the Wrexham fans, which is always the sign of a good player. What really pissed me off was the regulation racist chant of 'Sheepshagger', but it was weak and shortlived. Maybe some of the morons are growing up. Moron, by the way, is the Welsh word for carrots — what the significance of that is, I'm not sure.

Still and all, what with Wales giving Scotland a drubbing in the rugby (watch out England), I had a good day, one I hope to be able to repeat next year in Division One. Luton win the title by ten points and Wrexham go up through the play-offs in a blaze of glory, preferably beating Watford in the final. That'll do me.

J. Jones

21.01.97 TOWN 1 BOLTON WANDERERS 1

A strange one this. I have no doubt that had the score stayed at 1-0, then the boos and jeers would have been heard halfway down the A505. However, the crowd's reaction at the end makes you realise the thin dividing line between success and failure.

At times it was great, at other times it was absolute crap. But nonetheless it was a very unpredictable evening..... for both teams. Bolton are, without doubt, a class act, yet there were times when Luton looked as good, if not better. However, as was the case on Saturday versus Wrexham, some of Town's finishing was absolutely dreadful. None more so than Paul Showler's effort in front of the Bolton fans with the goal, quite literally, at his mercy — or then maybe it was a pass.

Is it me or do we seem to get an awful lot of poor officials? Maybe it's expecting too much for the officials to spot these little misdemeanours that can make or break a result. Mr Finch is, I assume, a relative newcomer....., and it showed.

No-one had a nightmare game, but three players were outstanding for Luton. Hughesy, Graham Alexander and Tony Thorpe. All three were livewires and never stopped trying. OK, maybe a few passes went astray, but it was Bolton we were playing, not Rotherham Disunited. One thing I've noticed about Graham Alexander is that he never has an average game, he's either brilliant or poor. Like Hughesy, he had a stormer and Tony Thorpe was very close to a goal several times. When the goal did come I feel justice was done. It was scrappy and very untidy, but sod it, it was a goal and it pissed a few people off.

So, we live to fight another day. Who knows what surprises will happen in the land of cloth caps and whippets? At the least Luton will make a few bob out of it.

J.S.

25.01.97 TROTTERS LOTS, HATTERS LOST

We all knew that the best thing about Marv's injury time equaliser four days earlier was that we would at least have a good day drinking in Manchester. The two downsides though were that we all knew we'd lose but secondly, and more importantly, what effect would a tough Saturday game have on the team two days prior to the big one against the shit?

The game began rather predictably with Wanderers taking the lead after twenty minutes, through Jock McGinlay after the bald 'he's a baby' linesman failed to spot a possible handball in the build up. However, to everyone's surprise, Town equalised through Thorpe and then allegedly took the lead through Marshall (I was relieving myself at the time) following calamitous defending by Bolton. HT 2-1.

The second half was a different story (5-0 to the Trotters!). Terrible mistakes by James and Johnson were sandwiched by a superb free kick by sub Thompson. Number 5 duly arrived and by the time the sixth was registered I was almost back at the station. Oh well, the last game for Luton at Burnden was certainly memorable..... for the wrong reasons. And we certainly know how to exit the FA Cup in style..... 6-0, 7-1, 6-2!!!

Steve F.

27.01.97 TOWN 0 W*TF*RD 0

When will they learn? Sky Sports (or should it be BSkyB?), making their debut at Kenilworth Road, choose a local derby because of its potential as an exciting match. But the M1 derby (don't you just hate that?) fails to live up to expectations. Of course, a home win would have been nice, but the form book for this fixture said different. Although it is now ten years since a W*tf*rd victory in the derby, the draw is now becoming the favourite result, and the Kenilworth Road match is tending to be the less interesting of the two. Even the atmosphere at our home fixture is somewhat unimpressive, with the poor away support being a major factor in this. Some 'ornets fans say that this is because of the intimidation in the town, but in reality there is little difference at either venue. Anyway, this was a rather forgettable match, in which the Town were marginally the better side, and W*tf*rd's continuation of their unbeaten, unvictorious run was testament to their solid defence and awful attack (come in, Devon Shite, your time is up). Wayne Andrews actually looked quite a threat for them, but not enough to win the game. The one certainty to come out of the game is that unless they discover how to score goals a bit more often, the Horns ain't going anywhere.

Oh yes, and they'll never beat the Luton!!

K.F.H.

01.02.97 NOTTS COUNTY 1 TOWN 2

An interesting trip this one. Some good beers then the most boring part of the day..... the first three-quarters of the game. An awful performance against a

poor team. Notts scored first and it looked like being the only goal. But they decided to try to hang on and Luton at last showed signs of waking up. Hughes scored with a rather speculative effort which seemed to go through the Notts keeper and suddenly we believed we could win it. With two minutes remaining a pin-pointed pass by Oldfield found Scunny on the edge of the box, and he duly smacked it home to send the travelling 1400 fans delirious.... "Ooh ah Alexander, ooh ah Alexander" was the chant. A bloody lucky win and it was good to see that Lennie bollocked the lads after this performance — totally deserved. I think Notts will have the best ground in the Third Division next year.

Steve F.

04.02.97 NORTHAMPTON TOWN 1 TOWN 0

If it had been anything other than the Auto Windscreens Shield, this would have been an embarrassing and disappointing result. But the competition is held in such high regard that most supporters thought it was a relief to be out of it. One or two who would have needed a midweek trip to Plymouth to maintain their 'run' were positively ecstatic — which is more than can be said for the Town fans who turned up for this game. Apparently it was the first time since the opening of Sixfields that away fans have occupied more than the one end of the ground, with our 1400 spreading up the side as well. Unfortunately, the stadium operators (ie not Northampton Town FC) seemed to be caught by surprise by the number who arrived without tickets, and the queue at the away ticket booth was still substantial some minutes after kick-off. But at least everybody got in eventually. You can probably figure out that the game was not up to much, judging by the time I've spent waffling on about other matters, and you'd be right. The highlight, for me, was leaving ten minutes before the end in order to beat the chaos involved in escaping the car park. Was there a better moment? Answers on a postcard.....

K.F.H.

08.02.97 TOWN 2 PLYMOUTH ARGYLE 2

We were all given a big brown envelope on the way in. A university questionnaire inside, but it was good to see so many brown envelopes being waved at Grobelaar as he came to the Kenny end. Feuer's penalty save woke the game up, but with Waddock and Hughes missing, we looked disjointed and despite another wonder brace from Thorpe, Plymouth pegged us back immediately on both occasions with worrying ease. Do I not like green.

Should Waddock be absent again this season, I feel we need another player with his leadership and experience to plug the midfield. Someone in the mould of Kamara/Horton/Wilson who we can sign before the transfer deadline. Suggestions to LTFC.

Kev

The Boring Old Fart's Singing Suggestions

Sitting in his bath, regarding his prospects and reading Mad 38 as an antidote to the somewhat dire but not unexpected 0-0 draw with Wrexham, the Old Fart was minded to give some help to Tim Kingston. Here (with words!) are some offerings. The tunes are a bit dated, but at least they hop along nicely and most of the words scan.

- 1 Tune: 'Jingle Bells'
Luton Town, Luton Town,
Town is on its way.
Oh, how fab it is to see
Us scoring goals today, oh
Luton Town, Luton Town,
Town is on its way.
We're going up the table
And promotions ours — Hooray!
- 2 Tune: 'Tipperary'
It's a long way to Man United
It's a tough game to play.
It's a big jump to Sheffield Wednesday,
But we'll thrash them on the day.
Goodbye this division,
Farewell all the flops,
It's a long long way to Man United,
Hatters are tops!
- 3 Tune: 'John Peel'
Do you ken Hatters colours of blue and white,
Do you ken our lads, such a glorious sight,
Do you ken our side* getting goals all night,
For we'll top all the teams in the morning.
- 4 Tune: 'My old man said follow the band' (*I thought it was a van - Ed*)
My old man said follow the Town,
And roar all the Hatters on their way.
Winning or losing we'll score in a minute
We'll cheer you on 'cos our hearts right in it.
With Long shots
And great goals;

* For example you could substitute individuals names if desired, eg. Dwight.

Great goals
 And great saves*,
 —Bloody hell we're going for the top
 So it's up with your voices like the old time thousands,
 Hatters WILL go up!

* Must get Ian the great in somehow.

- 5 Tune: I think it's 'Old Glory' — the marching tune of the US Marine Corps.
 From the Oak Road End to the Kenilworth,
 From the ground we love so well,
 We shall fight for our promotion,
 And give the beggars hell,
 We shall tackle with the tiger,
 We shall score just every week,
 And soon will come the glory and the triumph that we seek.

- 6 Bit too like Spurs rendering, but here are the words.
 Me peepers saw the wonder of the coming of the Len,
 With an iron fist and steely eye that triggers all his men,
 He has loosed the deadly shooting of his outfield number ten.
 Our team is marching on.

Glory, glory, Up the Hatters,
 Glory, glory, Up the Hatters,
 Glory, glory, Up the Hatters,
 Our team is marching on.

The Old Fart nearly made a tape of these, but the sound was so awful his family prevented him.

BACK ISSUES

Back issues are still available. We have sold out of issues 10, 11, 25, 27, 35, 36, 37 and 38. Issue 1 is free, 2 to 27 will cost you 25p per copy and all others remain at 50p each. When requesting back issues please include a stamped addressed envelope with sufficient postage. Cheques payable to *Mad as a Hatter!* Please do not send cash by post as it rarely arrives.

RECORD REVIEW

STEVE WHITNEY BAND

BMG (Swiss) 7432 1430802

MAD AS A HATTER

Recorded at Mad Hat Studios, Walsall.

The band:	Mike Hudson	Lead vocals.
	Christian Wiedemeier	Guitar, Mandolin, vocals.
	Michael Hedderich	Lead guitar, vocals.
	Dani Zimmerman	Drums, vocals.
	Schilti Kernen	Bass.

Never underestimate the pulling power of mid-70's sounding rock music in Germany, Switzerland, Italy and Holland. It may not be popular here, but in these countries it goes down a storm. Where am I leading to? Well, at Mad we were summoned to the post office (by one of those irritating little cards) to collect a parcel, and in it was this CD, which is how you come to find a record review in this august tome. The tracks are as follows:

1. SEVEN SISTERS A mid paced Bryan Adams type rocker with a Cheap Trick chorus.
2. RELY ON ME Sadly another mid paced track that does not inspire.
3. YOU MIGHT THINK A good cover of a track recorded by The Cars on their huge selling Heartbeat City album — you know, the one with 'Drive' on it. This is what it would have sounded like without the production skills of Mutt Lange.
4. GET UP SHUT UP A nice pop at politicians, press and do-gooders who are doing no good at all. Musically tho' we are still plodding.
5. A THOUSAND SUNDAYS We go acoustic now, almost identical to the Eric Clapton 'Tears in Heaven'.
6. DON'T WANT NO SLEEP But I nearly did anyway. Sorry, another mid paced track that doesn't inspire me too much.
7. SWEET TRANSVESTITE Starts off with a Stones riff then into an early AC/DC lyric. This is written by one Richard O'Brien — possibly he from Rocky Horror/Crystal Maze fame. Live this would be a killer because it would be speeded up. Magic.
8. ROSY'S GARAGE DOOR We appear to be speeding up now musically. Strange lyric tho'.
9. AWAY THE LADS Mellencamp type rocker that starts "Oh Luton Airport just flew in", and depicts the fun that the

10. MOSQUITO BLUES

band had recording the album in Walsall. Also that they got starstruck meeting Tony Clarkin and Bob Catley from Magnum in the studio.

A Quireboys type stomper, but..... if we could have a slight lyric change and call it *Hornet Blues*. I know we haven't had them for over 10 years, but when they sing "What a crazy sound, When those bastards are in town".

11. GLADLY GO BLIND

Another cover version of a Frankie Miller song, this time from the great 'Dancing in the Rain' album. On a personal level I would like to wish Frankie all the best in the fight to recover from a very bad stroke, God bless 'im.

12. LIGHTS ON

Another uninspired mid-tempo rocker!!

13. BAD WORDS OVER GOOD WINE

Back to the Quireboys style with more balls — also sounds like 'Nothin' but a good time' by Poison. Same subject as well — getting pissed. Sounds familiar.

What I will say for this album is that the cover versions are inspired. Thanks to one of the best bands to come from Switzerland since Krokus. If you like rock music (old style) then this is great for getting pissed to. If not, sorry. I must admit that if they play over here, I'll go. In a Luton shirt, of course.

Nico (How long?)

Ace track
or stupid question.

From the Daily Telegraph, 22/6/96.
That's what you get for living in
Shitford.

SUBSCRIPTIONS

Mad as a Hatter! is available on subscription at £5.50 for the next seven issues (overseas surface mail £6.75, air mail rates available on request) from the usual address. Cheques payable to *Mad as a Hatter!* Please do not send cash by post as it rarely arrives.

DUNN AND DUSTED

The article on Three Counties Radio in issue 36 has encouraged me to put pen to paper (or fingers to keyboard) to air a few thoughts.

Has anyone else noticed how many "definite penalties" the scum should be awarded each week according to Nick London on 3CR? I know of one that, perhaps, they should have had — nice one Spider! — but week in, week out, London spouts on about the number of penalties that they were denied. If all these certain penalties had been converted, the scum would be winning 9-0 every week, be top of the league and top scorers in the whole universe. Of course, we know this could never happen. W*tf*rd are crap, as are their forwards and the rest of the team for that matter. I thought Brian Swain was biased, but Nick London takes the biscuit. Having said that, I like a bit of biased reporting about Luton — Simon Oxley please take note.

Whilst on the scum theme, did you know that their "fans" are jealous of the fact that Tank Montana and Claire Ashford on Chiltern Radio (or whatever they call themselves) initiated the "Power Hum" for us, but not for them? Have you ever heard anything so sad? Scummers thinking they are crap because two radio unknowns don't hum for them, when we all know they're crap because they're, well, er, crap.

Finally, and this may be a bit controversial, have you noticed that the players brought to Luton by Terry Westley are still in the team and performing well?

Never a great favourite of mine, I think Steve Davis is over-rated. However, even I am forced to admit that now he no longer has the onerous burden of captaincy, he is beginning to look a good centre half. Still has the difficult job of writing a column for the programme though.

Graham Alexander had a difficult start to his Luton career, but I think he is one of the Town's most improved players.

Bontcho Guentchev. What can I say about the man other than my daughter has met him.

David Oldfield — a revelation this season at centre forward. Holds the ball up well and whatever else is said about him, you can't deny his 100% commitment.

There is always one exception that proves the rule. Enter Darren Patterson.

Finally, and I've saved the best 'til last, Ian Feuer. Not only is he very tall, he quickly established a rapport with the fans and has become a cult figure.

Perhaps Terry Westley wasn't such a bad judge of players, just not a very good manager (didn't think much of his choice of coach though — perhaps that was the problem). Let's face it, anyone who can screw £600,000 out of QPR for Juergen Sommer must have something about 'em.

Kelvin Dunn

WORLD'S WORST NUMBER 9

Since watching the Town regularly from the tail end of the 88/89 campaign to the present day, I have had the privilege of watching a plethora of players fill the number 9 berth in the Luton team. Chronologically speaking the likes of Harford, Elstrup, Dowie, Stein, Gray, Dixon and Hartson all come to mind (with the aid of old programmes) to the end of the 94/95 season. All quality performers, I'm sure you would agree. OK, during that time a few lesser lights have poached that coveted shirt for short periods — Farrell, Nogan, Campbell, Benjamin, Oakes, Biggins and Taylor, to name but a few. The 95/96 season saw the No. 9 shirt take on a resemblance of a "hot potato" as no-one made it their own — which probably accounts in part for our demise to the Second Division. At the start of this current campaign, stability was given in the shape of David Oldfield, and he rose to the task until injuries intervened. Since then Grant and Douglas both had a few games before Paul Showler got his chance. Not a consistent player, but a wonder goal at scumford earns forgiveness for most sins, until injury laid him low as well.

Now comes what I have been building to by painting this vivid picture of Luton past. The next and current (4th January) recipient of the No. 9 is our very own Euro '96 star (for all of 45 seconds) Bontcho Guentchev. This, in my book, just goes against the grain. This man should excel in this standard of football, but still does not contribute much of a positive nature. Indeed, in the last game played before the big freeze he became a liability by conceding a penalty, albeit a dubious one, which almost cost us dear. Some, I know, are of the opinion that he is too good for the players around him as does happen sometimes, but I don't think that applies in this case. How, at present, he merits a starting place is quite beyond me, but worse still at No. 9. Thorpy and Dwight may well favour numbers 10 and 11 respectively, but for the sake of tradition and the impending promotion drive he must be replaced and take up his better position of number 13. Damage limitation please, Mr Lawrence!

Incidentally, Bonch only made December on the official calendar — the 12th month. Any connection?

The Harrow Hatter

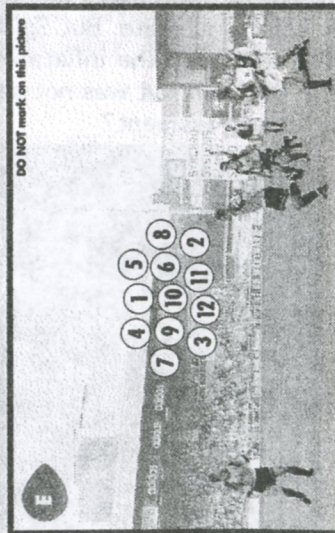
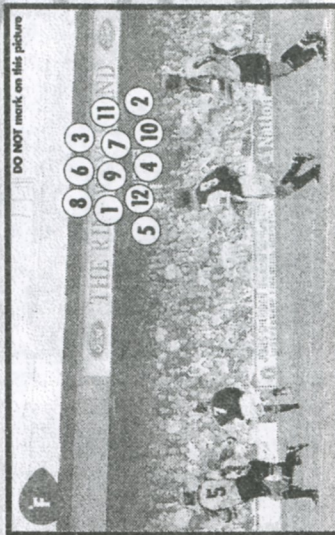
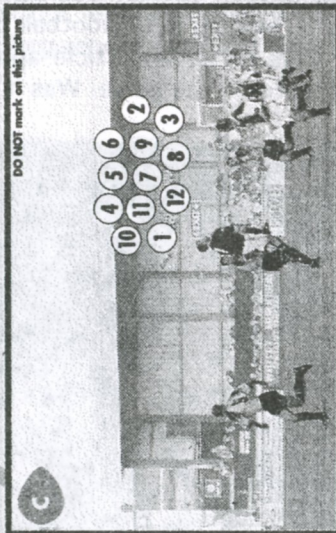
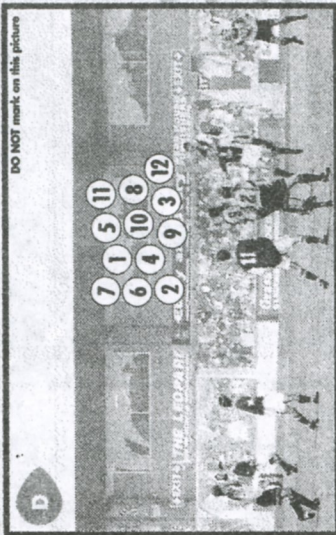
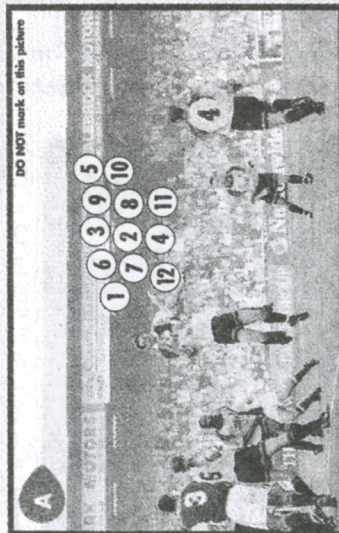
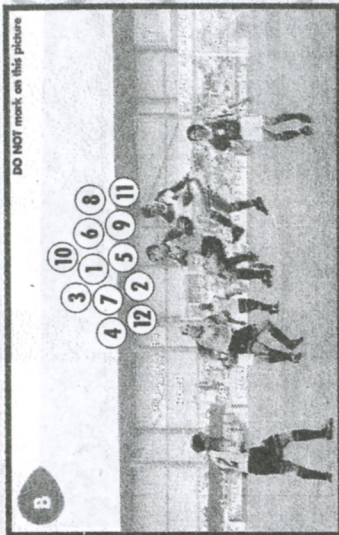


Where do footballers get their fashion advice? You can't tell when this is printed in black and white, But Spider is wearing BLUE football boots here.

The return of the inflatable! This particular article appeared at Notts County in the first half but was not seen later in the game. Was it confiscated or just hidden in embarrassment?



SHORT CUTS



Crewe v Watford. Weather - Dry, Hazy Sun. Ground-Firm.

This bit, was an ad for Littlewoods Spot the Ball. It features six typical slices of action from a Watford game.
Notice how the ball is always played attractively on the deck?

CAPTION OF THE WEEK

GIVE us a good laugh and you can win two cases of Carlsberg Lager.



That is the fabulous thirst-quenching prize for the sender of the funniest caption to the picture above of Middlesbrough duo Juninho and Mikkel Beck.

Write your caption on a postcard or on a sealed envelope and send it to GOALS Caption Contest, The Sun, 1 Virginia Street, London E1 9XP.

Entries must reach us by Friday and you must be over 18 to take part in the competition.

Last week's winner is Mr M J Farrer, of Shepperton, Middlesex. His caption has Bolton's John McGinlay asking Luton keeper Ian Feuer: "Here Ian, has anyone ever told you about Right Guard?"



And a piece here from The Sun. If Mr McGinlay had uttered the words as indicated, perhaps a suitable response from Ian Feuer would be something along the lines of "And what about some Listerine for your foul whingeing mouth you Scotch gobshite!"



Riding high with Bontcho

Riding high with.... er, excuse me? Minutes later the kid suffered horrific injuries when someone kicked a football near to Bontcho, and for some inexplicable reason he just fell over!!

MAGIC LAMP

A man was flying over a deserted island in the middle of nowhere in a helicopter, when it stalled and crashed. Alone, and stranded, in the middle of the island he discovered an old lamp. In keeping with tradition, he gave it a rub and, to his surprise, a genie appeared.

The genie, taking a deep breath said, "Oh, thank you. I've been in there for thousands of years just waiting for someone to come along and rub the lamp. In gratitude, I grant you one wish."

"Wow," said the astonished man, but saw the opportunity and asked, "er, can you fix my helicopter?"

"Don't be stupid," replied the genie, "I've been cooped up in a lamp for thousands of years. What do I know about helicopters!"

A little disheartened by this, the man decided to go for something different, and said, "OK then, can you get Watford promoted then?"

To which the genie replied, "Let's have a look at your helicopter, shall we!"

Robert Watts

IS IT MY IMAGINATION?

I am not going to start singing Oasis because I'm too bloody tired, but after finally getting down to K. Road to get *Mad as a Hatter!*, I get home to find that the most graceful, stylish, elegant and overall the best and most consistent player for God knows how long at Luton has been omitted from the Half Term Reports (issue 38). I speak of the legendary Marvin Johnson. He's played every game for the Town this season (I think) yet for some sad reason Tony Allbones thinks that it's better to write about David Oldfield of all people. Why? It said "another who needs to continue his efforts" at the end. No, ta. Every time I've seen Oldfield play he's been trying to rival Oakes for pussy of the year. I seem to remember Marvellous Marv (catchy, eh?) got a player of the year award not so long ago. So give him respect and write a report with your opinion, Mr Allbones, because, along with Steve Davis, they have done a brilliant job in the centre of defence. And just to prove that I'm not biased against Oldfield, my mate and I regard Paul Showler as a shower of shit, particularly after the non-existent role he played in the Wimbledon glitch.

Beaker, the Slip End Hatter.

TOWN TRAVELS

Another glorious victory for this department when we advised you to go and visit the Canal Tavern in Nottingham. As anyone who did try will now know, the site of the former Canal Tavern is now rather lacking in facilities — such as the pub itself. Sorry about that.

Perhaps foreseeing the late arrival of this issue, a guide to Bristol appeared in issue 38, and following parts of it made for a fine pub crawl, and a ten minute late arrival at the ground!

Our next trip is to York. A fine ancient city, with a walk around the city walls creating a pleasant diversion, a visit to York Minster can also be very interesting. In fact there are so many things to do in York, that if you're looking to spend a weekend there you'll be kept rather busy. For further information on sightseeing, try the tourist information centre. For information on where to drink, read on. The ground, Bootham Crescent, is about a 25 minute walk from the station and the city centre. The BURTON STONE INN, 34 Clifton, is about five minutes from the ground, allegedly football friendly, with doormen on matchdays, but I don't know about the beer. The MALTINGS, Tanner's Moat, welcomes fans and children, and is renowned for it's exotic guest beers. There are plenty of good pubs elsewhere in the city, but my local knowledge is not up to much, so I'm leaving it at that.

Three days later we're off to Chesterfield for a rearranged game, and another open terrace. As it's a midweek game, it'll be a bit tight for drinking time for most, with a long drive back to contend with as well. The ROYAL OAK, 43 Chatsworth Road, Brampton, is not too far away from the ground and serves a range of nine real ales, while the INDUSTRY INN, Queen Street is close to the visitors end of the ground.

A week later it's another long trip (Micky Mouse Cup permitting) as we set off to Wrexham, where, rather bizarrely, the ground is owned by the adjacent pub, the TURF HOTEL. This establishment may well admit visiting supporters. Also listed as close to Wrexham FC is the PLAS COCH, Plas Coch Road, a modern Banks's pub.

And just in case you're really not enjoying all this travelling, the next Saturday we're off to Crewe. Handy for the trains (!) Gresty Road is a small but impressively modernised ground. Pubs that may be worth trying are the BRUNSWICK, 71 Nantwich Road (Whitbread) and the BRITISH LION, 58 Nantwich Road (Ind Coope) but the selection really isn't that great.

K.F.H.

HatterLeague 2 Update

With 22 matches played in the HatterLeague, at the time of writing, the points scoring is going better than we could ever have hoped. The leading team has an amazing 380 points, and even the team in second bottom position has 130. The wooden spoon looks to be heading for Mike Hann of St Albans, who has opened up a 191 point gap between himself and safety (we always knew he'd get the wooden spoon, but did not expect it to be quite so convincing). Performance of the month probably goes to Lewis Durbridge of Epsom who, after a couple of judicious transfers, has more than doubled his score over the last 7 matches. Back at the top of the table, it's all very close, with the same teams jostling for position, but you may be surprised to know that all the leading teams feature Kim Grant. Clearly this man is an essential ingredient to success, as the highest placed teams without him are three of those tied for 9th place.

The top and bottom teams (and a selection of "overseas" entries from mid-table) after match 22 (Plymouth (H)) are as follows:

Pos	Name	Address	Team Name	Pts.
1=	Sarah Yates	Peterborough	Sarah's Supersonic Stars	380
1=	Andrew Ormiston	Bedford	Lucky Seven	380
1=	Mark Nelson	Leeds	Showdown In Unicorn Car Park	380
4=	Andy Wesson	Luton	Andy's Top Hatters	364
4=	Elizabeth Hansell	Luton	Happy Hatters	364
4=	Dale Williams	Bletchley	Happy Hatters	364
4=	Simon Alcock	Cannock	Zero	364
4=	Steve Porter	Luton	Seven From Heaven	364
26	Rick Hooper	Hong Kong	Hooper's Hong Kong Hatters	340
41	Pasi Vehmasaho	Finland	Lahti Town	328
42	Gareth Jones	Swansea	Dinamo Jones	325
50	Carita Uronen	Finland	Choy Li Fut Footballers	316
74	Rhiannon Jones	Ammanford	Have A Banana	285
88	Curtis Lockhart	Belfast	1st Belfast Luton Town S. C.	270
117=	Steven Whitehead	Wingrave	Wingrave Ducks	179
117=	Mick Johnson	Sheffield	Hatters of Sheffield	179
119	Lewis Durbridge	Epsom	Bontcho's Boys	170
120	Trevor Emery	Bedford	And, Why Not	168
121	Noel Cresswell	Milton Keynes	Red Hatter 2	161
122	Andrew Maslen	Bedford	David Pleat Smells of Cheese	130
123	Mike Hann	St Albans	Minus 3 Every Game (And Cheap)	-61

The transfer market has been a little quieter than expected, but this perhaps

reflects a worry about changing a winning team. It could also reflect total apathy, but we try to be optimistic about these things. Whatever, remember that you can make up to two changes to your side, within the original format, and that you should send a first class stamp with each transfer request.

Code	Player	£	Pts	Code	Player	£	Pts
<u>Goalkeepers</u>							
101	Ian Feuer	0.8 m	56	103	Nathan Abbey	0.2 m	-22
102	Kelvin Davis	0.5 m	-22				
<u>Defenders</u>							
111	Steve Davis	0.7 m	77	116	Mitchell Thomas	0.5 m	40
112	Darren Patterson	0.6 m	-22	117	Ben Chenery	0.4 m	-22
113	Marvin Johnson	0.6 m	38	118	Des Linton	0.5 m	-18
114	Richard Harvey	0.5 m	-22	119	Trevor Peake	0.4 m	-22
115	Julian James	0.5 m	40	120	Aaron Skelton	0.4 m	-10
<u>Midfielders</u>							
121	Gary Waddock	0.6 m	24	125	David Oldfield	0.6 m	24
122	Tony Thorpe	0.6 m	115	127	Paul McLaren	0.4 m	4
123	Graham Alexander	0.5 m	59	128	Sean Evers	0.3 m	1
124	Ceri Hughes	0.5 m	59	129	Paul Showler	0.6 m	15
<u>Strikers</u>							
131	Dwight Marshall	0.7 m	26	135	Stuart Douglas	0.5 m	4
132	Kim Grant	0.5 m	13	136	Jamie Woodsford	0.3 m	0
133	Bontcho Guentchev	0.5 m	9	137	Andrew Fotiadis	0.6 m	0
134	John Taylor	0.4 m	0				

So there we have it. Not much prospect of an improvement in scores for some of those players, but at the start of the season who would have known which players might be used, and hold their positions in the Town side. Oh yes, and please remember that anything you send us now has to have the new address on it. And if you look on page 2, you'll find there really is a new address, this time!

Chris Lennon, Russell Bulkeley and K.F.H.

RADIO DAZE

Heard on BBC Three Counties Radio on Saturday 8th February, during the Brian Marwood phone-in programme. Caller (an old git from north Bedfordshire): "I'll tell you who we could do with back at Ipswich, and that's Bontcho Guentchev." Marwood: "Oh yes, Bontcho's a big favourite down at Kenilworth Road. In and out of the side a bit, but a big favourite with the crowd." Hmmm, nice to know our local radio station is in touch, isn't it.

The Sharpe End

Football supporters are not noted for their love of the theatre, but any Luton fan looking for a good night out, watching a play with an hilarious, happy ending, should look out for the opening night of a new play called Elton John's Glasses written by one David Farr, which is due to be staged at the Watford Palace Theatre. The subject matter of the play is the final day of the 1995/96 season when Leicester's 1-0 victory at Vicarage Road condemned Watford to relegation.

Talking of the literary world, it is interesting to note the continuing success of Nick Hornby's Fever Pitch, the book about his experiences as an Arsenal fan (in which he speaks very highly of Gus Caesar!) which has been a stage play and is now about to become a film.

I review books for a number of publications, and it is astounding which clubs now have books written about them — obviously the Man U's, Liverpools etc., but also the likes of Cowdenbeath (known as the Blue Brazil), Wycombe Wanderers, Partick Thistle and many obscure non-league sides — Garry Nelson's 'Left Foot Forward' made the short list for the William Hill Sports Book of the Year, even though I told him the book never had a chance of winning after he scored against us, while one, about West ham, was even called 'An Irrational Hatred of Luton' — I nearly had a fight with the author when I met him trying to flog copies of the thing in London's Sportspages book shop.

So, the obvious question is, where is the equivalent Luton book? And who will write it? It won't be me — not at the moment anyway, I'm busy working on a centenary tribute to my 'other' club, Wealdstone of the ICIS League Division Three — so it's up to one of you lot — pull your fingers out and start scribbling.



It was a shame we missed so many games during the recent freeze up. I seem to recall that recent performances in the snow have produced pretty good results — not least when we hammered Portsmouth a season or two ago and, going back a while, I remember giving Chelsea a drubbing on a snow bound surface — although that wasn't the game Tommy Docherty was referring to in the Daily Telegraph when he entered the great glove debate by commenting; "I remember when I was manager of Chelsea in 1963. We played Luton in a deep freeze. We wore blue shorts, blue shirts, white socks and yellow gloves. In fact we went on to wear them a few times." A check back in the records reveals that the Doc's memory is probably slightly faulty as we played Chelsea on Boxing Day '62 and lost 0-2, but not again until April 1st when I very much doubt it would have been freezing.



The recently published Football Trust Digest of Football Statistics, which includes figures for the 1994/95 season, makes for fascinating reading featuring as it does a mass of statistics and tables.

For example, awarding points for the position each team in the Premiership/Football League has occupied from 1985/86 to 1994/95 reveals that Luton Town are the 20th most successful side in the land, ahead of such luminaries as Blackburn, Derby, Sheffield United, Millwall, Watford, Middlesbrough, Wolves. Least successful sides over that period — and some have only been in the league for a while — last were Wycombe, above them Barnet, Scarborough, Hereford, Colchester and Rochdale.

Luton's stewarding charges for 94/95 were the 9th highest in the First Division at £75,867 (highest was Millwall with £205,495, lowest Reading £23,328) up by 23.3% on the previous season — £449 per 1000 spectators.

Arrests of Luton fans at away matches in 94/95 was just 7, the lowest in the Division — although Scunthorpe in Div 3 had none (*arrests or fans?* — Ed) — where Sunderland were top with 168. Total arrests at Kenilworth Road games that season were 24 inside the ground, 7 outside and totalled 67 from 92-95, compared with 518 at Liverpool, the highest (Villa were second with 406 and Lincoln lowest with a mere 5).



A chap from Bournemouth won £292,000 on a football accumulator recently. The bet cost him a tenner and he tipped the outcome of 13 matches. The first twelve took place on Saturday and he got them all right with the result that he had £117,000 going on to Raith Rovers on the Monday night to win their match.

Anyone in their right mind would have begged, borrowed or stolen all the money they could get hold of and put it on the two possible outcomes of the Raith match which could prevent his bet coming up.

What did cabby George Jenkins do? Nothing at all. He let his bet ride — on this occasion it worked for him and he came up trumps. If it had gone wrong I'm sure he'd have said "Well, I only lost a tenner" — but that wouldn't have been accurate, he would have actually cot himself at least fifty grand.

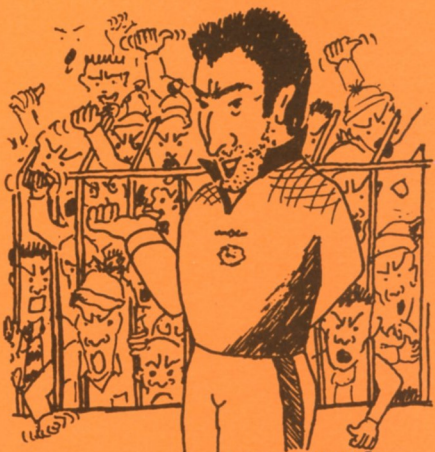
Still, fifty grand can't be much to him anyway, because I happen to know that if he had placed his bet with William Hill in the first place he would have collected £55,000 more than he ended up with by placing his bet with an obscure company offering inferior odds!

Graham Sharpe



UMBRO

ON ZE TRAIN, YOU
HAVE TIME TO THINK,
SPACE TO BREATHE.
SO I ASK MYSELF...



DOES A SUPPORTER
SHOUT LOUDER IF HE
IS IN A CAGE..



.. OR WHEN
HE HAS MY
BOOT UP HIS
ARSE.