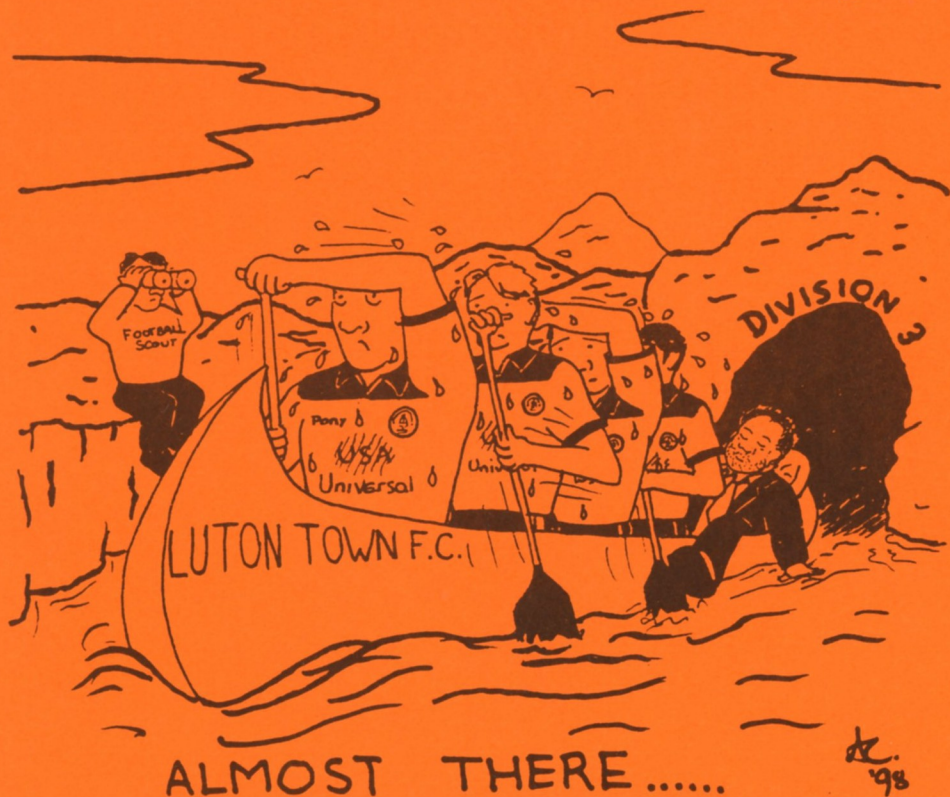


# MAD AS A FLATTER!

THE LUTON TOWN FANZINE

Issue 47

May 98



TRADITIONAL END-OF-SEASON 60 PAGE ISSUE  
AND STILL ONLY 50P



# MAD AS A HATTER!

THE LUTON TOWN FANZINE



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**BRICKLAYERS ARMS**, High Town Road, Luton.  
**THE CLUB SHOP**, Luton Town FC, Kenilworth Road, Luton.

## EDITORIAL

Those of you who always complain that I don't slag off the Chairman enough will be delighted to know that a few days after the appearance of issue 46, I had the Chairman on the phone congratulating me on a better issue of Mad, because it criticised him a lot more. Talk about water off a ducks back.....

Anyway, as I write this, there are two games left and survival in Division Two looks likely, if not certain. This could scarcely be called an achievement, and it is vital that things change so that we do not have to endure a relegation struggle next season. Results over the last few weeks have proved that there is some quality in our team, but with the injury situation still fairly poor, we can only wonder why it has taken so long. Many of us feel that the changes which need to be made include the manager and quite a few of the playing staff, and will be waiting to see what happens at LTFC between now and August.

Of course, news about our club could easily be missed with so much going on elsewhere, particularly in France, so we will have to concentrate on those places which provide the best coverage of matter Luton Town, namely BBC Three Counties Radio and the *Luton News*. Both have their detractors, but this is mainly because so many of us listen to 3CR or read the LN because we can't get the information anywhere else. So, to both, keep up the good work — but try to improve!

With the end of the season, some congratulations. First and foremost, not only here, but also in the South East Counties League, are the Town's own youth team, champions of their league for the second successive year. This is a wonderful achievement, and we salute you. We also hope that your liking for success will rub off on your elders, and stay with you in later years. Perhaps one day, a *Mad as a Hatter!* reader will write something about the youth team for the fanzine.....

Congratulations, part 2 (probably only relevant to readers over 30 years of age), to Paul Fatcher, of Town fame in the mid 1970s, who has at last got to Wembley. He will be leading out his Southport side (as player-manager) at the Twin Towers on May 17th when they contest the FA Trophy final against Cheltenham. Good luck, Paul.

Finally, thanks to all of you who have submitted material to MAAH during this season. Unfortunately we have been unable to use everything, for a variety of reasons. Primarily, this is due to lack of space (particularly in this issue), but is sometimes due to items being out of date, duplicated, or libelous, and, occasionally, lost. There is quite a bit left over now for the first issue of next season, which will be out in August. But in the meantime, keep up your good work and keep sending the articles in. Additionally, thanks to our marvellous all-weather sales team for their efforts (usually to stay in the pub, but that's another story), And thanks to Paul Hollingshead at Blue Print for managing to print the fanzine is rather less than what is normally considered a reasonable space of time. That's all for now — see you in August. Have a good summer!



## END OF SEASON REPORT & SOME PREDICTIONS FOR THE FUTURE

As another season to forget draws to a close and it looks as if we will avoid the pleasures of Division Three (this was written just before the Gillingham game), I thought I would add my views of the season to the growing number of forums available to the falling number of supporters.

### First Team Players

**Kelvin Davis** - It is amazing what a bit of confidence can do for a goalkeeper. I have always rated young Kelvin as a great shot-stopper but more likely to catch a cold than the ball. However, since Lennie's resounding vote of faith in him prior to selling Feuer he has been a revelation. Many more performances like this and I can see us losing another goalkeeper before too long. Marks for Effort - 9; Marks for Attainment - 8.

**Julian James** - It hasn't been a good season for 'Jessie' what with the overall poor form of our defence and his unfortunate string of injuries. Always a determined performer, his ability cannot be doubted having not looked out of place in our defence when we used to play in the top flight. This year however has seen an inconsistency to his performances, probably due to his over anxiousness and trying rather too hard. Marks for Effort - 9; Marks for Attainment - 6.

**Graham Alexander** - Town fans seem to have a love/hate relationship with Graham and his season hasn't been helped by switching between right-back and midfield. Has chipped in with a few goals and some notable free-kicks (Burnley at home) but we are all still baffled as to why he persists in taking corner-kicks. Never one to shirk a challenge, Alexander has been a much maligned but invaluable servant this season without whom we would have struggled a great deal more. Marks for Effort - 8; Marks for Attainment - 7.

**Darren Patterson** - A classic example of a quality player coming to the Town and falling into obscurity. It wasn't many seasons ago that he was putting in solid performances in the Premiership and he still does a good job for his country, so why has the majority of his Town career been wasted? Bought by Westley to play on the right hand side of a three man central defence Patterson has suffered from several injuries and being consistently played out of position at right-back. Since reverting to his favoured central position Darren has been outstanding and as he is still on a week-to-week contract will no doubt receive a better offer over the summer and leave under freedom of contract. Marks for Effort - 9; Marks for Attainment - 8.

**Steve Davis** - Solid, dependable, club captain and frequent goalscorer - what more can I say about him that hasn't already been said. Will no doubt

end up as player of the season and leave during the summer. Marks for Effort - 9; Marks for Attainment - 8.

**Alan White** - Something of a rarity in that he appears to be Lennie's one and only decent purchase. Coming in at the depth of our crippling injury run, he has shown on many occasions that he is still very inexperienced but for £40,000 can only be described as a timely bargain. One for the future who will certainly improve from playing alongside Patterson or Davis if they are to stay. Marks for Effort - 8; Marks for Attainment - 7.

**Marvin Johnson** - In his 10th season this year, 'Magic' is another who has suffered from injury and inconsistency. Whilst like Julian James he has played for us at a much higher level Marvin always did look out of place and we hoped that he would look more at ease in the lower leagues. A good season last year has been undermined this season, looks at home in a winning side but when things are not going well can be a liability. Whatever your opinion of him you cannot doubt his commitment, and I would urge all true supporters to show their gratitude at his testimonial. Marks for Effort - 8; Marks for Attainment - 6.

**Mitchell Thomas** - Whilst never being a big fan of 'Spider', I have this season come to appreciate how important he is to the team. You could hardly describe him as a quality player in his second spell at the club, but when he is absent the back four looks out of sorts. Obviously a popular player in the dressing room, I think Mitchell deserves far more credit than he receives. Marks for Effort - 7; Marks for Attainment - 8.

**Paul McLaren** - A smashing lad who, at the beginning of the season, looked the perfect replacement for Waddock (especially when shooting!) when he finally hangs up his boots, but has faltered slightly on occasions. Obviously still inexperienced despite having been part of the first team squad for some years now, he still needs to play alongside a more experienced player to look convincing (Bristol Rovers at home being a case in point). Will no doubt blossom into a saleable commodity in the next couple of years despite being an ex-Watford fan. Marks for Effort - 9; Marks for Attainment - 8.

**Gary Waddock** - Solid and dependable, you could never question his commitment or attitude but his playing days are probably nearing an end. Even now Lennie says he cannot play two games in a week and due to his defensive nature often only figures in away games where we can play on the break. Hopefully he will be rewarded with a coaching position with the club in the summer, particularly after Trevor Peake's departure. Marks for Effort - 9; Marks for Attainment - 7.

**Sean Evers** - How long will he continue to show such effort and enthusiasm if he continues to be included in the first team?. Has a great 'engine' and links particularly well with a front player who can hold the ball - such as



Gray. Looks to be a promising prospect until such time as he becomes a regular when he will no doubt adopt the communal apathy. Marks for Effort - 7; Marks for Attainment - 7.

Dwight Marshall - Always a favourite with the fans, Lennie tried to give him away on a free before Christmas since when, despite being played mostly out of position, he has certainly proved his worth. Has certainly lost his pace since the broken leg and has probably only one or two seasons left in him but will always give 100% and has the ability to try the unexpected which is something we sadly lack. Just imagine where we would be if he had received an acceptable offer from another club over Christmas. Marks for Effort - 9; Marks for Attainment - 7.

David Oldfield - Steve Guy suggested in the last fanzine that 'Skippy' was past it, and thank goodness for that as since then he has been a revelation. Always runs his socks off for the cause but there has been a question mark against his ability. Not really a striker or winger, he can get away with both at this level and, since Thorpe's departure, has started to notch some assists and even some goals. Another whose contract is up in the summer but in this case I would suggest that he would be wise to stay where he is appreciated, at Kenilworth Road. Marks for Effort - 9; Marks for Attainment - 8.

Phil Gray - The wrong man at the wrong time. If Gray had been bought to replace Thorpe with some of the £800,000 it would have sweetened the bitter pill. As it was he was brought to play alongside him when what we really needed was a good old fashioned centre forward. It hasn't helped either that he hasn't been really fit since his return and that most Town fans remember him as the arrogant money-grabber that was finally sold to Sunderland in 1992. However, Gray is a quality player whose experiences have matured him and if he had been two or three inches taller would be a cracking centre forward. Despite this he still fights for and holds up the ball and brings other players into the game, but I do worry about his goalscoring abilities. I would urge Town fans to be patient with Phil who will prove his worth next season but really needs a quick goalscorer to play alongside him. Marks for Effort - 8; Marks for Attainment - 6.

### Reserves

Richard Harvey - A classic case of the face not fitting. Even when he hasn't been plagued by injuries he has been ignored by the present management despite us being desperate for left-sided players.

Simon Davies - A good player does not become a bad player overnight, so what happened to Simon Davies?. Another one who needs a long run in the team to build confidence and prove just how good he can be. Already shows skill on the ball but is far too nervous and this is reflected in his play. When judging him just remember that if things had been different he could have

been playing against Monaco in the Champions League semi-final in Ryan Giggs's absence.

Andrew Fotiadis - An honest and hardworking player who has been troubled by injuries and who most Town fans rate as a promising player for the future. I worry however about a striker who doesn't appear to be able to shoot!

Matthew Spring - Another excellent prospect from John Moore's youth team who has buckets of enthusiasm and determination and scores the odd goal. Mr Kohler must be rubbing his hands with the thought of a sell-on clause.

Stuart Douglas - Do we work our young players too hard at this club, because they always seem to be injured? I have high hopes for Douglas who has plenty of enthusiasm and pace and certainly knows where the goal is.

Gary Doherty - The next John Hartson? Gary is a versatile and powerful central forward or defender who has shown buckets of potential in his few first team outings and as soon as we are safe this season should be given some much deserved starts.

Paul Showler - What can I say, another great purchase Lennie.

### Management

Lennie Lawrence - Demoting Wayne Turner in mid-season leading to his subsequent departure really said it all to me. He has wasted money, blamed everyone else including the fans (bad move), whinged constantly about injuries and finances, talked down our team whilst talking up our opponents and even lost the faith of the staff at the club. I freely admit to being one of those who, during the injury crisis, stood up for Lennie, just goes to prove I am human and prone to errors of judgement. I shall welcome the end of the season when I reckon he will walk away from the club having 'saved' us from relegation. Still, he is a very nice bloke though!

John Moore - If you have ever watched our youth team you will probably agree that it is not full of individual stars but useful players who work hard and as a team. At what stage in the season did these qualities appear in the first team? Coincidence, I think not.

Bruce Rioch - You may not appreciate it but Mr Rioch has had more influence than given credit for, and come the summer I predict will have a great deal more.

### The Board

We have to face facts, until we have a stadium that generates sufficient finances to subsidise the football club or a wealthy benefactor comes along



we will have to sell players. David Kohler is a businessman whose dream is to build a super stadium to make his fortune but who, I honestly believe, is now a Luton Town fan. He is, in conjunction with Messrs. Bassett, Terry and Green (only one of whom is a very rich man but all of whom are true fans), doing what they feel is the best for the club given the difficult circumstances. The sale of Tony Thorpe for example was almost unanimously considered by fans as short-sighted at the time, however with hindsight it has paid off for the board. It would appear that we will avoid relegation, the bank deficit is a little less and we have since seen Shaun Goater sold for only £400,000. It is very easy to criticise the board but until such time as you win the Lottery I think they deserve our support.

### Goodbyes

Wayne Turner - Whilst never being a favourite of the fans whilst a player, I think that everyone felt sorry for Wayne when he was released by the club. Certainly at the time the management needed some new blood but Turner was made the scapegoat for those who really should have taken the blame. Now at Wycombe as first team coach, it would be a strange kind of justice if he was happily employed in the summer and certain others were not.

Trevor Peake - His departure was ill-timed but I don't think that anybody would begrudge Trevor his move back to Coventry, and we wish him all the best in his new job.

Ian Feuer - Much has been documented about his departure which eventually owed more to personal circumstances than personalities. Whatever happened behind the scenes Ian was a bloody good 'keeper who this season suffered from playing behind a poor defence but most importantly he was a thoroughly decent bloke. All Town fans salute you Ian.

Tony Thorpe - Often considered an arrogant and selfish player but very few world class strikers have ever been anything else. Since his departure I have yet to hear one fan say good riddance despite all the moaning about him prior to his leaving. Ultimately, it was ironic that he left to a team that he was not 100% sure about joining because the money was more important to the club. Unfortunately we will never know how good Tony Thorpe could have been as joining Fulham will, I fear, be the ruining of him.

### Thank you

Rory Allen - Hands up those of you that questioned the wisdom of signing Rory on deadline day. It is nice to be proven wrong occasionally though, isn't it? Whilst not being the most talented player to grace the Kenilworth Road turf he has scored some fabulous tap-ins in the past weeks and we really did need someone who could be in the right place at the right time to make a change.

Bryan Small - Whilst being very inconsistent during his three month stay, I fear that we would be in a worse position now if it was not for Small's influence at the depth of the injury crisis. £50,000 would have been money well spent to bring him in permanently but personal terms could not be agreed and the last thing this club needs is to increase the wage bill.

Chris Allen - At the time he was signed I thought that Allen was the sort of player we desperately needed. A left-sided winger who was quick, tricky and could beat players, unfortunately he was none of those things and is still struggling to find a new club. We thank Dave Bassett for letting us have him on reduced wages and wish Forest luck if they want £500,000 for him.

### So to the future.....

I am sure that the KohlerDome will receive planning permission at some point, I only hope it is soon, as if it was going to be refused it would have been done long before now. I figure that the Dept. of the Environment are now trying to justify their decision and secure the best deal possible for the local environment. So at last the club will be able to move forward as I think we all agree that we can only decline whilst we remain at Kenilworth Road under the present board. This deal will, I believe, secure our long-term future as the nature of the multi-purpose stadium and leisure complex proposed will, from what I understand, be owned by David Kohler PLC and leased to us thus reducing our overheads enormously.

In the meantime however we need to restructure the management of the playing staff considerably to ensure that we decline no further down the leagues until such time as the new stadium is built in four or five years time. The departures of Turner and Peake will necessitate new faces whatever happens to Lawrence and so much depends upon him as to whom this may be. With only a year left on his present contract I feel that negotiations this summer will probably lead to his departure as I cannot see him accepting a coaching post under a new manager which is what is desperately needed. We need a manager with experience at this level, a thorough knowledge of the game, good contacts throughout the leagues and most importantly a passion for the club.

I think by now that it is widely known that Bruce Rioch, who still lives in Harpenden, has been at most home games this season and is often seen in discussions with the present management before matches. He also turned down the Northern Ireland manager's job some months ago because he "already had a position with an English league club" yet nothing has been announced about this new position. I may be getting my hopes up for the future but I firmly believe that if it looks like a manager and it sounds like a manager then it probably is the new manager of Luton Town Football Club.

A. Nonn



## THE BRISTOL EXPERIENCE

I must start with an apology. Living in Bristol, and given our recent record against City, many City fans are obviously keen to make my acquaintance, as indeed are Rovers fans. Support Luton and become Mr Popular, eh.

Thus, I found myself driving a car load of City fans with another three cars following in to Luton one bright Saturday lunchtime for no other reason than that I know the way.

The M4, M25 and M1 being an incredible journey way beyond the comprehension and experience of the average scrumpy (I know, I married one and she cries all the way when we visit my mother). This is where the apology comes in.

I'm afraid that two of the five occupants of my car were 'drummers' and two of their drums travelled to Luton in the boot of my car. There, I've said it now and I unreservedly apologise for not leaving them in Slough. If it's any consolation I know that most City fans also find them highly irritating and embarrassing.

Anyway, to the match.

My first disappointment was that Marvin wasn't playing, having promised said City fans that he would be the architect of their destruction. My second disappointment was that despite the new stand being half empty the ticket office still saw fit to sell me a ticket for block A, row E, seat 5.

"Is it a good view?" I asked.  
"Oh yes," was the reply.

Block A, row E, seat 5 is directly behind a large metal pillar and affords a view of, on one side the main stand and on the other the Kenilworth Road end. I, of course, moved to one of the many empty seats from which I could see. After 20 minutes I moved back again.

The second half was much better as both sides had by then realised that the other side was crap and the match opened out.

But for some poor finishing at both ends, some good keeping from Kelvin and the ref succumbing to an attack of myopia, I'm sure we would have seen some goals. What did become apparent was how much we rely on Thorpe (and Marvin) for goals, with Alexander shooting ineffectively from everywhere and Oldfield running hard but not being particularly threatening. Gray

showed some nice touches and prompted well but he's no replacement for Hughes. Fotiadis and Marshall livened things up a bit when they came on and look to be our best alternatives when Thorpe finally leaves.

For City, we were fortunate that Goater, Goodridge and Stig Johansen had left their shooting boots at home, as once again the opposition found an alarming amount of room through the centre of our defence, and they really should have scored. Certainly, the view of the City fans and the local press down here in Bristol was that they should have sneaked it. But then again they're biased. My own view was that the result was about right, but I'm biased too.

One other observation. I counted five handballs escape unpunished and two good shouts for a penalty (the foul on Oldfield a definite) not given. The reason for this became apparent when I glanced across and saw the referee sitting in Block A, row E, seat 5.

Keep praying.

Peter Clark

## SOME ENTRIES IN THE NEW LUTON DICTIONARY

**hornet** *n.* 1. any of various large, strong members of *Vespidae*, a family of wasps. Up to 200 individuals live in a sheltered hollow nest, made of material manufactured from the bark of trees. They are herbivorous and carnivorous and can inflict a severe sting \\ one of a group of sick prats who do not realise that they regularly watch shit in Hertfordshire. 2. **to stir up a hornet's nest.** to arouse the fierce anger of a number of ignorant prats \\ to tell a group of scummers the truth.

**scum** *n.* 1. impurities which rise to the surface of a liquid and collect on it, esp. during fermentation or boiling \\ the light, floating skinlike mass so formed \\ the residue of oxides etc. which floats on a molten metal \\ people of a class that one regards with profound contempt \\ everyone and anything to do with Watford FC. 2. *v. pres. part scumming past and past part., scummed* *v.i.* to become covered with scum \\ *v.t.* to cover with scum.

**scumbag** *n.* a female who associates with a scummer \\ may also suffer from the same disease.

**scummer** *n.* a low life tosser with no intelligence \\ person who suffers from the same obnoxious disease of supporting Watford FC.

Orpington Man



## SHORT CUTS

THE antidote to those who think league football is all high-fliers and smooth-talking professionals...

We put through a quick call to Luton Town FC asking for some details on the club's early fixtures this season.

"I'm not very good at writing or anything like that," volunteered the club's new PR supremo. "If you want information on the games you can always listen to the radio - I think that'll be best."

We persevered: "Surely there must be something you can do?"

PR man: "Not really, no. Errrrm, I don't actually have much experience of this kind of thing - although I've been a Hatters fan for 50 years."

It's going to be a long season...

And an insight into the mind of the professional footballer. Kerry Dixon, late of Luton Town, with a brief comment on his career. Glad to see his best memory comes from representing his local club, but not so happy with the reasons. Does this mean he's glad he didn't score a couple of goals to win it for us, and be our hero instead?

SPORT reporter, Pete Kenyon's controversial match report for the Luton against Bristol Rovers game

shortly before Christmas merited a mention in club captain Steve Davis' programme notes.

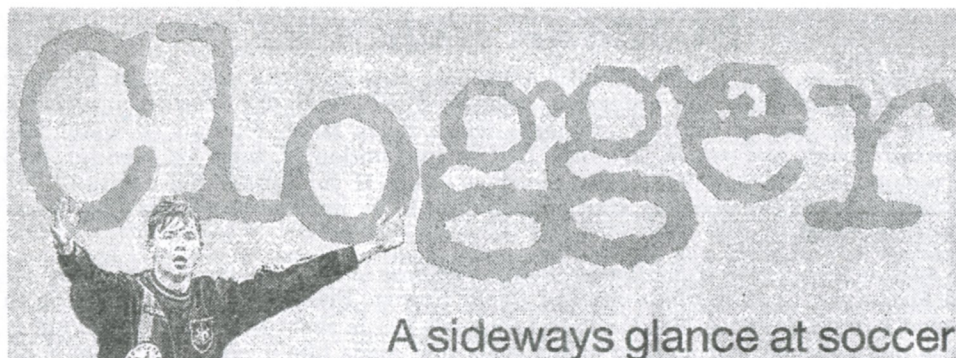
In his regular column in the Hatters' fanzine, Davis, not one of Kenyon's fans at the best of times, said 'the lads' would be riding above the jibes.

Finally, from our favourite news(?)paper, the *Accuracy on Sunday*, we find that Steve Davis writes for MAAH. Must ask him about that. Or is it that Pete Kenyon can't tell the difference between the programme and fanzine?

Now this really is worrying. If the club is putting so much emphasis on PR and Marketing that they can't even do a press release about fixtures, then it really is getting its priorities wrong somewhere. I think I know who the voice at the end of the phone is as well, but to prevent embarrassment (and/or libel suits) I'm not saying.

"Apart from playing for England, my best memory in football was playing for Luton, against Chelsea, in the FA Cup semi-final at Wembley in 1994.

"Luton lost 2-0 but the reaction of the Chelsea fans to me was probably the greatest thing that has happened to me. Every single Chelsea fan was singing, 'There's only one Kerry Dixon'. It brought a lump to my throat."



A sideways glance at soccer

A couple of name checks here for Luton Town FC, both culled from *The Guardian*. Not sure about this "away kit from the late 70s", but we'd probably like him as a Luton striker. As for Les Sealey, that's now 8 clubs, with Bury latest on the list.

**Sir Norman Chester's fantastic football fact**

Since leaving Luton in 1990, goalkeeper Les Sealey has played for seven clubs, averaging only 12 games at each. His busiest recent season entailed 14 games for Leyton Orient and West Ham in 1996-97.

**Their kit don't fit**  
No. 23 Jon Dahl Tomasson

At least it looks like him. Yet he appears to be wearing a Luton Town away kit from the late 1970s. And what's more, he's just scored a goal. Clearly an imposter masquerading as a Newcastle striker.

By William Gray

A TRIP to Kenilworth Road is not normally a cause for jubilant celebration. But tomorrow's Second Division match with Luton will be a sweet moment for Bournemouth fans.

William Gray hasn't followed our visitors fortunes this season, because it usually has been a cause for jubilant celebration.

### INTERNATIONALS

Austria ..... (2) 2	Hungary ..... (2) 3
Vastic 10	Horvath 4
Amerhauser 21	Illes 32 54
	(Vienna) 21,000
Belgium ..... (1) 2	Norway ..... (1) 2
Van der Elst 7	Riseth 11
Wilmots 64	Solskjaer 69
	(Brussels) 13,371
Czech Rep ..... (0) 2	Rep of Ireland ..... (1) 1
Smicer 48	Breen 9
Lasota 75	(Olomouc) 9,405

Note the name of the scorer of Norway's first goal. We are assured that this is the same Vidar Riseth who seemed to be such a waste of time here at Luton. He's now top scorer in the Austrian League, so expect to see him in the Premiership in a year or two.



## SUMMER READING

The dread days of the close season approach. How can the dark days between Marv's testimonial and the pre-season tour be filled? Well, the World Cup will fill the odd hour, but in the few moments when there is no football to watch the following books are worth a read. Living in London, I tend to wander into Sportspages in Charing Cross Road every so often. If you ignore the sanitised life stories of current Premiership stars, which tend to be unrewarding, there are some interesting finds.

One such is *The Greatest Footballer You Never Saw — The Robin Friday Story* by Paul McGuigan (Guigsy of Oasis) and Paolo Hewitt. Friday played for Reading in Division Four in the mid 70s. He scored 53 goals in his short time with them, but it was as much his off-field manner as his goals that made him a cult hero. Team-mate Paul Went describes how Robin would turn up for away matches. "We'd go away on the Friday night in our suits and ties and he'd turn up on the coach in a pair of jeans with the crotch missing, no pants, a scruffy T-shirt, winklepicker boot and a carrier bag containing a bottle of Dry Martini..... nobody minded because of what he could do on the pitch." He was banned from most of the pubs in the Reading area at various times but still gave fans great memories with his wholehearted playing style. His goals played a big part in getting Reading promoted in 1976, but by the end of the year he had to move on. The ex-Luton coach Jimmy Andrews signed him for Cardiff and in April 1977 he scored two goals as they beat us 4-2. He then endeared himself to Luton fans by giving a V sign to Milija Aleksic who had fouled him earlier in the match. He quit the game in his mid-twenties and died, after years of alcohol and drug abuse, in 1990 at the age of 38.

A player from the same era, to whom Robin Friday is compared, was Frank Worthington. In his book *One Hump or Two?* Worthington tells some great tales of his Georgie Best lifestyle involving plenty of wine, women and money. Bill Shankly wanted him to sign for Liverpool but he failed the medical because of high blood pressure. He was sent on holiday for a fortnight in the sure knowledge that the relaxation would solve this problem. Worthington could then sign and be part of the team that would dominate football for the next decade. Frank being Frank however, he happened to share a villa on his holiday with two young Scandinavian ladies, and returned for his second medical in a worse state than for the first. For Luton fans he offers an explanation for the poor performance of ex-Hatters hero Malcolm MacDonald on a 1974 England tour to Eastern Europe. The night (and early morning) before one of the internationals Worthington won a serious amount of money from MacDonald in a card school and he claims that in the video of the game you can see Supremac is pale from worrying about how he is going to pay Worthington what amounted to several months wages.

*Tales from the Boot Camps* by Steve Claridge (with Ian Ridley) also has gambling as a strong theme. He tells of his short stay at Luton in 1992, and to those who saw his 17 games it is clear that his biggest contribution was as the team's bookmaker. On a pre-season tour to Sweden the team had a day out at the races and Claridge lost £2,500 to Mick Harford on one race. He estimates that out of 15 gamblers at Luton there were six good ones. The amounts he has won and lost will amaze anyone who is used to putting a fiver on a horse in the National or buying a lottery ticket. He has, however, managed to combine his unusual lifestyle with scoring winning goals at Wembley and playing, eventually, in the Premiership. There are plenty of entertaining snippets from his times in the lower divisions, for example playing with a midfielder who had a disabled sticker on his car at

Aldershot, and fighting with his manager at Cambridge, John Beck, during the half time interval of an important match.

I would put the autobiography of Kevin Keegan in the dull sanitised category, but for Luton fans he does offer an (not entirely convincing) explanation of why one of his acts as Newcastle supremo was to deprive Hatters fans of the silky skills of their favourite, Darren McDonough.

A classic from the seventies is *The Glory Game* by Hunter Davies. He followed Spurs for the whole of the season 1971-72, the first time that any journalist had been given this sort of access to the players and officials of a club. It was the era of Bill Nicholson, Pat Jennings, Mullery, Chivers and Gilzean. It is a fascinating look at a bygone age and gives Luton fans an idea of the club to which Rory Allen will be returning (very weak, but the only Luton connection I can think of).

I read *Only a Game?* by Eamonn Dunphy at least twenty years ago. Currently out of print, it will be re-issued at the beginning of next season, and is well worth looking out for. It tells the story of the 1973-74 season from the perspective of Dunphy as a Millwall player. Any Luton fan will be able to identify with the high hopes with which the players start the season, convinced that they will stroll to the championship and promotion. Unfortunately, we also know the inevitable way the season plays out as they end up in mid-table obscurity. Dunphy became a journalist at the end of his playing career and I remember the book as being well written. So, an entertaining book in which Millwall come a cropper — what more could anyone want?

As an appetiser before France 98 I would recommend *All Played Out* by Pete Davies to relive the highs and lows of Italia 90. Davies is a fan, had access to the England players who got to the semi-finals and turned it into one of the best books about football that has been written. If you watched Italia 90 it will rekindle your good and bad memories — if you missed it (like Pearce and Waddle) then you will get an idea of what you missed.

Davies recently wrote *I Lost My Heart to the Belles* on which the current drama series 'Playing the Field' is based. I thought the book was better than the TV version and the theme of a once successful Doncaster Belles ladies football team struggling against adversity will strike a chord at Kenilworth Road.

The common theme of these books is that they show the human side of footballers who thrill and infuriate us. We like to think that when they are not playing they are training, working on those brilliant free kick and corner routines and, when they are not in training they are either eating their healthy diet or resting in preparation for the next match. Next time one of our heroes is not quite on his game in the first half perhaps we should ask whether he has six months wages riding on the 3.30 at Newmarket.

Finally, *A Hatter Goes Mad* by Kristina Howall.  
The Editor reserves the right to edit articles for reasons of space  
Howard Chandler

## 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.





"Just leave it me," says Macca, "straight in the net". If only. Fortunately, Rory Allen (below) has proved rather more reliable when it comes to shooting.



## LENNIE'S BANNED PROGRAMME NOTES

You may remember a few matches back, Lennie Lawrence's column in the match programme was mysteriously replaced by a couple of pages of waffle from our illustrious Chairman. After some diligent searching through the Kenilworth Road waste bins, our correspondent managed to come up with what appeared to be an edited version of the missing notes. And here they are.....

Welcome to today's match. I'd especially like to welcome the away fans who are totally loyal to their team and manager, unlike you lot, you bunch of **Hello! David Kohler here. I just thought I'd interrupt the manager to say a big thank you to all you fans for turning up week after week and paying your hard earned wages into the club. Well done.** over achieved.

On the injury front, we are still without Paul Showler who has been injured for all of the season and hasn't attended any of the matches. I just wish you fans would do **Hello! Your friendly neighbourhood Chairman here again. Just to wish you all good health and to say that I look forward to hearing you in fine voice today cheering on the team.** chant "out, out, out" again, I'll ram my fist right up your **DK here again. Lovely weather, isn't it, don't you think?** hooligans.

On the transfer front, I still don't have any money to spend on new players. I've been looking at getting a loan player but you'll all probably shout at him that he's a pile of steaming **I'll just interrupt there to let you all know that the current news on my Dome is that there's no news yet. Just thought I'd let you know.** Watford.

It's been a disappointing season, but I'm sure that with your support we can turn the season around and improve. Fat cha **Hello! As your chairman I just thought I'd let you know that Lenny has my vote of confidence.** chairman forcing me to sell all our best **Has anyone got Mick Harford's phone number?** mad? Me? Ha ha ha ha ha!!!!!!!

Enjoy the game.

B Dave B.

## CONTRIBUTIONS PLEASE

Wahay! That's your lot for the season, and there won't be another issue until August. With the new season starting on August 8th (yeah, that soon) issue 48 should be on sale on that date, or a week later, whichever provides the first home match of the season. We would love to receive contributions from you in order to continue the success of this fanzine. So, if you would like to send any cuttings, articles, match reports, letters, cartoons, photos, whatever, get them in the post to us to arrive by July 24th. The address is MAAH, 38 Twigden Court, Mount Pleasant Road, Luton, LU3 2RL.



## IN THE REAL WORLD...

Having just read issue 46 of *Mad*, I felt I had to write and make some sort of response to a few of the issues raised by various people. Many of the articles were on a similar theme so I have written this to put across a slightly different viewpoint.

My first point is about the response to Tony Thorpe's departure to Fulham. For a large part of last season and much of this one, Thorpe has been continually slagged off by people in *Mad* and throughout the crowd. He has been called lazy, arrogant, selfish and greedy and has been constantly moaned at for not trying. The fact that he scored 31 goals last season and 19 this didn't make any difference to certain sections of supporters. Now, all of a sudden, when he has been sold by Kohler everyone loves him and are suicidal that he's gone. What a complete joke and a bunch of hypocrites some people are. I was saddened at Thorpe's departure as I thought he was an excellent player for us, but frankly who could blame him for going as he obviously realised he wasn't appreciated at Kenilworth Road.

Thorpe's inevitable sale has just become another excuse to moan at Lawrence and especially Kohler. Feuer's sale has also done the same to a lesser extent. Everyone knew that Thorpe would go and, yes I agree, the timing was lousy. But what did people realistically expect? The money we got was a bit pathetic, but we got more than Bristol City did for Shaun Goater and he's consistently scored 20+ goals for the last three or four seasons.

When will people realise that Kohler isn't going anywhere no matter how much people slate him during games and after. No-one likes players being sold and, unfortunately, that will always happen at a club like ours. Even if Kohler did resign it wouldn't make a blind bit of difference, just look at the 'Swales out, Lee out' fiasco at Manchester City.

Too many people are living in the '80s still and sadly those days will probably never be relived. Face it, we are no longer a top division team and will now always struggle to make ends meet.

Everyone has been trying to get Kohler out for the last 6 years at least so he's hardly going to suddenly leave now. It is also quite interesting that the continual chanting during games only coincides with when the team are doing badly. Everyone wanted him out during 1992/93 and at the start of 93/94. We then had our cup run, he didn't sell the hero of the moment in Scott Oakes, and it all went quiet. The same in 94/95 when we did reasonably OK (well, we weren't fighting against relegation) and everyone was quite content and accepted the sale of John Hartson to Arsenal. Early in 95/96 we all hated him for appointing Westley, but last year no-one said a word as we had a good season. Surely if people do seriously want him out they should have had a continual 6 year campaign against him. Kohler must have worked out the

pattern as well, and he knows he's in line when people get bored with slagging off Pleat/Westley/Lawrence (delete as appropriate).

The other point I'd like to make is on the issue of supporting and abusing players. Why is it that certain players, like Ian Feuer when he was here, can do no wrong and some supporters can't accept it when they play crap? Lawrence was totally right to drop Feuer and put Kelvin in as he was costing us too many points with some woeful performances. Just because he is Ian it doesn't mean he's exempt from being dropped, especially with the quality of the reserve. This quality was highlighted in the game at Grimsby, where Kelvin won us the match. I don't think you can reasonably blame Lennie for Feuer's poor form.

I've come to the conclusion that at this club it is, or has become, trendy to constantly boo and moan at the likes of Julian, Mitchell and Graham, no matter what. Yet heaven help you if you criticise Steve, or had a go at Feuer when he was here. I think all players should receive the same criticism and praise when it is due and just about think everyone managed it with Oldfield.

I know that most people won't agree with what I've written in this article, but I'm just getting a bit bored with the "Kohler out" and "this time 10 years ago...." comments. I think the sooner people start to live in the real world and accept that Luton are in Division 2, the better it will be for everyone.

C.E.O.

## BANK HOLIDAY BLUES

Once again we found ourselves playing at home in the second match of the Easter holiday — as seems to be the case every year. And once again, an awfully large percentage of Town fans wondered why we were playing the match on a Tuesday evening, rather than on the Monday afternoon like almost every other club. The reason for doing this goes back, I think, to the days of David Pleat and has been perpetuated as being the preference of the supporters. So, now you know, it's our fault. But nobody asked us, did they?

As there has been no attempt at communication on this issue, we'd like to find out what you, the supporters, really think about this. To do this we've included a question about this in the form for the end of season poll, but we would ask that even if you are not filling out the whole form, please answer this one question, and then, if the majority of you really do prefer the idea of playing home matches on Bank Holiday Monday afternoons, we might really get what we want. And you can rest assured that whatever your preference, we will communicate it to the club. Whether they will listen, we can't say, but we can try.



## SAD GITS ON TOUR

With reference to the article "Beating the away day blues" (issue 45). As well as having followed the Town these last 25 years, myself and other sad gits (including a Spireite fan) took it upon ourselves to tour the non league scene over the last few years since one of us achieved 92 club status (it wasn't me, honest). Anyway, here are some of our findings.

### Barton Rovers

Though the ground at Sharpenhoe Road may consist of bus stops on one side and one "Main stand", it can proudly boast a decent club house from which you can view the match. Also there are two food stands that outdo our beloved Kenilworth Road, by not only selling large portions, but also obscure sweets that we thought had disappeared in the 70's — and the girl is not bad either. Recently, as Lennie's team had been shit there has been an increase in Luton fans visiting the Rovers, and as I pen this we are planning an away trip to the hated Berkhamstead, which is just before the Town v Chesterfield match. Admittance is around £3.50 and programmes £1.00. Badges are about £2.50.

### Shillington FC

Were unable to field a team at all this season, so enough said there.

### Dunstable FC

Though this is 10 years ago, this was the shittiest ground ever with a scrap yard on one side of the pitch and a large hill behind one goal as well as a thorn bush obscuring the corner flag. The main stand consisted of old broken seats, and the old git at the clubhouse would not let us in — and I missed the only goal of the game when I sneezed. But this was best summed up by the club badge, the size of a plate, which said "We're on the up with Dunstable Town". The club closed down shortly after.

### Hitchin Town

Since many of you visited Hitchin last summer you will know that the original Canaries ground is one of the better grounds, unlike St Albans.

### St Albans City

What a DUMP! I recently knocked this ground off my list when I attended the St Albans v Hitchin match. The cost of a club badge here was £3.00 and the quality was piss-poor. There seem to be a lot of scummers over there and the club house is crap. This is a really depressing ground and I will stick to Barton and Luton, thank you.

Finally, beware as this obsession with the non-league scene can go far as two poor souls found out. One went off to 'do' all the non-league grounds in Scotland, the other went to 'do' non-league Rugby grounds, neither were heard of again.

*The Admiral*

## The Modern Fans

As the performances continue to get even more crap (ie: v. Bristol Rovers), I look around the Kenny End at the characters who sit there. And if the game is so entertaining that you end up having a good argument with two twats at the front who won't sit down for half a minute then you do notice a few who are quite.... well, different.

### THE PLONKERS

Specifically that bloke at the front who keeps leaping up off his seat to slag off the team at every conceivable mistake — and I mean every mistake. He has to be seen to be believed. For Christ's sake, whoever you are, why don't you just sit down and appreciate what you paid nearly £300 for — or try to at least.

### THE BLOKE WHO'S GOING TO HEAVEN

Yes, you who slags off the fans who shout abuse when the team's performance is crap. "Oh shut up and support the team", and "Oh give over, blah, blah, etc." The one who never swears and is obviously the perfect Town fan, and a role model to us all.

### THE EMPTY SEAT FAN

The very shallow fan who hands her season ticket to someone else after that defeat. It wasn't any worse for anyone else you silly woman. We'll see her again when we thump Watford one day to make us First Division Champions.

### THE FANS I CAN'T QUITE DESCRIBE

This rare breed always has something to say at each match, be it "Lawrence out", "Tits out" or "Oi Lennie, we didn't lose the second half". And it's always said when everyone is going to hear it. Respect going out to these lads who always bring a smile to my face and will never, ever, leave their seats 5 minutes before full time.

### THE NOT-REALLY LUTON FANS

These are just those improperly raised kids that are taken to a match by their daddies, and end up cheering not when the Town score a brilliant goal, but when they hear that Man United have won. Coventry, Coventry??

So, there you are — hopefully over the next few home games starting with Northampton, I will actually be more captivated by a stirring Town performance than looking at the fans around me on our way to another stuffing.

*Beaker*

## GREATEST CONTRIBUTIONS TO FOOTBALL MATCHES IN HISTORY

Number one: Alan White (Luton Town v Fulham, 24th January, 1998)

*40 seconds: Fails to mark Paul Moody, allowing the striker to get past him and score.*

*2 minutes: Stretchered off after challenge by Moody.*

*Yup, well played Alan. Great game, son.*

*The Beat*



## A DIFFERENT VIEW

*A Bournemouth fan's view of the debacle on January 31st, having read match reports on the Web and found them "honest and interesting".*

Try this perspective from a lifelong Cherries supporter.

Consider this: Luton won more than half the 50/50 balls in the middle and had the more potent front pair. Our front pair had scored 6 between them in all competitions before the Luton game.

Luton also had Steve Davis who is probably one of the better players in the division. Yet they were not as well drilled and hence lacked Bournemouth's creativity and basic footballing craft in the last third. The 1st goal came from a right back (Young) pushing up to the final third and a midfield player (Robinson) making a run from 'in' to 'out', to overlap for the cross.

They worked these patterns all afternoon. Overlaps and other 'two-on-ones' don't just happen. In short Luton had the better players, but Bournemouth were better coached.

The blend of 'push and go' with long punts from Glass was deliberately done to keep the Luton defence 'honest'. We were not supposed to score from the up and under (someone tell Harvey), it was only to push your back four back a bit, to limit the counter attack so we'd have room to play.

Consider this theory: get a good bunch of kids, no old has-beens or prima donnas, get them all used to a certain system and then if you must chop and change they will be interchangeable. What I'm saying here is that the Luton side looked a hotch-potch, albeit undoubtedly more talented.

In that context your substitution was bizarre — Luton had settled into a pattern and finished the first half well on top. Why fix what's not broken?

Now, who was at Dean Court last season when LTFC were top of the table? Luton came back from a goal down to go in ahead at the interval. In the second half Luton had a completely different shape, wholly defensive, gave up midfield and lost! A similar feat was achieved in the play-offs.

The point is painfully simple. With better coaching you wouldn't be playing Bournemouth this season, let alone losing.

Good luck for the rest of the season.

*Downloaded from the Web by The Cheshunt Moaner.*

## LENNIE LAWRENCE'S TRANSFER DEADLINE LIST

BRADLEY ALLEN	crap
RORY ALLEN	bribe David Pleat
CLIVE ALLEN	too old
ALAN SHEARER	not very good anymore
ALAN SMITH	retired
PAUL ALLEN	no comment
CHRIS ALLEN	he might be good
ALAN HANSEN	a bit old but good knowledge of the game
ALAN BRAZIL	younger than Trevor Peake
ALAN LAMB	getting a bit desperate
WOODY ALLEN	could make the end of season video
DAVE ALLEN	only got 9 fingers but could be a replacement for Feuer
ALAN WHICKER	travelled journeyman
MALCOLM ALLEN	crap
TIM ALLEN	could help build the KohlerDome
ALAN TITCHMARSH	nice jumpers
ALAN PARTRIDGE	Aha
ALAN RICKMAN	hard man
ALAN DAVIES	he was in Jonathan Creek, we're up shit creek
RAY ALLEN	Lord Charles would fit well in defence
EDGAR ALLEN POE	dead

*B. Dave B.*

## BACK ISSUES

Back issues once again available. We have sold out of issues 10, 11, 22, 24, and 35 to 37. Issue 1 is free, 2 to 34 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 (second class is 31p for one issue). Cheques payable to *Mad as a Hatter!* Please do not send cash by post as it rarely arrives.



## SCRIBES CORNER

Personally, I don't know what Lennie complains about. This management lark is a piece of piss. As you probably saw in the *Luton News* ('Lennon's Lionhearts' — nice one Dave (although I'm still making my mind up on the headline!)), our traditional Easter clash with the Watford fanzine Clap Your hands, Stamp Your Feet ended in a 3-2 win for the Bedfordshire boys.

Lawrence complains about anything and everything (but usually injuries). I didn't even have a bloody goalkeeper for my game — but I still got on with it (and we won).

So, Mr Kohler, My advice to you over the summer is Lennie OUT, Lennon IN!

=====

As I write this, it seems that we have somehow managed to avoid relegation (a win at Brentford will make it absolutely certain) — and that is thanks to mainly one man, namely Rory Allen. Even though he did come from Tottenham 'Division One' Hotspur, he's been a God send and his goals have been vital. Sadly, I can't see us signing him though — Tottenham only have to name a price above 'free transfer' and we won't be able to afford him.

=====

My mate made four rather bold predictions before the York game. 1. We would get a penalty. 2. We would win 3-0. 3. Phil Gray would replace Dwight Marshall. 4. Hearts would win their SFA Cup semi-final. I sat in amazement as all four came true (which made up for his two predictions before the Walsall game; namely that 1. Rory Allen would score the winner, and 2. he would pull twice down the Zone that night; both being wrong).

=====

I also made a prediction before the York game. I said Graham Alexander wouldn't be able to take a decent corner — and, bugger me, I was right (not that we didn't know that before anyway).

=====

Met Alan White down the Riley's Snooker Club after the York game (an evening which turned into a bit of a trick shot special!!). According to him, "of course, we're gonna fookin' do Grimsby" and "I'm gonna score another fookin' header like I did against fookin' Carlisle". Now, I admire the lad's optimism, but: (a) we never beat Grimsby, and (b) we never beat Grimsby away.

Needless to say, we won 1-0.

=====

If 3CR reckon they are 'neutral' (ie; give the same amount of coverage to Us and Them), and scum fans reckon 3CR are more biased towards the Hatters, then someone answer me this question:

Why, on February 14th — the day of the local derby — did 3CR bother asking Town fans to phone in with their views? When we got back to the car after the match, in the time it took us to travel halfway home (they moved onto Rugby commentary at this point) every caller was a

scum fan. Yeah, cheers 3CR — don't mind us whatever you do. We could at least expect 50% coverage on a local derby day. If I wanted to listen constantly to the incessant ramblings of a scummer, then I'll buy an Elton John album.

=====

Having missed it out of the report (easily done, it was bloody early on Sunday morning), the players on duty against CYHSYF on Good Friday were: Mark Araci, Keith Hayward, Colin Keeley, Angus Kinnear, Chris Lennon, Tony Masters, Carl Ripley, Daniel Ripley, Kelvin Ripley, Steve Sims, Mick Ward, Mark Wilson.

=====

I see our forgotten midfielder has had injury set-back after injury set-back this season. Paul Showler (remember him?) — the only man Darren Anderton can take the piss out of for being injured all the time.

=====

Who the hell does Murray Craig think he is? Apart from acting as PR agent for 3CR is issue 46, ha also launches an unjustified attack on the sports pages of the *Luton News*. Saying three pages on LTFC is dismal is complete crap.

Not only is the Saturday match report in the paper (with photos), but also ALL the news from LTFC, including the season's stats.

Murray seems to be forgetting a few things:

- For there to be more on LTFC there has to be more from LTFC — there is not enough news about the club to write a book every week.
- There are other sports that have to be reported on. Although LTFC is (obviously) the main interest, there are still audiences for golf, athletics and local soccer.
- The person who writes on LTFC (Dave Flett) is not employed to report solely on the Hatters. As I said in the last point, there are other sports to write about, and Dave is also required to work on the sports section of three other newspapers, Quite a lot of hard work to fit into one week, wouldn't you agree, Murray?

So, Murray, before you unjustly criticise local coverage again, think before you say anything because I'm telling you now that you couldn't do a better job.

=====

So, there are seven Luton fans in Harlow? Wrong, In four weeks time you can make that six. Yup, this is my last Scribes Corner coming from the great Essex town, as my course is ending (in time for the World Cup — brilliant) and I'm moving home (hurrah!).

Although Harlow is a bit crap, to be fair there are certain things that I'm going to miss — the Greyhound (our second home, which became a lot better in March when they got Stella Artois in), lifts home from college (cheers Jen (or 'Speedy Gonzales' as WQ called her)), free films at the cinema (cheers Phil) and..... erm, that's about it.

So, farewell Harlow and welcome back Luton....

Chris Lennon



## THE BOOK THAT I'VE WRITTEN....

Okay, so the publication of a new football book isn't going to set the literary world alight. Even a football book relating especially to the exploits of Luton Town FC isn't exactly unheard of - *The Luton Town Story* was written for the '85 centenary, was followed by a Cup exploits special after a certain match in '88, then came Kristina Howells' *A Hatter Goes Mad* and *The Definitive Luton Town FC* which both came out last year. However, I do hope that my book, *Kenilworth Sunset* (or, if the inquiry isn't published pretty damned quick, *Kenilworth Sunset?*), will be seen as different from any LTFC book before.....and, granted, that's because I chose to rip off *Fever Pitch* instead.

Even so, I don't feel that that necessarily discredits my effort. Nick Hornby's book was written as a reaction to a spate of "hooliebooks". After Hillsborough the vast majority of football supporters decided that acts of hooliganism should cease immediately. However, it wasn't long before ex-hooligans (claiming to have seen the error of their ways, like born-again Christians on death row) were writing up their bad boy experiences. *Fever Pitch* totally outshone and outsold these, but many of the new books written in its wake have gone back to the hoary old hooligan theme. The fact that publishers still decide to put out such books is sad proof that the aggro attitude is still alive.

The infamous crimes of Doug and Dinsdale Piranha were first bought to light by the Monty Python team back in the 60's. Their reign of terror (Dinsdale's most heinous crime was A-bombing Luton airport) took a turn after that when the brothers decided to become Watford hooligans instead. Thankfully, Doug and Dinsdale hung up their bovver boots a few years back and, since then, have churned out a series (the current count is three, or four) of "hooliebooks". Their stance is reputedly 'anti' hooligan - but the books are obviously just more hooligan glorification - the brothers apparently blame the authorities for everything (it's the new paranoia that finally weaned Dinsdale off Spiney Norman).

If you're not a Monty Python fan, then that last paragraph probably won't mean very much; but don't dwell on it. All that is certain is that the Piranha brothers remain very anti-Luton (or "L\*t\*n" as they put it - I couldn't bear to write "Watford" when I was eleven either), and their books have done nothing to help the already not over friendly Hatter/Hornet relations. However, looking through the books in Hammicks did leave me with the desire to write a football book about Luton Town - one that definitely wasn't based around the gangs of boys chasing each other round town centres, trading punches and then tales of terrace machismo.

Oh yes, I've seen crowd trouble whilst supporting the Town in the 80's. I accepted it then, but never took any pleasure from it. My reaction to violence was to get away from it as soon as poss'. And, whilst the recent glory days of LTFC were during the 80's, the atmosphere in football grounds in the 90's

(with a few sad exceptions, notably in South Wales) has been so much better.

Even so, it should come as no surprise that it is the old First Division days that have come out strongest in my memories. The modern day Junior Hatter can really have no idea of the teams we were beating just a few years ago - Liverpool, Manchester United, Everton, Tottenham, Arsenal, AC Milan and Watford - the Hatters beat them all. Except AC Milan. I loved it - standing in the middle of the Oak Road, shouting my head off in support of my heroes; Ricky Hill, Brian Stein, David Moss, Micky Harford, Steve Foster, groaning when Wayne Turner was named in the team. They were great times - at least at surface level. There was always the plastic pitch, the MK argument, the Luton Strikers and David Evans to keep elation in check.

In any case, the good times shine through - but I was keen not to be overly sentimental. Despite how lovely it is to remember beating Spurs 3-1 away from home, the overriding concern is what happening right now. No matter if we're safe in Division 2, or still have a fearful eye on relegation - today's match against Carlisle (if your reading this hot off the press) is by far the most important match in your mind. In almost all cases (unless you've two meaningless league matches before a big cup game or a local derby) it's always the current match, or the next match, which matters most. In order to capture the immediacy of supporting the Hatters, or any other team, I kept a game by game diary last season - you remember, the one where we nearly made it. Quite a few of the games I've forgotten since then - what was on my mind during the match against Chesterfield for example - but it's surely true that the vast majority of games are humdrum affairs that are quickly forgotten. Even so, I remember looking through my Dad's (very limited) collection of Hatters memorabilia from the late 50's, including a season ticket insert which Dave had dutifully filled in with results.... until the season turned bad and it didn't seem worthwhile anymore. I longed to know what it was like at the ground in those days. Hopefully my book will help encapsulate the 96/97 season for posterity - the hope and the heartache, Tony Thorpe's brashly over confident t-shirt and a freak aversion towards Bury. No, it wasn't a great season (even if this one has proven to be oh so much worse), but that's what it was like.

In order that the book doesn't read like a 'Decline and Fall' epic I have, rather cleverly I thought (you'll probably regard it as stupid), put the games together in a January to December format - so that a report from Jan 97 will be next to a Jan 84 entry. We've put little borders around the old bits, so you don't get confused.

And John Hegley has very kindly written an opening limerick.

Hopefully it'll be out at the beginning of next season and costs considerably less than a replica of the custard coloured obscenity that Pony had us running out for away games in this season.

Tim Kingston



# RAVING MAD!!!

Dear "Mad",  
Two thoughts as we stare into the abyss: We've had Jurgen Sommer, we've had Matthew Spring — so before we have an autumn in Division 3, do you think Lennie could buy Aron Winter?

Another thing: the futuristic KohlerDome is to have a movable pitch or something, right? Could we have it mounted on a huge turntable so if things are going badly we could rotate it and have the goals go in at the right end?

Paul Gorman,  
Edinburgh.

**TABLE 3 - SPECIAL CARE FOR ELDERLY DONKEYS**

- 1 Protect from extremes in climate, e.g. rugs, shelter
- 2 Separate from young, boisterous animals
- 3 Assess body weight frequently
- 4 Provide special diets for those with chronic liver/kidney disease and those with poor dentition
- 5 Provide deep beds, non-slip floors and flat paddocks for animals with muscular weakness and limb stiffness. Donkeys with stiff necks may be unable to self-groom and remove insects and may have difficulty reaching food and water
- 6 Groom often as may fail to shed winter coat and, therefore, be more prone to skin diseases
- 7 Provide regular dental check-ups
- 8 Approach with care as they may have poor vision
- 9 Monitor liver and kidney function by regular blood tests

**Donkeys are not hardy like native ponies. This donkey, photographed in winter, is wearing a well-fitting rug, has shelter from a thick (evergreen) hedge and is provided with hay.**



Dear "Mad",  
We printed this article in a horse magazine at the printers where I work. I posted it to Mr Lawrence in early March and since then, as you'll agree, results have improved, so if we stay up and he keeps his job, he'll owe it all to me.  
Coming soon.... tips for fat, lazy, alcoholic, Belfast born wasters from the continent. Incidentally, please slag of Simon Davies a bit more 'cause he's shite.

Jimmy Ryan's revenge or what?!

Chris,  
Dunstable.

Dear "Mad",

I expect that there other league tables out there showing Luton at the top of the league, but surely none showing us so high so late in the season — only 6 games to go. This one dates from 8th April 1987.

Dave Pearson,  
Caddington.

DIVISION I												
	P	W	D	L	F	A	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Everton .....	34	12	3	1	38	10	8	4	6	24	17	67
Liverpool .....	35	12	3	3	36	15	8	4	5	25	19	67
Luton .....	35	13	4	1	25	10	3	6	8	14	25	58
Tottenham .....	32	11	3	4	32	13	6	3	5	23	20	57
Arsenal .....	33	9	5	2	22	6	6	5	6	20	15	55
Nottingham F .....	35	10	7	1	31	12	5	3	9	24	29	55
Norwich .....	34	7	9	1	23	17	6	6	5	21	25	54
Wimbledon .....	34	9	4	4	25	16	6	3	8	19	23	52
Coventry .....	34	12	2	3	28	14	2	6	9	10	22	50
Man Utd .....	34	11	3	4	34	16	1	8	7	11	19	47
Watford .....	34	9	4	3	29	15	4	4	10	25	31	47
Q.P.R. ....	35	9	4	4	26	19	4	4	10	14	24	47
Chelsea .....	34	7	4	7	23	25	5	5	6	20	27	45
Sheff Wed .....	33	7	7	2	28	16	3	4	10	16	32	41
West Ham .....	33	7	2	7	25	25	4	6	7	19	28	41
Oxford .....	35	7	6	4	26	22	2	5	11	10	34	38
Sheffam .....	33	9	2	5	35	19	2	2	13	18	39	37
Leicester .....	35	8	5	4	24	20	2	1	15	13	45	36
Charlton .....	34	5	6	6	21	20	3	3	11	13	28	33
Newcastle .....	33	7	4	6	26	24	1	5	10	10	29	33
Aston Villa .....	35	6	7	5	20	22	1	4	12	17	45	32
Man City .....	34	6	5	5	20	17	0	8	10	7	29	31

Dear "Mad",

I, like many others, recently wrote to David Kohler expressing my concerns about our beloved club, and like many others, probably got the same reply. I was not content with this so I arranged a meeting with him and saw him and his solicitor for well over an hour and a half, in which Kohler showed me contracts of his employment, club accounts, and various other information. The point is he asked me to ask any of the fans in my area to come over for a beer, and he would answer all questions and buy the beer as well.

Upon informing all and sundry, no-one wants to take up this offer to hear his views I will gladly extend this offer to yourselves to hear his views but in case you are also not interested, I will tell you anyway.

1. The fanzine does not slag him off enough and is tame.
2. Waddock is crap.
3. He would like to get rid of Marshall and Oldfield.
4. The executive boxes should have been built on top of the old stand that was there originally.
5. He was a season ticket holder at Manchester United in the 1990 season.
6. His wages are £80,000 a year.
7. The income from fans does not cover the bills.
8. Westley, as manager, was an error, and Jim Ryan was sacked because the players did not like him.
9. He is buying a new car from his own pocket and the club car is going back.
10. He was not too keen on the paint job at his house.
11. Harford will not be manager here because he is being lined up elsewhere.

There were other statements which would be best left to David Kohler to express to anyone who wants to see him them self, like I did.

Man in a Luton shirt.

Luton.



Dear "Mad",  
What I say is:

Know your rights Mr Lawrence. What do you think of while car jamming down Hazelbury each day? 'Should I stay or should I go?' Face it, mate, if you do go it'll hardly rock the casbah and if you stay you may get caught in the red angel dragnet and taken straight to hell. Or are you there already?

Take some advice if you don't wanna get overpowered by funk. Come back from holiday with an atom tan and sign Sean Flynn from Coventry or wherever. He's a ghetto defendant for your inoculated city. And remember, death is a star, whoever he plays for.

Seriously, I think he'll stay. He has been unlucky with injuries etc, but has also been very crap at times with team selections and substitutions that defied belief. He's been here long enough to know what's what, and if we're not challenging near the top by next December, then sod continuity and sack him like we should have done last one. And get yourself a copy of Combat Rock by that popular beat combo The Clash.

Katie 'Punk Rock' Francis.



Under pressure? Lennie takes a stroll along the touchline and, strangely, no-one's shouting at him. Surely this doesn't mean he's been forgiven, does it?

## "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

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Address:.....

.....

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(\*Delete as appropriate)

Cheques payable to Mad as a Hatter!

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



# ANOTHER REFERENDUM !

OK, not really a referendum, as we're asking you to provide the answers rather than a simple yes or no. This is the annual end of season thingy where we want you to provide your opinions on the season that you have just suffered, and the individuals and events that have caused your suffering and those all too brief and infrequent moments of joy. As last year, we're providing you with a form for your voting, but you don't have to use it. If you don't want to take your copy of *Mad* apart, you can photocopy this or just use a sheet of ordinary writing paper. And, as always, any additional comments you want to make to support your nominations will be welcome.

The closing date is Saturday June 20th, after which we will have a draw of the entries from the 10 year old Wembley '88 straw boater, with the winner receiving an exciting item of leisure wear from the LTFC collection. Remember, send your completed voting forms to MAAH, 38 Twigden Court, Mount Pleasant Road, Luton, LU3 2RL.

- 1 BEST TOWN PLAYER.....
- 2 BEST YOUNG PLAYER.....
- 3 BEST TOWN PERFORMANCE.....
- 4 WORST TOWN PERFORMANCE.....
- 5 BEST TOWN GOAL.....
- 6 BEST GOAL AGAINST.....
- 7 BEST OPPONENTS.....
- 8 WORST OPPONENTS.....
- 9 GOOD REFEREE.....
- 10 WORST REFEREE.....
- 11 BEST OPPOSING PLAYER.....
- 12 WORST OPPOSING PLAYER.....
- 13 IDIOT OF THE SEASON.....
- 14 HERO OF THE SEASON.....
- 15 BEST GROUND VISITED.....
- 16 WORST GROUND VISITED.....
- 17 LOW POINT OF THE SEASON.....
- 18 HIGH POINT OF THE SEASON.....
- 19 THINGS TO LOOK FORWARD TO.....
- 20 THINGS TO DREAD.....

- 21 SHOULD BANK HOLIDAY MATCHES BE PLAYED ON MONDAY AFTERNOONS  
(AS OPPOSED TO TUESDAY EVENINGS)? .....YES/NO

And if there's anything you'd like to say about *Mad as a Hatter!*, like what we could do to improve it, whether we should double the price, that sort of thing, please feel free to mention it.



## 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?)



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

## STAYING UP?

21.03.98 TOWN 2 GRIMSBY TOWN 2

*Why, oh why, oh why, oh why.....*

Why do we only start playing when we're 2-0 down?

Why does Lawrence think fighting back to snatch a point justifies playing badly enough to be 2-0 down in the first place?

Why do we not play Steve Davis up front all the time (he's the best 'forward' we've got at the moment)?

Why do we persist with Alexander taking the corners?

Why was Davis not sent off for his foul on Lester (the resultant free kick from which Grimsby took the lead)?

Why has Fotiadis not shown the promise he did last season?

Why did Lawrence, in the post match press conference, say that Grimsby are the best side in the division (obviously they are not — they are only third)?

Why can we not beat Grimsby?

Why wasn't the new *Mad* on sale like it was supposed to be?

Why am I writing a match report in questions?

*The Beat*

PS: Touching moment of the season: Ian Feuer waving goodbye — especially when he kissed the LTFC crest on his shirt. I don't care what anybody says, Lawrence should never have dropped him (although Kelvin has done exceptionally well since). So, for the past two years service, thanks Ian — you were great.

28.03.98 FROGS 2 BRITS 3

*Down with the Deirdre*

Who says Luton can't handle pressure? This was the longest second half of my life, with Walsall lumping high balls into our box repeatedly. What is it about teams beginning with W and route one football (Walsall, Watford, Wimbledon)? With regard to the title, surely Walsall are more likely to be relegated than us.

Good performances by forward players on our side for a change, which really exposed their shambolic defence. Also, for the first time in ages we had some luck (Oldfield scoring when he was trying to control the ball). But the lasting memory of this game is that free "Bosman" foreigners who come to play in this league are only here for the money. Walsall's foreign players showed neither the commitment or skill to play in this country, and clubs who are top heavy with foreign "stars" (outside of the Premiership) are in trouble in the long run. Look at Southend as another example. In the dog-eat-dog world of our league, Frenchman Boli soon became rabid, throwing a sly punch at James when the ref's back was turned. Worse was when Tholot dived trying to get Mitch sent off, when it was clear that Mitch was nowhere near the Frog's legs. For the record, goals from Oldfield, the impressive Allen, and Marshall (from an acute angle, and how he loved it) kept up our promotion worthy away record.

*Agent Orange*



#### 04.04.98 TOWN 3 YORK CITY 0

After the welcome victory at Walsall, could we have 2 back-to-back wins? In not a particularly good first half, we finally broke the deadlock when Rory Allen's shot was parried on the line for a penalty, with the York player deservedly sent-off. I thought Rory would take the resulting pen, but up stepped Alexander who confidently put us 1-0 up. The second goal, on half time, was a peach of a shot by Oldfield, and with York down to 10 men, we should have cruised through the second half. But it was York who applied all the pressure for the first half hour — to the exasperation of us all.

Thanks to Kelvin (again) we stayed two up, and when sub Gray nodded a third, the Town players finally started to sweep the ball around with some confidence, as York surrendered.

I failed to see what the York players' problem was with the second sending off. Rory Allen fell on top of their player, who totally over-reacted. Presumably, this was in more frustration at not turning pressure into goals. Shame.

*The Thin Controller*

#### 07.04.98 GRIMSBY TOWN 0 TOWN 1

A trip to Grimsby in midweek didn't particularly stir the imagination, however, bearing in mind our precarious position in the league, the evening took on a totally different perspective.

The first strange occurrence was the smell of chips, not fish, as you approach Grimsby. The second oddity was the strange sight of what looked like Donald Duck and son prancing around the ground before the game. Be honest, it wasn't really Captain Birds Eye, was it?

On to the game: What a stirring performance, not just because we won, but the team battled for 93 minutes and deserved the victory. Why couldn't this have happened at the beginning of the season?

Kelvin produced the save of the season during the first half, keeping out a header low to his left — how did he keep it out? In fact, he's been an absolute marvel recently. And David Oldfield produced the shot of the season, which led to Rory Allen poking in the rebound off the keeper. The inevitable chants of "You only sing when you're fishing" followed. And amazingly enough the team hung on to the lead (with a last minute scare) for 40 minutes, even though 'Stevo' wasn't playing.

A brilliant gutsy performance (hope I'm not going too over the top on this), and brilliant support from all those that travelled up there.

In a nutshell, arguably the best game of the season as it practically secures our safety for next year. A cracking night!

*The Preston Hatter*

PS: Mr Lawrence, please sign Rory Allen permanently as he showed again at Walsall and Gillingham that he's both skilful and a great goal poacher.

#### 11.04.98 GILLINGHAM 2 WE'RE GETTING SOAKED 1

It's cold, it's wet, it's Gillingham — with lots of yellow coated policemen shutting

the stable door after the horse has bolted, and Luton taking their foot off the pedal after three impressive wins.

Town were not really at the races here. They gave it a bit of a go but quite frankly I don't think even I would have wanted to charge around in all that pissing rain.

The Gills number 10, the impressive Akinbiyi, should have had 5, but only got the two. Rory (please buy him!) gave us some hope by getting yet another away goal, but it was never really to be.

Let's hope that we now stuff Chesterfield, as 3 more points (with a couple of draws) should be enough to make us absolutely sure of safety. Here's hoping!

*Phil the Highbury Hatter*

#### 14.04.98 TOWN 3 CHESTERFIELD 0

*Staying up.....*

I'm concerned — very concerned. In fact, I'm more concerned now than I was a few months earlier in the season. The reason why? Well, we've just won TWO home league games IN A ROW. Is that allowed?

To be fair, for a side pushing a play-off place, Chesterfield were crap (it goes to show the mediocrity of this division). Not only were they crap, but they're a side who don't score or concede many goals — I didn't realise until I saw it on teletext that this was their heaviest defeat of the season.

I spent a whole night believing it was Marshall who had scored the opener. I thought he had — but teletext and the papers said it was an own goal. I'm still not convinced (although, quite frankly, not really that bothered).

Rory Allen nabbed the second just after half time, Oldfield hit the third and only the crossbar prevented Jules (who, as it turns out, could have been playing his last full 90 minutes in a Town shirt) from scoring a spectacular fourth.

The win was our fourth in five games, and this mini-revival has saved us from relegation (I can't see us stuffing it up now) and, unfortunately, probably saved Lawrence his job.

So, all in all, a pretty successful Easter — two wins and one defeat. There was this success, the defeat against Gillingham and, of course, the most important result of the Easter period: MAAH! 3 - 2 Scum. Come on!

*The Beat*

Just for the record: this was only our third league win at home since November (Blackpool and York being the others) and each of these have been won 3-0. Spooky.

#### 18.04.98 BRISTOL ROVERS 2 TOWN 1

Arrived at Bristol Temple Meads before opening time and eventually located a recommended pub that was actually open. A short walk up the hill to a hostelry run by the most generous landlord in the country, where our group remained until shortly before kick-off. Deposited at the 'traditional' away end entrance at the Memorial Ground just after kick off, in time to hear the Gasheads roar acclaiming



their, oh so soft, opening goal. Vociferous "persuasion" of the stewards finally persuaded them to let us through the cage to the away end with an escort, to immediately see Alexander shave a post.

Midway through a poor half the Gas doubled their advantage through another soft goal, ie. two free headers, as Tillson added to ex-Scummer Beadle's early goal, which looked to have effectively killed the game. In between, the unlucky Jules was again crocked, this time with what appeared a serious leg injury.

Rewvers decided that they would defend their two goal lead for the entire second half (why?) and when Oldfield scored with 15 minutes left they were hanging on for dear life. Better finishing and luck may have produced an equaliser, but 'twas not to be..... Fortunately, Brentford and Plymouth both lost at home. So..... on to Griffin Park.

Incidentally, in what is always a superb match programme (The Pirate) how nice it was to see our local, the Brickies, voted best away pub by Rovers London branch. Bravo Alison.

Steve F.



Fond farewells have been said this season to this man, Ian Feuer. We hope that Ian will have happier memories of LTFC than his face in this picture suggests. What is certain is that we'll not easily forget Ian, who is not only a very good 'keeper, but also a thoroughly good bloke.

## 3-2, WE BEAT THE SCUM 3-2

It is 4.28 am and we have just realised that we have missed our deadline. Bugger. However, we are not tired (or, surprisingly for a Saturday night, pissed either) so we will endeavour to stay up and write this. How's that for commitment? You see, on our journalism training course we get told meeting deadlines is very important (and so it is — Ed).

Just in case you were wondering, the duck is happy (and you still believe we're not pissed!). But in case you're really wondering (and as if the title doesn't give it away) this article is about our Good Friday fanzine football match against the scum.

The day started brightly (it didn't start raining until we got to Watford) as the team assembled at Stockwood Park to go down in convoy. However, with Jennifer behind the wheel of our car (we're talking "safe" (yeah right - CL) driver here), we sped off and lost the convoy before we even got to Junction 10A of the bloody motorway. Apparently it's impossible to drive slow with Run DMC on in the car.

Getting to Watford was fine, but our first major problem came as we were sat in the changing room (I wasn't allowed in so I stayed in the car sulking - JW):

Chris: "Right, who wants to play in goal?"

(Silence)

1: "You mean to say we haven't got a goalkeeper?"

Chris: (pausing slightly) "Yup, it looks that way."

2: Oh 'king marvellous!"

Thankfully, Angus and Keith (or 'The Cat' as he shall forever be known) volunteered to play a half each in goal. "I warn you that I'm crap in goal", said Keith. At least we were warned.

Going up for the toss, I was forced to shake hands with a scummer. Their captain said, "We all want to shake your hands for beating Grimsby." I recall my reply being two-worded, and beginning (and ending) with F (answers on a postcard). This was followed by the scum's first piece of blatant cheating. The ref (dubiously the Watford sub) gave me the coin and told the scum captain to call. The call was 'heads'. 'Heads' it was and Watford had won (not surprising seeing as they are a bunch of tossers!). Only then did they show me the coin — a double headed one. Cheating bastards.

The game kicked off, and to my delight I found my marker was, in fact, only six years old (oh, all right then, he looked like he was six) which suited me just fine (yeah, cos that's your playing ability -JW). The Town totally dominated the first period. For some dubious reason the scummer ref(s) played 55 minutes each half (I'm sure it had absolutely nothing to do with us being in front for most of the match!). Yet, for all the domination we were only one goal to the good by the interval. Colin Keeley, who for most of the



match was in direct contest with me (Chris) to see who could use the 'F' word the most in a single game of football, slid in at the far post to net a Tony Masters cross. The defence was rock solid with Angus only called upon to make one major save. However, instead of using his hands (like any normal keeper (except Andy Dibble)) Angus decided to catch the ball in the face. Still, it didn't go in, so I'm not complaining.

During half time I tried to convince Jenni (who was huddled under a broly at the touchline) to do a streak. But she was having none of it (the flimsy excuse of "it's too wet" being used!). Instead, we had to make do with Malcolm trudging across the pitch in hood, coat, waterproofs and wellies (didn't quite have the same effect, though). As manager, I did the honourable thing and brought myself off (bollocks! You were knackered -JW) although I was back on the pitch within 10 minutes as an injury to Mick Ward at right back ended his game and forced us to reshuffle.

The scum began to get on top of us at the start of the second half, and their equaliser had looked on the cards, with the shot going through The Cat and into the net. The goal that put us back in front, scored by yours truly (*what? Jenni? Ed*) was marred by controversy. The goal itself was perfect — I was put clean through, raced into the area and guided a perfectly weighted shot past the oncoming keeper (who spookily looked like Liam George) and in at the far post (although if you ask anybody else there you might get a slightly different version!).

The controversy came as Tony decided to follow the ball in. The crap linesman (assistant referee!) stuck his flag up and CYHSYF claimed offside against Tony. This was met by quite a lot of swearing from our team (and supporters - JW), in an attempt to get the ref to change his mind. I do think I helped to persuade him with my outburst, which was along the (censored) lines of:

"How the f--- can that be flagged f---ing offside when it was a f---ing shot, you f---ing ---?" I'll leave you to guess the last word. So, the ref ambled up to Tony:

Ref: "Did you touch it?"

Tony: "No"

Ref: "Right — goal"

Us: "Hurray!"

Now, we've asked Tony numerous times since and he still claims he never touched it, so it must be true.

Their second equaliser came as a result of The Cat being lobbed on his goal line, although I think Colin's outburst (aimed at The Cat) was a tad harsh. Angus Kinnear scored the winning goal for Mad. His initial shot from Daniel Ripley's cross hit the post but while 3 scum defenders and the keeper ponced around in the mud trying (badly) to clear it, Angus picked himself up off the

ground and rammed the ball home. After that we heroically held on, although we survived a late scare when the scummers hit the crossbar with a header.

Elation at the final whistle as Mad! increased their winning streak to, wait for it, 2 games (stretched out over twelve months mind you!) and, for me, victory in my first taste of football management. As 'Lennon's Lionhearts' (as the *Luton News* put it) trudged off to the changing rooms, Jenni threw her second sulk of the day and stormed back to the car after being told she still couldn't go into the changing rooms (it's not bloody fair - JW).

The nice people on the other side (who had, incidentally, just lost 3-2 to their far superior rivals) informed us they had arranged a pub — the Estcourt Tavern — for us to drink in. We approached this establishment with some trepidation — was an ambush planned for us? Thankfully no, but we were provided with chip butties, which went down a treat.

On the way back we hit traffic on the M1 (a bloody jam from junctions 6 to 10). So, when you're at a standstill on a motorway there's only one thing you can do. Yup, you guessed it — the Wham! tape came out, and fun was had all round (OK, by just two then).

The 'we beat the scum' celebration moved on to Luton town centre (it was a bank holiday — any excuse to go out on an all day session!) although numbers had dwindled. There was us two, Tony, and two others we had picked up along the way (who, for some unknown reason, didn't really get on with one another) Beverages were consumed at Pitchers, Brewery Tap and Yates', where we spent half an hour talking to a Luton steward (the one who looks like the lead singer from Space (NB: there was a common link — I'm a steward at Spurs (which involves going to a lot of games!)) - JW), who talked us into buying him a drink and when we got back from the bar he had fucked off!

The final piece of celebration was Visage in Hemel. Yeah, I know it was in Hertfordshire, but who gives a toss, because:

### 3-2, WE BEAT THE SCUM 3-2.

*Chris Lennon and Jennifer Warner*

PS: See, a whole report on the fanzine match and not even a mention of (m)any dodgy throw-ins.

PPS: It's now 6:48 am. We've sat up all night writing this. I hope you appreciate it.

PPPS: Goodnight.

### WHEN YOUR NUMBER'S UP.....

Memo to Dwight — wait until your number is shown before assuming you are the one being substituted. At Grimsby he was halfway off the pitch before he noticed that the number nine was being held up and it was David Oldfield going off.

*Howard Chandler*



## A CASE OF MISMANAGEMENT?

I have just got back from the away game at Grimsby somewhat stupefied that three back to back wins have got us out of the relegation zone. Another home win, allied to a couple of away points, should see us in almost mid-table obscurity. Three cheers — not! The fact that we have struggled throughout this season and fluked a little respectability at the fag end of the season is no cause for celebration. Our recent good run should be considered as the “Westley factor” — a situation where a couple of decent results masks the underlying trouble. Remember TW’s reign, where every time it looked like his time was up he managed to pull a result out of the hat, ie. away to Ipswich and Norwich. Had we lost one of those games perhaps he would have been replaced earlier, and the tailspin resulting in eventual relegation **may** have been avoided. This is very much the case two years later with that cheerful chappie Lennie Lawrence. The fortunate (and very temporary) arrival of Rory Allen has papered over the Kenilworth Road cracks, I believe.

I personally spoke to David Kohler just before Christmas, when our esteemed chairman told me that LL had two games to save his job. Down 2-0 at half time at home to Northampton it looked like curtains for him, but a second half fight back to share the points and the away win at Millwall, to mix metaphors, saved his bacon. I still feel that defeats in those games would, in the long term, have had a more beneficial effect on the club’s fortunes. You can guess that I do not have any confidence in Lennie’s stewardship at Luton for reasons which have been chronicled at length by many others in previous issues of *Mad*. I, for one, will **never** forgive him for his insistence on playing the shameful Bontcho Guentchev last season despite other players (even myself!) being available.

I would add a few points though; why is Alexander still taking corners when Paul McLaren has shown, on the few occasions he has taken them, that he is far superior? I digress slightly by admitting that when Macca takes a shot at goal the net is one place it will not end up — our Paul couldn’t hit the proverbial cow’s arse with a banjo! LL hastened the departure of Saint Ian of Feuer by blaming him entirely for the shortcomings of the sieve — sorry, the defence. Smiler’s judgement in spending £250,000 on Simon Davies has yet to be vindicated and his decision to retain Dick Harvey cannot be explained. The fact that Phil Gray has not been fit for selection for much of his return spell seems to be anyone’s fault except that of the manager. Added to the fact that you get the impression that his team talks are conducted in the style of the late Tony Hancock and that Lennie is world class in making excuses/being wise after the event/inventing scapegoats/possessing demotivational skill (delete where necessary please), I, for one, would be happy (!) to see him pack his bags come May.

If he were to go, then who should replace him? Sentiment and the Peoples Choice would mean the return of the prodigal son Mick Harford. I feel certain that a big Mick/John Moore partnership would be highly effective. Perhaps the addition of Ricky Hill or Andy King would result in a team to be proud of, rather than the somewhat apathetic bunch we have at present. Are you listening Mr Kohler?

Gerry Callaghan

## THE GOOD, THE BAD AND ANDY DIBBLE

Few of us will witness another season where so many players have made first team appearances. Let us reminisce about the good, the bad and the ugly that have turned out in a Luton shirt this season.

### Goalkeepers

Ian Feuer, Kelvin Davis, Andy Dibble, Nathan Abbey, Mark Gayle.

I think we were all sad to see Ian go, particularly after his heroics last year. However, we should not underestimate the quality of Kelvin Davis. His confidence has grown this year and some of the saves he made in the home match against Plymouth were world class. I have elderly relatives who would play better in goal than Andy Dibble, and they would certainly be in a better fitness condition. Nathan is a young lad who took his chance well against Colchester, while we have yet to see Mark Gayle called up.

### Defence

Steve Davis, Richard Harvey, Julian James, Marvin Johnson, Gavin McGowan, Colin Omogbehin, Darren Patterson, Trevor Peake, Bryan Small, Mitchell Thomas, Alan White.

With Graham Alexander and Sean Evers also called on to play at the back, there have been a large number of different back four combinations used. It is hard to remember a match where last year’s back four of James, Davis, Johnson and Thomas have all played together. Alan White’s arrival coupled with Darren Patterson’s return to fitness mean that Marvin Johnson’s chances look limited, despite his new found capacity for scoring goals! I had to include Colin Omogbehin although he is condemned to life in the “subs not used” list.

### Midfield

Graham Alexander, Chris Allen, Simon Davies, Sean Evers, Robert Kean, Paul McLaren, Paul Showler, Matthew Spring, Gary Waddock.

Paul McLaren and more recently Sean Evers seem to have come into their own, with a bright future ahead for both. This is probably just as well with Gary Waddock’s days looking numbered. Simon Davies has never been given a chance, nor has he proved that he should be given one. Chris Allen showed little interest in wearing the Luton shirt, while Paul Showler’s absence has been of detriment to the team. Graham Alexander has suffered from patchy form, and might spend longer in training on his corners! Matthew Spring looked impressive upon his debut, but has yet to make his long term mark on the team.

### Attackers

Rory Allen, Gary Doherty, Stuart Douglas, Andy Fotiadis, Liam George, Phil Gray, Dwight Marshall, David Oldfield, Tony Thorpe.

While Liam George, David Oldfield and Dwight Marshall have all been called into duty on the left wing, eight separate strikers have been used. Only David Oldfield’s eight goals and Tony Thorpe’s nineteen have proved to be of any note. Phil Gray has been dogged by injury, while the youngsters have shown pace, skill and promise, but little in the way of goals. Rory Allen looks good, but is really only here to get back to fitness before resuming his bid for a place at Spurs.

Ian A.



## SHORT CUTS

### DIVISION 2

1. Lennie Lawrence, Luton Town
2. Graham Taylor, Watford
3. Ian Holloway, Bristol Rovers
4. Billy Bonds, Millwall
5. Neil Warnock, Oldham Athletic
6. Nigel Worthington, Blackpool
7. Alan Little, York City
8. Ian Atkins, Northampton Town
9. Ray Wilkins, Fulham
10. Chris Waddle, Burnley
11. John Duncan, Chesterfield
12. Alvin Martin, Southend United
13. Martin Hudson, Carlisle United
14. Alan Buckley, Grimsby Town
15. Gary Peters, PNE
16. Jan Sorensen, Walsall
17. Brian Flynn, Wrexham
18. Mick Jones, Plymouth Argyle
19. Mel Machin, AFC Bournemouth
20. John Deehan, Wigan Athletic
21. Micky Adams, Brentford
22. Tony Pullis, Gillingham
23. John Ward, Bristol City
24. John Gregory, Wycombe

Lennie tops the table — but what for? Ah, of course, the ugliest manager in football. Only the *Sunday Sport* could figure that this is the “biggest talking point of the season”. Another masterpiece of serious journalism — well done chaps!



By JOHN WARBURTON  
**IT'S the biggest talking point of the season, up and down the country people are asking the question - who is the ugliest manager in football?**

panel had to consider the worst of the bad bunch and choose an overall winner from our four quarter finalists.

These were Derby's Jim Smith, Stockport County's Gary Megson, Luton Town's Lenny Lawrence, and Cardiff City's Russell Osman.

The girls really had their work to cut out to separate the ugly blokes who've topped out in their divisions.

Kerry Burton said: “It wasn't an easy decision. Any of the four would have been a worthy winner.”

Jo added: “After quite a lot of deliberation we finally came down to a straight choice between Jim Smith and Lenny Lawrence. And Jim finally came out on top because we all felt his lack of hair really helped to emphasise his worst features.”

### SHEFFIELD UTD v SWINDON

BLADES boss Nigel Spackman refuses to use injuries as an excuse for his side's alarming dip in form. Spackman has seen his side lose their last two games. He admitted: “The loss of important players **HAS** upset the balance of the team.”

### Crock-sure Spackman

Meanwhile, certain Luton managers could learn a lot from Nigel Spackman, couldn't they Mr Lawrence? (Cutting from *The Sun*)

That's one more problem for under-fire boss Lennie Lawrence, who is still wondering where his next team is coming from.

After Tuesday's Coca Cola Cup defeat at West Brom, Lawrence revealed: “We've got 28 pros at Luton and two on loan and I had 16 of them on the treatment table

“We've got 28 pros... and I had 16 of them on the table” — a line from Carry on Physio?? Ooh, Matron!

## Lawrence gang face prison if they fail to answer

Daily Mail Reporter

Some of our performances this season have been criminal, but surely this is a bit harsh?

# Well done girls!

A message from *Mad* to Watford on their promotion.

strated how much we are missing the injured people at the back.”

Davis' recovery from a back injury that saw him collapse in agony less than a fortnight ago has been described by the Hatters' manager as little less than miraculous and “more to do with witchcraft than physiotherapy.”

So, if Goodyear isn't physio next season, we'll know why — Lawrence will have burned him at the stake.

## Forwards transformed by half-time team talk

Even The Times has picked up on the inspirational and motivational team talks given by Lawrence during the interval.



# Surprised by speed of McLaren

But not by his shooting ability?

**EURO MP Eryl McNally is battling to improve Luton Town's chances of playing European football.**

UEFA, continental soccer's governing body, has said that from this season the winners of England's Coca-Cola Cup will not be allowed to enter the UEFA Cup the following year.

That would close off one of the two avenues into European competition for the Hatters. The

other is by winning the FA Cup, where they could play big foreign teams like Inter Milan and Ajax in prestigious money-spinning games.

"Eryl McNally is battling...." Yeah, apparently she's a good right winger.

"That would close off one of two avenues into European competition for the Hatters" — is the Herald & Post taking the piss?

## THE SUN SAYS

# Mad Hatter euro party

ARE YOU sitting comfortably? Then

## 10 YEARS AGO

**STEIN is the two-goal hero as Luton beat Arsenal 3-2 in the Littlewoods Cup Final.**

**Edwina Curry resigns as Health Minister over the salmonella in eggs affair and John Cleese's A Fish Called Wanda is a movie smash hit. The Pet Shop Boys are top of the pops with Heart.**

"He's sending me messages through his performances that he's just about ready," Lawrence said of the busy midfielder, "what he's got is legs which is different to the other midfielder's we've got."

So, that's our problem — we've been playing with a midfield full of amputees. And they could all take a corner better than Alexander!

## LUTON TOWN - By any other name

William Shakespeare wrote that a rose would smell just as sweet by any other name but could the same be said for our football teams. All of them have a nickname by which they are known, so this article will take a light hearted, tongue-in-cheek look at the nickname of today's opponents **LUTON TOWN**.

There are many things that can spring to mind when considering the **HATTERS** and some of them we can mention here.

**CAPS** - Well there have been a few given to their players over the years.

**BOWLERS** - This season has seen them bowled over more than they would care to mention.

**TOPPERS** - It has been some time now since they were topping anything and this season seems to continue that trend.

**BOATERS** - Those old time straw hats give us a clue to the way that they have been playing this season, blown away like straw in the wind on many occasions.

**MORTER BOARDS** - The famous hat worn by teachers of the highest quality yet that is something that they are unlikely to wear much this year.

Actually the saying "Mad as a Hatter" could describe the way they have been playing and results would seem to suggest that this is so but we need to be alert throughout the entire match because they are sure not to make it a "tea party".

David Hall

*The views expressed above are not necessarily those of Millwall Football Club*

## MILLWALL — BY THEIR OTHER NAMES

The above extract was produced in the Millwall matchday programme for our recent visit to the Den. Even with the attached disclaimer, it is a bit of a piss-take from a club with more than a few pseudonyms of their own. Here are some of them — in a light hearted, tongue in cheek, look:

**W\*nkers** — 'cause they are

**Thugs** — Just ask the police who organize the visiting fans scenic tour back to South Bermondsey station.

**West Ham supporters** — They like this one - not.

**Lion cubs** — junior thugs, sorry, supporters.

**Sarf Londoners** — 'nuff said.

Actually, the saying "No-one likes us" could be described as the understatement of the century when applied to the Den dwellers.

The Harrow Hatter

As if we couldn't emphasise it enough: 10 years ago — TEN years — we were winning the Cup. Now look where we are. Thanks Kohler.



Bring an interpreter because fresh from the programme it's:-

## STEVO

### CLUB CAPTAIN'S CORNER WITH STEVE DAVIS

It looks like it's going to be a great end of season run in for us. I'm sure that 'Parsley' has played a big part in this, linking up well with 'OAP' and 'Barrymore' up front. It's great that he's doing so well, especially with 'Tiddler' out injured and 'Lazy Cake Boy' gone to Fulham.

Hopefully, I'll pass the late fitness test and be able to play today. If I don't, I'm sure 'Donkey' will be OK to link up with 'Shite', 'Dr Octopus' and 'The Hairdresser' defending in front of 'Pob'.

Elsewhere in the team, good luck to 'Clarissa', 'Travis' and 'YTS' today, as they were all out on the piss last night and will have hangovers. If they don't do well 'Big Lezza' will kick them down the frog and toad.

On the long term injury front, we'll hopefully be welcoming 'Crockett', 'Helmet', 'The Red Baron' and 'Slaphead' back soon.

Finally, as they say in France "Nous employons une allumette pour allumer un feu. C'est pour 'Big Dozza'".

B. Dave B.

## ONE BULLET

Beginning a new series, which starts with surely the bloke we'd all love to "bop off". If somebody gave you a gun, loaded with just one bullet, who would you shoot? Here's my choice:

### No. 1 Richard Keys

You turn on Sky half an hour before the big match wanting some serious analysis of the game to come. Andy Gray normally sits there on a Monday night, and gives it to you pretty straight. Then there's the twat who sits opposite him declaring "Yeah Andy, but OUR technology proves the linesman was wrong". Stand up Richard Keys.

If he's not sucking up to the big teams, then he's sucking up to the big teams, usually in ways that have never previously been sucked. "Live and exclusive only on Sky," followed by "don't dare go away, this one really should be a cracker" are often heard from this knobber, who quite clearly has no appreciation of the game, but got paid a huge wad for reading an autocue.

In the end, he just sounds like the blokey salesman trying to sell you a vacuum cleaner.

In short then, he needs a seeing to. I bet you're all queuing up for this one....

Tony Allbones — Hormones in action



Darren Patterson has been superb since his return from injury, and fully deserves his Northern Ireland call up. A stalwart of this difficult season has been the much maligned Mitchell Thomas, seen here in action at Grimsby — after the opposition gave up and went home?





## BANK HOLIDAY NIGHTMARE

Having moved 50 miles up the M1 to Rugby 14 years ago when still at school, you have to say that the chances of later marrying into a family which has a Watford supporter as a father in law is tremendously unlikely, as well as unlucky! This, however, is exactly what happened, although up until this season I've nearly always been able to maintain the upper hand in family exchanges of banter. As you can imagine I've received plenty of stick this season, especially after the home defeat which, unfortunately, I was not present at.

And so it came to yesterday (13 April - definitely unlucky for me!). My brother in law and his fiancée who live in Bristol invited us all down to spend bank holiday Monday with them. The day was to include a trip to Ashton Gate to see Bristol City play Watford. This I was prepared to go along with as I had not been to Ashton Gate before and, despite having to watch Watford, we were sitting with the home fans so I thought I would assume the role of a City fan for the day.

Immediately prior to kick off the first distressing moment of the day occurred. Over the PA system came an announcement which always provokes much amusement around football grounds. "Mr So & so, your girlfriend has just gone into labour". As the crowd started to laugh my father in law, who hadn't been able to catch the announcement, asked me what had been said. Despite the fact that I've been in the Midlands for over half my life and my Luton accent has faded a fair bit, a Bristol City fan in front who heard me reply, turned around and asked what result we were expecting from the game! Whilst I did not wish to disclose my true allegiance for two reasons, namely:

- fear of being in the company of other unofficial Watford fans in the stand, plus
- to avoid unnecessary piss taking from the locals

I made it perfectly clear that it was a Bristol City win that I had come to see!

As the game started I began to feel this would be the end result as Watford began in their usual style — kick the ball up in the air and hope Jason "he's got a pineapple on his foot" (as the City fans sang) Lee would be able to steal a goal. Not much went their way during the first half and it was disappointing that half time arrived with the score at 0-0.

The second half did produce two goals, the first of which came from Lee and sent the Watford fans delirious and singing "We are top of the league". Just as I held my head in my hands and professed this to be my worst nightmare, City equalised. Whilst it was impossible to get as enthusiastic as I become when celebrating a Luton goal, I did manage a smile as the City fans began singing "We are top of the league" and the Watford fans fell silent!

The game ended with the somewhat predictable draw meaning that Watford had been promoted to Division One. This I thought was bad enough, however, worse was to come. As we left the impressive (by second division standards) ground, I heard that Brentford had won and, pending tonight's game against Chesterfield, we are just one point from the dreaded relegation zone.

My next, and possibly final, game to watch the Hatters this season is at Brentford on 25 April when we may well require a win to stay up. Either way, it is now clear that there will be no "M1 derby" (as Sky called it) next season. Let's hope for one of two reasons there will be one again in two years time.

That was my bank holiday nightmare — I am sure you will agree it doesn't get much worse in footballing terms (apart from seeing Luton lose), than seeing Watford attain promotion!

*Andy McCabe - Rugby Hatter*

PS: Does anybody know when the club will get hold of the 1988 Littlewoods Cup Final video?

## Literally

I'm currently reading the Kevin Keegan's autobiography and, so far, at page 258 out of 310, Luton has only had minor comments.

BUT, on page 257 there is a paragraph which brings out all of the emotions — the transfer of Darron McDonough from Luton to Newcastle for £100,000, circa 1992.

Keegan writes:

'Darron McDonough was another player I signed on scout's reports. They thought they had found a leader, and a fellow who could do the job of winning the ball and supplying it. He did not fulfill our hopes, partly because I don't think he was ever fully fit, and partly because he had some personal crisis at the time and had to keep popping back to the south to sort it out. Another problem was that he had not played enough when he joined us and badly needed match practice. We just didn't have enough games in which we could carry passengers — we had to win to stay up, and that meant being ruthless at times. Darron was not a lucky guy, and a snapped Achilles' tendon was the last straw.'

Does anyone remember Darron? Did you, like me, hold your breath the whole time the transfer deal was being negotiated because you couldn't believe our luck — someone paying £100,000 for a player who never seemed to (want to) give his all for the club (besides being totally useless)? When the deal was concluded I wanted to jump up and down with glee — we had got rid of him and for £100,000. Happy days, oh happy days.

*The Cheshunt Moaner*



## A BREAK FROM THE NORM

Whatever your opinion on Lennie Lawrence, the fact remains that he has failed at Luton Town. He inherited a team at the bottom of Division One, and his team is now at the bottom of Division Two. He has failed to save us from relegation and twice failed to achieve promotion. His tactics and substitutions continue to baffle/amaze most of us. For example, can't he see that Alexander only takes corners to the near post looking for a flick on. This works **VERY** occasionally, but still we persist with it. Lawrence is generally negative in his attitude and approach to the game. Difficult as it is to agree with a scummer, compare and contrast the tone of interviews with Lennie and Graham Taylor. Taylor is always upbeat and positive and has achieved success. Lennie is the ideal manager for the attitude and apathy that has spread through the club in recent years.....

Is it really only 10 years since that 3-2 at Wembley?

\*\*\*\*\*

Oh, what a surprise! Read in the Chesterfield programme that Paul Showler played 45 minutes in the reserves, then injured himself in training! Will he ever play again?

Phil Gray now needs an operation on his back. What a waste of £400,000 (think, we could have got 3 Barry Hayles' for that). It's interesting that Northampton paid 10% of that fee for David Seal. Result, this season Seal has 13 goals, Gray 2 goals.

\*\*\*\*\*

Wasn't it strange to actually win at Grimsby after our recent record at Blundell Park. And strange that it wasn't freezing and bleak in Cleethorpes. It was a bit disappointing not to face a gale blowing across the pitch.

\*\*\*\*\*

W\*tf\*rd's promotion is hard to take, but I had to suffer worse than most. Living and working in Hertfordshire, I'm surrounded by Hornets (strangely quiet last season). Anyway, without a game on Easter Monday, I volunteered to work. So did 3 Hornets. Outnumbering me, they decided they wanted to listen to their team going up. Therefore I was forced to listen to the whole 'glorious' 90 minutes on 3CR. Talk about rubbing salt into the wound.

Message to David 'Hertfordshire' Croft on Radio Bedfordshire (*sic*). Watford do not belong in the Premiership or Division One as you keep suggesting. They have only spent a few seasons in the top flight, and historically belong in the old Division Three.

\*\*\*\*\*

So, the season is almost finished and we're almost safe. The close season, with the World Cup and pre-season friendlies is virtually non-existent. Still, it gives me a chance to allow my bank balance to go back into the black and regain my optimism. Traditionally, I'm glad of the season's end but start getting withdrawal symptoms sometime in June..... Happy summer!

Norm

## JUST A RUMOUR?

Picture the scene. It's transfer deadline day, Thursday March 26th. The location is Luton Town's Kenilworth Road stadium. In the bowels of the stadium is the manager's office, where Lennie Lawrence and David Kohler are trying to think of a striker who could be signed on loan to score some goals and save the club from relegation. Bradley Allen, the preferred option, has been ruled out, as has his Charlton Athletic team-mate Steve Jones. Lennie's famed list of strikers is now in the bin as none of them are available. Meanwhile, Wayne Turner is calling in at the club to collect his severance cheque after being sacked/released earlier in the season. He is asked to call in at the manager's office and on arrival is asked if he knows of any strikers that might be available on loan. His answer (not something along the lines of "Yeah, there's this bloke at.....") should not come as a surprise.

Could this really happen? We may never know, but I'm sure it didn't. But it would be a bit worrying if it had. Meanwhile, we'd better thank Lord Pleat of White Hart Lane for having more idea than our management, and getting Rory Allen to Kenilworth Road.

K.F.H.

## IS GRIMSBY GRIM?

Well, not now if you look at the football side of things. A fierce Oldfield volley saved, but followed in by our Rory (let's buy him!), coupled with a Kelvin save from point blank range header that was the best I have seen in nearly 30 years of watching football (and yes, that does include Gordon Banks against Brazil).

But what about Grimsby itself — Cleethorpes to be accurate, because that's where the ground is. I know it sounds naff, but it all depends on the weather, you see. With a little sun and a few healthy swirling clouds, the Humber becomes a bracing, dramatic example of our great north eastern coastline and it's inlets. The docks and assorted fish factories become really quaint. Oh, to be in Grimsby!

However, as on the aforementioned Tuesday (that of our 1-0 win) when it is grey, and then grey changing to more grey accompanied by drizzle and cold winds, the docks and all the fish factories get magically transformed back into a dump. The Humber, with it's previously impressive big ships, begins to resemble the dirty, grim Thames estuary on a bad day, leaving you to cross a rickety old iron bridge over the railway line to visit a fairly ordinary football ground.

So, is Grimsby grim? Well, 4 points out of 6 against one of the best teams in this rather dull division probably tips the balance in favour of a no answer.

2-1 down, 3-2 up — Highbury Hatter



## WHAT HAPPENS WHEN YOU GET BORED?

I got bored one night so went through the TV pages in the papers looking for film titles appropriate for Luton Town.

\* **9.0 CLUELESS.** (1995) Sky Screen 1.  
21.00-22.35 See Film Choice. 61537208

Lennie Lawrence in starring role.

Our defence under the spotlight.

**3.05 FILM: Slapstick** (1981) Compilation  
of silent movie comedies

**6.00 AS GOOD AS DEAD** (PG, 1995) Judge  
Rainhold, Traci Lords, Crystal Barendse

A docu-drama about Paul Showler.

The prequel to the film about the Watford team "Eleven Donkeys".

for exciting ★★ 38279  
**9.00 TWELVE MONKEYS**  
(1995) Bruce Willis is

**12.10 FILM: Ooh You Are Awful** (1972)

The team's performance under critical analysis.

No other reason for this one being included other than that it stars Liz Hurley — which is good enough for me!

**2.40 MAD DOGS AND ENGLISHMEN** (1995)  
Elizabeth Hurley as

**11.55 SATISFACTION** (Not for kids,  
Bateson, Julia Roberts, D

Fantasy film; a look at Luton Town fans.

Definitely a spoof.

**10.30 FILM: Magic Town** (1947)

**10.00 GOING UNDER**

Fact based drama charting what happens to Luton in the next 5 years, while Kohler remains at the helm.

1968) Frank Sinatra. Mystery. 7276940  
**1.35 THE ST VALENTINE'S DAY MAS-  
SACRE** (Not for kids, 1967) 7136105

A film sadly cancelled due to a 1-1 draw.

Haven't got a clue what this is about — but it sounds rather daunting.

**MARVIN'S ROOM (12):** Have the tissues ready for this heart-breaking

hands of a vicious rapist. 700110  
**4.25-6am WILLY FOGG: 20,000  
LEAGUES UNDER THE SEA** (U) Animated

And this is about the division we'll be playing in a few years time.

The Beat

## Luton Town

Liam Madden reckons The Hatters can live up to their hype...

**Player To Watch:** We're hoping for 30-plus goals again from Tony Thorpe, but the Premiership scavengers are circling. If he goes, we've got high hopes for Liam George who's scored bags of goals for the reserves and the youth team

**Manager:** Lennie Lawrence 10/10 — the ideal manager for a small club like Town. Aspires to play passing football on a tight budget and with home-grown talent

**Chairman:** David Kohler 8/10 — has slowly won the supporters over as reality has kicked in (i.e. he's not Jack Walker and we're not on top of any millionaire's shopping list). Approachable and speaks his mind

**Kit Sponsor:** Universal Salvage Auctions

**Style Of Play:** Goals 'R' Us — we play an open game, sometimes passing it too much, but we're never direct. Trouble is, you have to be good at it in a division where decent football isn't the norm. Good to see Crewe getting promoted playing the right way, even if it was at our expense

**Celebrity Fans:** Nick Owen and the late, great Eric Morecambe

**Mascot:** A cheerful fella called Harry, inspired by 1970s Luton boss 'Happy' Harry Haslam

**Top Local Boozer:** The Newt And Cucumber along Upper George Street

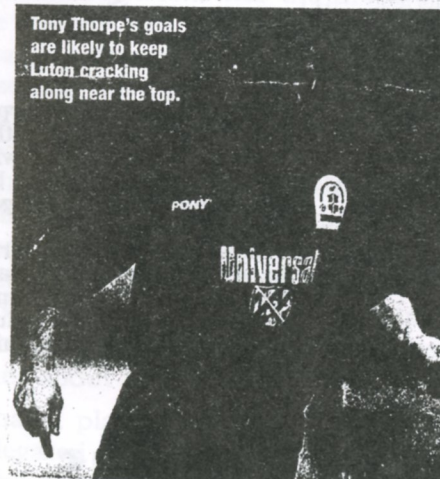
**Expectations:** Judging by last season, the teams in this division are poor (although that could be a culture shock after 10 years at the top). We'll find it harder now that we're favourites for the Championship, but about the only thing that's certain is we'll be sweating on promotion come the last day of the season. It's a long-standing Luton tradition

**Fan's Prediction:** Champions (it's hostage to fortune time)

**TF's Prediction:** Champions

**Title Odds:** 6/1

Tony Thorpe's goals are likely to keep Luton cracking along near the top.



## SHORT CUTS

Not sure which of the football mags this came from, but we're willing to bet that Liam Madden might have had second thoughts by now. Lennie 10/10? Interesting to note that the Newt & Cucumber has relocated.

**GRAHAM TAYLOR** is hoping the return of key players will kick-start **WATFORD'S** faltering promotion push. **Watford** were held to a 1-1 draw by arch-rivals **LUTON** at Vicarage Road and Taylor knows his side need more firepower to seal automatic promotion. He said: "We've been badly hit by injuries to our flair players but we have **Alon Hazan** and **Ronnie Rosenthal** coming back next week and it was pleasing to see **Stuart Slater** back after being out of action for four months."

Looks like Turnip Taylor is going the same way as Pleaty when it comes to waffle. The cutting above could be a misprint, because the word flair has so rarely been associated with Watford. But can anyone figure what he's on about below?

■ **GRAHAM TAYLOR**, assessing his team's 1-1 draw with Southend in the **Watford Observer**: "What I haven't said, and I don't intend to, but it is worth mentioning nevertheless, is some of the knocks and injuries we are getting are beginning to take their toll."





## Club call Luton Town

**Ground** Kenilworth Road  
**Capacity** 10,000

**Travel bug** Luton have been trying to leave their ground for decades. The two most recent pushes have been the unpopular efforts of the former chairman David Evans to move the club to Milton Keynes in the mid-Eighties, and the Kohlerdome.

**Dome home** The dome, modestly named after the chairman, David Kohler, is planned as a 20,000 indoor arena near the M1 with a removable grass pitch. Permission to build it is still awaited.

**Roof appeal** The club's rationale for the roof, put to a public inquiry in 1996 began: "The climate in northern Europe is such that the weather cannot be guaranteed."

**Ten-year itch** Things happen to Luton at the end of the decade. In 1959 they reached the FA Cup final. In 1968 they left the Fourth Division for the last time. In 1978 David Pleat became manager for the first time. In 1988 they won the Littlewoods Cup and got to the FA Cup semi. In 1998 they are in danger of returning to the league's basement — their 0-0 draw at home to Wycombe on Satur-

day sparked a protest from disgruntled supporters.

**Crazy antics** The fates have dealt differing hands to the heroes of Luton's 1-0 win at Maine

Road which staved off relegation in 1983 and inspired that famous jig from Pleat (above centre). The goalscorer Raddy Antic (left) is in charge of Atletico Madrid, while Brian Horton (right) has taken over at hapless Brighton.

**Odd past** The popular American goalkeeper Ian Feuer began his career with the Los Angeles Salsa.

**Odder future** Town's Danish striker Lars Elstrup left the game in 1992 to join the Wild Goose Company cult, changing his name to Darando.

**Lounge lore** The club's range of celebrity fans is spanned by the bars named after them: the Eric Morecambe Lounge and the Nick Owen Lounge.

**Happy returns** Town exerts an uncanny pull on former favourites. Those who have come back recently include

John Moore, Clive Goodyear, Brian Stein, Mick Harford, David Oldfield, Mitchell Thomas and Pleat himself. **Happy Harry** Rumours that Town's straw boater-wearing mascot, Happy Harry the Hatter, is modelled on former manager Harry Haslam are totally unfounded.

This piece came from *The Guardian* a few weeks back. Oddly, we can't find a thing to take them to task on.

## I thought it was all my fault

Things they never said:  
Lennie Lawrence!

**LUTON** striker Tony Thorpe, who scored a hat-trick in the 3-0 win over Blackpool, will leave Kenilworth Road by the summer says manager Lennie Lawrence.

"If he maintains that form he should score 25-30 goals this season and we won't stand in his way if a big club come in for him," said Lawrence.

And things they not only said, but got right. Again, Lennie.

## Dome truths

**THAT damned Dome has disaster written all over it.**

The creative director quits with

## KINGSLEY, WHAT'S THE SCORE?

There have been very few moments this season when I've been prompted to write to *MAAH*, other than to express my immense disappointment at the way our side's performances have gone, or to mention my absolute disgust at Tony Thorpe's premature sale for peanuts to naff moneybags Fulham. The questions were asked over and over again, condemning David Kohler's appalling administration and wondering why he didn't go for at least £1.5 million and why, crucially, we couldn't hang on to him for just a little longer to see us through an incredibly important time for the club, in many more ways than one.

However, I'm not writing to have a pop at Kohler, Lawrence, etc. It's high time our loyal fans read some positive remarks instead of depressing drivel that we already know (even though this depressing drivel is very valid).

April 7th, 1998, 7.45 pm — Grimsby Town at Blundell Park. The fact that we might win here did not even enter my mind as our sluggish, twisting drive ambled through outpost Lincolnshire hamlets. The 7-1 thrashing in a cup game a few years ago, coupled with numerous forgettable league defeats led me to believe that a win in Cleethorpes would be nothing short of a miracle. Before I go any further, I'd like to thank the big bloke (Luton fan) who dished us a couple of free tickets as we legged it towards the away end. £12 is quite a save in this day and age.

The game itself started brightly with Luton passing in triangles quite convincingly. This was the first game this season when I can truthfully say we looked like we actually had a midfield. My perceptions of Grimsby changed dramatically as the game progressed. In truth, they were unlucky to lose but, having said this, Luton had equal chances which were missed. If it hadn't been for heroic goalkeeping by Kelvin Davis it would certainly have been a draw or worse. Grimsby looked slick up front and, at times, played some very impressive passing football. In fact this whole game was a good exhibition of football and the Grimsby fans must have wondered what Luton were doing in such a precarious league position. Our defence looked very solid, even without Stevo. David Oldfield had another excellent game and looks very convincing when running at players — he has the skill and pace to beat many second division defences and he must keep doing this. But a few lines about Rory Allen are essential.

What a player! My God, 4 or 5 games ago we really looked like we'd be relegated for the simple reason that we didn't have a tall goalscoring centre forward. Since his arrival I've been amazed at the new shape he's given to the whole side and it is a real novelty to see a Luton head winning headers up front. He looks a class act, has a brilliant touch and great positional awareness. Frankly, he looks massively out of place in Division Two, but I

Domes, disaster; Perhaps our "creative director" should quit. David Kohler — MD without Portfolio and money.



don't care, and neither should any Town fan because, come May, I think we'll be taking our hats off to him and drooling thanks for saving our bacon. He took his goal very well after Oldfield had hit a thunderous volley from just outside the box, which the keeper could only get a hand to. He composed himself and picked his spot, knowing that he had time. How many times in recent seasons out of the top flight have we seen Town players in similar positions eight yards out with just the keeper to beat, only to spoon it over the bar after needlessly snatching at it? A few words must also be spared for Dwight Marshall who has struggled to regain a first team place after his horrific injury at Sunderland.

I was disappointed by a fan who wrote in issue 46, that we should stop worshipping him, insisting that he deserves no praise whatsoever. I pity the person for saying that. Marshall's heart is always in the game and he made some superb runs against Grimsby, not to mention his superb solo goal against Walsall a couple of weeks earlier. Yes, he's lost some pace but he's still a threat, his confidence has been knocked but he's bounced back. Some of us have short memories. Before his injury at Roker Park, he was very sharp and scored many quality goals including, ironically enough, against Grimsby at home when we won 3-2 and he scored twice. So a big two fingers to the Dwight Marshall critic mob, because myself and my friends will be chanting his name before, during and after games, and we've all got exceptionally loud voices. Even now, he's too good for most of the defences we encounter nowadays. If he ever looks below par, it's usually because he's being elbowed and kicked off the ball by donkeys who can't deal with him in any other way, and the referees never see it and even if they do they usually let it go because it's becoming a way of life in the lower divisions etc, etc, etc....

Now, I'm straying from my original point of writing. Grimsby was definitely the most enjoyable and worthwhile away game of the season.

*James Cook*

## RADIO DAZE

On 3CR Radio Herts on Tuesday March 3, David 'Excellent stuff' (apparently he keeps saying that!) Croft was doing another of the football phone-ins.

Lisa, from Bedford (guess what - a scum fan like all the other callers to the station) was in the process of chatting up Croftie and talking about her "wonderful" side, when she said:

"It's nice to see success down here again."

Sorry, but run that one by me again. What the 'kin' hell do you mean AGAIN? When was success with your the first time?

*The Beat*

## WHAT HAPPENED WHEN WE PLAYED COLCHESTER?

### (Nothing Really!)

A lot of people have trouble remembering past matches. The following is an aide memoire for all of this season's matches. Very few of them were memorable for more than one or two things. The last three games I had to predict.

Southend	Goodbye Ian	Blackpool	Here we go again
Colchester	Hello Nathan	Colchester	Sunny evening
Oldham	Showier's back	Fulham	Pre-Harrods Fulham
Millwall	Fortress Kenilworth crumbles	Northampton	Hello Bryan Small
WBA (CCC)	Hero of 1988 returns	Bournemouth	Only 7 minutes left - oh no!
Wrexham	Oh Andy!	WBA (CCC)	Defeat with honour
Watford	10 years - it only took	Bristol City	6 players under 21
Plymouth	Spring arrives - and leaves	Wigan	Never a penalty
Brentford	The corner is turned	Carlisle	One Alan White, there's only.....
Burnley	Alexander's free kicks	Wycombe	Two equalisers
Preston	Inept	York	Chris Allen - he's a bit good
Torquay	Free Saturday on Dec 6	Chesterfield	No fog, but nothing to see
Walsall	Four in a row	Millwall	Just be patient - we will score
Gillingham	Bundle, bundle!	Southend	Three points, but no sun
Bristol Rovers	Welcome back Darren	Oldham	Oh no, it's a corner!
Northampton	Good 20 minutes	Fulham (AWS)	Thorpe - they liked him
Blackpool	One Tony Thorpe, there's only...	Wrexham	Stevo has scored - yawn
Brentford (AWS)	"Wembley, Wembley..."	Watford	Goodbye Tony
Fulham	Post-Harrods Fulham	Bournemouth (AWS)	Stupid competition
Bournemouth	Marv the goal machine	Plymouth	Goal makes Foti sick
Bristol City	Chris Allen - thanks for the effort	Preston	Best 45 minutes of the season
Wigan	Skippy got angry and scored	Burnley	Spider strikes
Wycombe	Came for 1, nearly got all 3	Walsall	Rory, Rory!
Grimsby	Best team in Division	Grimsby	Man of the match? All of 'em
York	Penalty at last	Gillingham	Longest minute's silence ever
Chesterfield	Another routine home win	Bristol Rovers	Nice pasties
Carlisle	Rory say goodbye with hat-trick	Brentford	Relegation fears ended

*Howard Chandler*

## SING WHEN YOU'RE.....

Are we the only team that has fans singing the merits of the coach firm that they used to get to the match? At Grimsby, the talk was not of the respective merits of Kelvin and Ian, or whether Rory Allen is better than Tony Thorpe. Instead it was whether Shorey or Buffalo was the coach firm to be seen using. As a car driving neutral I enjoyed the banter.

*Howard Chandler*



# William HILL HatterLeague

## The Final Update

The competition is over, with Bristol Rovers away being the 37th and final match. Sadly, this had no bearing on the results, and it is time to declare the winner of the competition, none other than Dave Pearson with his Derbyshire 1968 team (presumably a veiled reference to the great Ian Buxton). Dave won the last Manager of the Issue award, which only helped to consolidate his lead. Dave will be receiving a £50 free bet voucher from our fine sponsors, William Hill. Second place, and a £25 bet, goes to David Trillwood who has been there or thereabouts all season, and third place with its £15 bet is awarded to Martin Blake whose team has finally found a name. Congratulations to all of you, and the very best of luck with your bets. Here are the players scores for the season (and who would have thought that Oldfield and Alexander would be the top scoring players):

Code	Player	£	Pts	Code	Player	£	Pts
<u>Goalkeepers</u>							
201	Ian Feuer	0.9 m	-22	203	Nathan Abbey	0.3 m	-37
202	Kelvin Davis	0.3 m	31				
<u>Defenders</u>							
211	Gavin McGowan	0.4 m	-42	215	Darren Patterson	0.6 m	3
212	Julian James	0.4 m	9	216	Mitchell Thomas	0.4 m	33
213	Marvin Johnson	0.5 m	-28	217	Richard Harvey	0.3 m	-38
214	Steve Davis	0.8 m	67	218	Alan White	0.5 m	11
<u>Midfielders</u>							
221	Graham Alexander	0.7 m	81	224	Sean Evers	0.3 m	32
222	Gary Waddock	0.6 m	36	225	Simon Davies	0.4 m	6
223	Paul McLaren	0.5 m	55	226	Paul Showler	0.5 m	0
<u>Strikers</u>							
231	Tony Thorpe	1.0 m	67	235	Stuart Douglas	0.5 m	3
232	David Oldfield	0.7 m	82	236	Liam George	0.2 m	1
233	Dwight Marshall	0.5 m	16	237	Kim Grant	0.2 m	0
234	Andrew Fotiadis	0.8 m	5	238	Phil Gray	0.8 m	12

So, to the final placings (incidentally, the editor, with his team "Inside Information", secured a glorious 63rd place with 35 points!):

Pos	Team Name	Manager	Pts
1	DERBYSHIRE 1968	Dave Pearson	261
2	THAMESLINKHATTERS	David Trillwood	253
3	MARVIN'S TESTIMONIAL SIDE	Martin Blake	237
4	LUCKY DIP	Daniel Bennett	228
5	LUTON 3 ARSENAL 2	Steve Lindsay	201
6=	THE FELCHING FIVE	Gerry Callaghan	198
6=	KOHLER DROMETOWN	Lozz Pitcher	198
6=	CAMDENTOWNERS	David Hylden	198

At the opposite, or wrong, end of the table Maxine Whiting made a late recovery to close the gap from 18 points to only 5 — a good try, but not quite enough, to leave the bottom place open to someone else — a bit like Doncaster winning their last two games of the season!

73	SIT UPS
74	HATTERS UNITED
75	PLAY HARRY THE HATTER
76	THE ONLY WAY IS UP FC 97
77	DAN'S DUFFERS
78	HARRY HASLAM LEGS ELEVEN

C. P. Robson	5
Ryszard Buczynski	-8
A. Griffiths	-10
Patrick Sammon	-18
Daniel Ripley	-21
Maxine Whiting	-26

Finally, the editor would like to thank Russell Bulkeley for running the HatterLeague again this season, and doing such a fine job. Also, special thanks to Dave Flett of the Luton News for his assistance during the season. Dave provides the definitive information on appearances and goals and assists, and saves the rest of us endless arguments. Thanks also to Chris Lennon for devising the competition, and Graham Sharpe at William Hill for providing prizes. I expect that we will be back in August with a new competition for next season, and that Chris is devising new twists even as I write this.

KFH/RB

## To T or not TT?

At the time of writing, when it looks like we're staying up, it appears we're a better side without Tony Thorpe. Is this a coincidence or not? As someone wrote two issues back: footballing genius or lazy sod?

More than twice as many goals as anyone else is a very hard fact. He probably had a better season than last year when you think that almost a third of his 31 goals then were penalties. This year he/we didn't get even one spot kick, which in itself is a big argument against him. A tricky little bloke like that should be in the area far more often and a certain amount of fouls are inevitable.

Perhaps he didn't get enough service or help from midfield? Or could it be they had buggers all to aim at? His departure pretty much coincided with Waddock playing less often which makes it hard to judge on that, but the midfield is much better now, and a centre forward like Gray or Allen running into gaps instead of waiting for the ball is a massive help. Gray is much maligned but I think given fitness, he'll get goals in this division, and work hard to boot. Allen's great but temporary.

I don't want to slate him too much, after all I cheered him often enough and he's better than me (probably). But it is a cruel world we live in and he always looked a bit slow/unfit/overweight/lazy. I can't see him getting in the Fulham side past Peschisolido and Moody, and his lack of pace means he'll never make it at the top.

So, assuming we stay up and do much better next year it might not look such a bad deal after all. There's several young forwards coming through who look promising but have yet to prove they can get goals. Let's hope they learn from the good bits of Mr Thorpe's game, which were legion.

Black Belt Jones



## The Sharpe End

Looking at the Second Division table in a more optimistic mood after the 3-0 home victory over Chesterfield, it was thought provoking to observe alongside us none other than Oldham who, after looking like making the play-offs for the majority of the season, had suddenly gone into freefall. I commented as much to a good friend of mine who also happens to be an Oldham fan, and who used to write about them for the national papers, so has a few contacts at the club.

We reminisced about the semi-finals of the FA Cup just a few short years ago and wondered just how the two sides, who could have filled Wembley for the Cup Final that recently, could suddenly come to find themselves poised above the trapdoor for Division Three.

"No one cares at Oldham anymore," said my friend, "they don't want to play, he doesn't want to manage and no-one wants to watch them. It's a minor tragedy, but no-one seems to care."

That reminded me of what Steve Claridge has said about Luton in his *Tales From The Boot Camps* book, that they were a team which had got used to losing. One can only wonder what effect being beaten First Division semi-finalists this season may ultimately have on Sheffield United and Wolves, although these two start with a major advantage over Oldham and Luton — their much larger fan base which assures them a decent regular income to invest in their clubs.

When you don't have that you have to rely on selling players, as we know only too well, and on buying well but cheaply, about which we don't seem to know a great deal — with the honourable exception of Alan White. I suppose it is possible that we could buy well and cheaply by bringing Rory Allen to Kenilworth Road on a permanent basis, but that is something of a long shot given his obvious potential and class, and probable long-term importance to Spurs — particularly if they were to go down, which was uncertain at time of writing.

And who gets the credit for bringing Rory to Luton? I imagine it must be David Pleat — because Lennie Lawrence said, on radio, that Pleat had recommended Allen when he was scrambling around for a striker just prior to deadline day.

But, in the same vein, I think we can absolve Lennie for the Phil Gray fiasco, a deal which I would have thought was inspired by one D. Kohler. No excuses for L.L. over Simon Davies though. That's his deal, without doubt. Simon has recently been about as high profile as Salman Rushdie after the fatwah was declared.

Has he lost the ability to kick a football? Has he had a leg amputated? How can a player good enough to appear for Manchester United in European competition not be able to cope with life in Division Two?

I met Alex Ferguson on a television programme on which we were both appearing recently, and he was very positive about his former employee. "He's got a good engine and he'll get up and down the pitch all day," he said. He didn't respond to

my comment that he also has as good a right foot as Ricky Otto, but then plenty of players are overwhelmingly one-footed. Alex did make one interesting observation about Davies, which for reasons of confidentiality cannot be repeated here, but it wasn't one which would explain his current plight. Perhaps he'll come good next season.

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Will Lennie still be in charge next term? Obviously if we're relegated he won't be. If we're not I would imagine he's a certainty.

If he did or does go, who would come in? It would have to be someone newsworthy as at Third Division level it would be the only prospect of getting anything written about the club by the national media — and at that level it would be worth experimenting with Mick Harford, although you'd have to be prepared for a complete change of footballing style, I'd have thought.

As for the players, who's going to be around and who'll be on their way? Once again the difference between Divisions Two and Three could be the crucial factor. For my part, I'd not be unhappy to wave goodbye to the exasperating Graham Alexander, surely the least reliable dead-ball or set-piece specialist around, who even seems incapable of taking consistent corners. Mitchell is past his best (assuming he had one), Marvin has been a great servant but is never going to improve, Dwight Marshall is sadly not the player he was while Gary Waddock has been one of my favourites but is hardly likely to be voted Best Young Prospect.

I think that the two full-back positions are the most problematical, closely followed by the central striking role if Rory roars off.

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Now a question or two for Mr Kohler. Why, would you say, should I renew my season tickets next season? No doubt you'll be putting up the prices or, at the very least, not reducing them. And in return, what improvements will I get?

Will you finally get rid of that bloody floodlight pylon which obstructs the view from the new stand, and which you pledged to remove when it was opened? Will you offer concessionary rates to season ticket holders for Coca Cola and/or FA Cup games? Or even give free entry to early round Auto Windscreen games?

No, I thought not.

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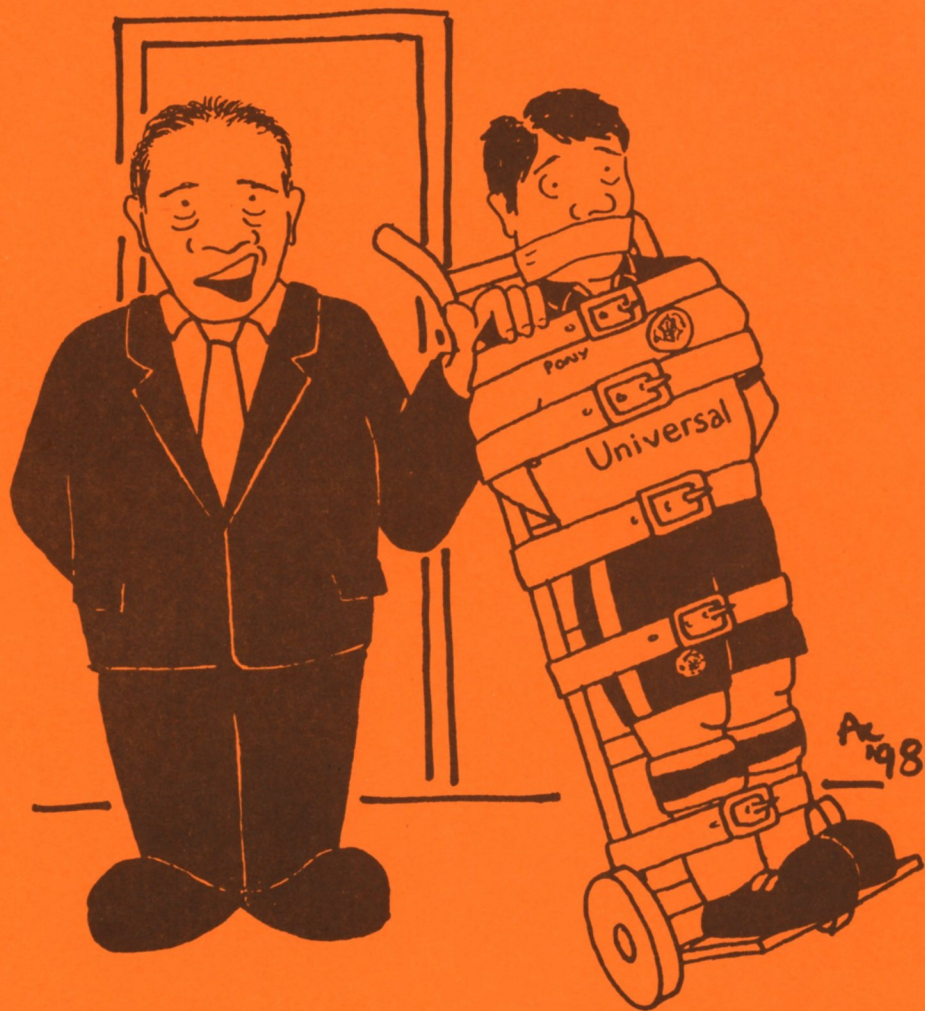
Finally, a quick warning to Nick Owen not to consider giving up his TV career to become a professional gambler.

Nick entrusted me with his family's Grand National wagers — managing only a second place from no fewer than six selections. Having said that, he fared better than I did — mine fell at the first.

Enjoy the close season.

Graham Sharpe





"We'll be doing all we can to ensure that Rory stays next season."