

MAD AS A FLATTER!

THE LUTON TOWN FANZINE

Issue 51

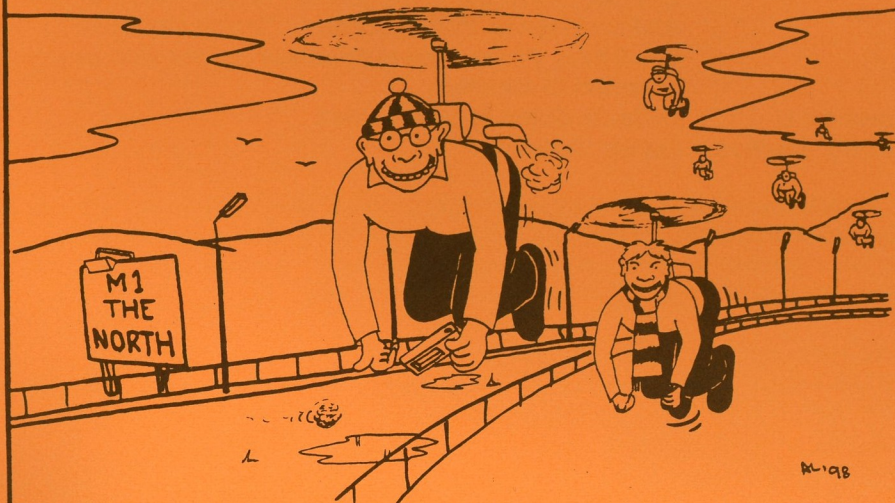
Dec 98

STILL ONLY 60P



PRESCOTT DECISION: DAFT?

Mr Prescott feared that the KohlerDome would bring increased congestion on the M1 from visiting teams' supporters:



How the @#!* do you think they get here now, John?

MAD AS A HATTER!

THE LUTON TOWN FANZINE



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EDITORIAL

With this issue coming out just before Christmas, you may have expected a seasonal special. Well, if you did, you'd be wrong. The planning section of *Mad as a Hatter!* is nowhere near good enough to organise something like that, so you're just getting the same old stuff as usual. Instead, we'll hope that what makes Christmas special is the performances of the team over the next few games.

Speaking of performances, the last few haven't been that clever, aside from the heroic performance at the Stadium of Light which, it seems, will be drawing compliments from Sunderland supporters for some time to come. Otherwise, it looks like the team have been suffering a huge hangover from too much celebrating after the cup successes (I speak with some authority on that subject as an ex-Sunday footballer!). Either that, or the youngsters who so invigorated the start to the season have become tired and jaded, and if that's the case we're in trouble as far as a promotion challenge is concerned.

Not having won in the league for two months sounds awful, but in that time we've only had five matches, which is not so bad. However, we cannot afford a similar run of results again this season now that the only cup we are involved in is the Auto Windscreen Wipers thingy.

With exits from both cups, attention turns not to the league, as it should, but to concerns about which player(s) will now be sold to keep the finances on an even keel, and how badly it will upset the balance of the team. If we are realistic then some of our younger players are our most saleable assets as they are the individuals most likely to develop into top class players. In a strange sort of way, they are also the ones we can probably most afford to lose, not that we can really afford to lose anyone. But when it comes down to it, whoever is sold and when they are sold will be decided not by David Kohler and Lennie Lawrence, but by whichever lunatic turns up on the doorstep waving large amounts of money around and what it is they want to buy. I believe that our board are shrewd enough to get the best deal they can for the club and, crucially, for the team in the circumstances they have to operate in. Of course, I accept that is not the sort of thing a fan is supposed to say, but that's the way I see things.

I'd like to tell you how excited we all were when we heard the draw for the AWS. Walsall at home gives us a great chance..... of playing in front of an almost empty ground. Yup. That excited.

Finally, I would like to wish all readers, contributors and Luton Town players a very happy Christmas, and a successful and prosperous New Year. Thanks to everybody who has sent something in for this issue enabling me to produce this a mere three weeks after issue 50 — I wasn't convinced it could be done, but you've proved me wrong. It's now a clear 8 weeks until issue 52 arrives, so I can have a bit of a break, before having to fill this page again.

POST SUNDERLAND HOMESICK BLUES

It wasn't the fact that we'd lost. It wasn't that we'd come so far, in the cup and in the car. It wasn't that we didn't play well; we defended doggedly, especially after Thomas was sent off, but had nothing in midfield or attack. We weren't particularly put off by Sunderland's late brace which finally put the result beyond question (we had been hoping, before then, that the compliment of Marvin's own goal would be returned at one of our second half corners). We stayed behind and applauded the team off - they could have made more of an effort to show their appreciation of a fine Town following, but they were quite possibly both physically and emotionally shattered. Fair play to them, the lads done good in getting us this far.

No, what upset me was the fact that the 1998/99 Worthington Cup campaign was merely an appetiser for Sunderland fans with so much more to look forward to. Their new home is a beautiful stadium (without doubt the best new stadium built with the Taylor report in mind), right in the centre of the city. They undoubtedly have the infrastructure to succeed in the Premiership.

Luton Town have no such rosy future, and it was the general air of cheery optimism in the Wearsiders which was the hardest thing to take. Meanwhile, John Prescott seems casually determined to halt our football club's chances of even creating a niche in the First Division (from where, we'd like to think, the club might find themselves in a position to "do a Wimbledon").

A Worthington Cup semi-final would have given Luton Town fans the kind of instant gratification which has become the only way we can enjoy supporting our team - looking into the future just isn't an option at the moment. We can only think short term.

Sunderland fans may have been pondering on the rest of their Worthington Cup run and the fact that winning the trophy would open the door to European football a year or two earlier than planned. We pondered on how long it would be before we stopped to have a wee.

It's a long way back and, sat in the back of the car, I recalled how some Luton fans had attempted to harangue their Wearside counterparts with the first rendition of "sign on" I'd heard since the mid-80's. It seemed rather apt, given the relative positions of the clubs, that the supporters of the underdogs should seek solace in the insults of the past.

We caught up with the Bobbers bus at a service station at about 12.15 am. Someone asked how we'd got up to Sunderland. The answer, "oh, in the car", caused a fair amount of merriment for the next 10 miles or so on the road - as it was pointed out that the chances that we'd come on the train (or by plane, or by hovercraft etc etc) were fairly slim. And so, in the short term, our depression lifted again as we counted down the junctions on our way back home.

Tim Kingston

THE SKY'S THE LIMIT

As some readers may be aware, seven of us recently appeared live on Sky TV's football magazine show *Soccer AM*. As part of the show, they have a 'Fans of the week' section, which just happened to involve us idiots. Now for the diary of events that saw the Town abuse the Hornets without all the answering back....

Weds 11th November, around 10.30 am. Phone rings, it's some bloke called Fenners asking for Tony Allbones. Hang on, that's the funny bloke from *Soccer AM*. What's he doing on the phone to me? After some chit chat, and hoping to get a slot on the show around March time or whatever, Fenners (who also happens to be on the production team) says that we're provisionally booked in for this Saturday!! After the initial excitement over the phone, I'm asked, "Well, can you get your mates on for this Saturday?" Without doubting for a minute that I couldn't, the answer's a big fat yes and with that I now had some very quick organising to do.

6.00 pm. Phone up Matt Crouch to let him know about Sky's proposition and to tell him to get his lads together sharpish to give me a definite on it. Without hesitation, the phone goes five minutes later. We've got the seven.

6.45 pm. Phone producer to confirm everybody's interest. He gives us the nod, we're bloody well on in 60 hours time. He asks where we're coming from. I say Bedford and Flitwick. "Oh well, we'll just have to put you in a hotel Friday night then." Is this really all happening?

7.30 pm. Get back to Matt. Tell him about Sky's point of shoving us in a hotel for the night. We all go mental. Free hotel, free train tickets down, taxis paid for....

Thurs 12th November, 9.00 pm. Phone up Fenners at *Soccer AM* just to make sure everything's running smooth at their end, and to confirm rail tickets are on the way down for tomorrow morning.

Fri 13th November, 7.00 pm. Meet the rest of the lads in Flitwick. Apart from my brother Gavin, the rest of the motley crew are as follows: 'Fat' Matt Crouch, Richard Hardy, Elliott Kenyon, Simon Darwen and Duncan Butcher. A bunch of nutters, but it's what the show needs.

8.00 pm. Grab the train down to King's Cross from Flitwick, and on to the Piccadilly Line to our destination, Boston Manor, which is only a stone's throw from that shit hole, Griffin Park, home of Brentford. Once we've got the carriage to ourselves we have a 3 a side footie game which quickly turns into a free for all rugby assault. A crowd ensues.

9.30 pm. Get a taxi from the underground to the Boston Manor Hotel. Contrary to what you may have read in your local paper about us staying in a "plush Heathrow hotel", this is certainly not plush. Just about satisfactory, it has a creepy feel about it. After whacking our gear down, and phoning up Fenners to confirm we've made it, it's time for a couple of pints. Trot down to local pub, which is highly unwelcoming. Drink beers. Grab kebab. Abuse kebab house keeper, and tell him to watch out for us on TV tomorrow.

Midnight. Rooms are decided. Two singles (Simon makes sure he's got a single for some obvious reason....), a triple and a double, which I share with Matt. No sleep at all, just talk about what might happen in a few hours time. Matt's got a glowing watch that's pissing me off.

Saturday 14th November, 6.00 am. Telephone rings to let us know we've got to get up. After fiddling around doing our hair, and generally walking around in a tired haze, we all go down for breakfast. From seven places about one plate gets eaten. The rest ends up elsewhere.

7.00 am. Promptly, two taxis turn up to run us down to the studios. Our driver is a nice old chap

for the time of the morning. Mind you, Londoners have always got something to harp on about.

7.15 am. Arrive at Sky's HQ in Isleworth, and stand around for half an hour in a room used for signing guests in and out. Watch TV where Man City won and, hey, Millwall lost. Good start to the day, then. Some girl meets us, calling herself the assistant floor manager. Each of us fills in and signs a form declaring that we won't swear, promote drugs, sex or alcohol. As if...

8.00 am. Fenners meets us right outside the set, and gives us a very concise rundown of what he wants from us, and what he expects from us. For the first time, the nerves start getting to us a touch.

8.20 am. After all the waiting, Tim Lovejoy introduces us; "And we've got Luton fans of the week". In harmony, we all break out with that old favourite chant of "We hate W*tf*rd". After getting the song out of the system, we all now feel a lot better. Any nerves are out of the window. The show continues at a brisk rate, with various 'in' jokes and references to recent topical issues. A couple of us show our ignorance towards LL.

10.10 am. The weekly 'Soccerette' makes her appearance onto the show, and she is hot. A blonde from Birmingham, Amy Johnson, who happens to support the Villa. We all go mental when she describes herself as single. Following this, I get selected to catwalk with Tim and the lovely Amy in front of the cameras. I must admit, Mr Lovejoy is pretty cool at this bit.

10.20 - 11.30 am. The show progresses with special guests Geoff Thomas of Forest, and some indy band called "Pure Essence". Tim Lovejoy tries vainly to wind us up on air because of his birthplace/origins of Chorleywood. We have none of it.

11.45 am. One of the best parts of the show — "Chips". We don't do at all bad, scoring three times inside a minute. I'm sure the W*tf*rd players themselves would have done worse.

Midday. The show finishes. After a few photographs, we all pop over the road to the rugby club for some post-show drinks. Tim has had to bugger off to see his 'Mighty Blues' (Chelsea) in action, whilst Helen Chamberlain rushed off to see her beloved Torquay play at Worcester (FA Cup first round). Still, get to chat to Geoff Thomas, in particular about the Van Hooijdonk row, and all the crew come for some lunch and a beer. They are all so down to earth, and top blokes. Speaking to Fenners, who says the show went really well, we all hope that we might get a chance some time next year to appear on another show.

2.30 pm. Taxis pick us up and take us across London to King's Cross. Arrive back in Bedford around 4.00 pm. It's all over. An experience not to forget. Back to work tomorrow.

Tony Allbones, the Kempston Methodist

**ON THE INTERNET?
JOIN WHOSH
WORLDWIDE HATTERS ON THE SUPER
HIGHWAY**
email request-ltfc@robots.ox.ac.uk

FUTURE STARS — PART 4

The final position to cover is arguably the most important position of all - the strikers. As most people will know, since the departure of Thorpey, we have been left without a prolific goalscorer at the top level, but there are few waiting in the wings. Phil Gray has been much improved this season, with Stuart Douglas proving to be a good complement to his game. Andrew Fotiadis has been scoring goals for fun in the reserves, and I feel he deserves a chance in the first team should Lennie ever decide to make a change. Herve Bacque has been a disappointment but I still think he is a class player and could yet play a part in our promotion drive. However, apart from these four, there are relatively few players able to fill in this position. These are as follows:

1 Gary Doherty

I am pleased to admit that Gary has proved me wrong about lacking the finesse to appear regularly as a striker, as our new 'super-sub' has looked the part in his recent appearances. Although he is a bit slow, he has the physical presence I feel we have been lacking for for many years. At the age of eighteen, Gary's touch will improve with experience, and 'Dozza' could be a potential asset to the club, especially as he can be used in central defence as well. The impact he has made in recent games highlights what a target man can add to the team, and whilst I do not want to see Luton turn out like W*tf*rd and not know the meaning of playing football, I don't think it would hurt to have some height and power in the team.

2 Jimmy Cox

While some may argue that Jimmy's strongest position is on the wing, as that is where he has been used in the first team to date, having watched him for two years in youth team, I feel he is more effective up front. 'Coxy', aged 18, is a very quick and tenacious player who is difficult to knock off the ball, and a player who I strongly tip to be a future first team regular. His pace unsettles defenders and forces them into making mistakes, and if it could be harnessed, he could go a long way in the game. On a short term basis, he could be a replacement for Evers, should the latter be sold to a Premiership club.

3 Steve Augustine

Steve must be one of the unluckiest players in football. With the injuries he has had, he makes Paul Showler look like Mr. Motivator. No sooner had he returned from one long term injury, than he broke his leg last October, and has not played since. The nineteen year old can operate as a left winger or a striker, but as a six footer with tremendous upper body strength, I believe he is best used as a target man and if he manages to stay clear of injuries on his return, he may be another good prospect for the future.

4 Tresor Kandol

Tresor, or TK, as he is generally known, has made a great impact in youth team football, and is rated very highly by teams over the country. He has scored a considerable number of goals in the air and on the ground over the past couple of years, and is starting to look stronger on the ball. Around the penalty area he is dynamite, but he must improve his all round game if he is to fulfil his potential. The seventeen year old second year YTS has already signed professional forms with the Hatters until the year 2000, showing the hopes the Luton management team have for him (*and he does the best goal celebration yet seen from a Luton Town player at any level — Ed*).

Clifford has been a very good complement to TK in the youth team this season, and is another conventional striker who loves scoring goals. TK and Clifford are the only two strikers on the books at YTS level, and they have formed a good understanding with each other over the past couple of seasons. Clifford's progress this season should ensure he is signed on professionally at the end of the season.

Patrick Johnson

NO PLACE LIKE.....

So, the KohlerDome saga continues. As we await the High Court action that is to be taken to seek a judicial review, in the knowledge that if that fails then David Kohler will submit a new planning application for a smaller capacity stadium, I have to wonder if we got the tactics right from the start. Although support from those of us who attend Kenilworth Road was mobilised, through letters of support for the application, little was done to mobilise the support of the population of Luton. Instead, the voice of those who opposed the scheme, and are now showing their true NIMBY colours by gloating even though their objections have been rejected, was not drowned out as it should have been.

Many of you will have read this far and concluded that I am talking out of my hat, as the people of Luton don't give a hoot about the football club. There is undoubtedly some truth in that, but the goodwill of the people of the town should not be underestimated. Although the number of us (speaking as a Lutonian) who attend matches is relatively small, there are an enormous number of people in Luton who feel that junction 10 IS the best place for a new stadium, and can see that it would provide benefits to Luton in terms of employment and facilities that the town currently lacks. Some of these people would start to attend matches in a new stadium, and we would certainly see the return of many who stopped coming to Kenilworth Road because they were fed up with being unable to see much through the forest of roof supports and floodlight pylons.

It is a little late to do anything about it now, but what would have been the effect on the politicians and unelected civil servants of a petition supporting the application — a petition of perhaps 50,000 signatures? If nothing else it would have made it clear that the majority of the people in Luton support the proposal for a new ground — and if it had accelerated a decision we would probably have the go ahead by now, maybe even with the support of Sir Graham Bright. Sadly, we'll never know.

K.F.H.

"You're listening to Radio Two-and-a-bit Counties, serving Herts, Bucks and that bit in the middle. I'm Danny Crofter and this is 'Soccer Chat', the show where I interview a local football celebrity about the burning issues.

Sadly, we won't be joined by our special guest today as Harry the Hornet is in police custody following his fight with Wolfie the Wolf. We would have asked Stevenage Borough if they wanted an interview but they were out. Luckily, though, one of our researchers has discovered that there is, in fact, another local side in the Nationwide League. Well, blow me down with a feather! No, not Wycombe but dear old Luton Town, who sent along their Chief Operating Officer, Laurence Lennison. Welcome Laurence."

"Thanks Danny, I'd like to tell your listeners..."

"First, Laurence, are you a Hornets fan like me?"

"What? Er, no. We have had an application for..."

"So, what do you think of our great start to the season? Premiership next year, possibly?"

"Danny, I'm not a fan. I want to talk about the KohlerDome..."

"Is Europe in 2000 out of..... sorry, did you say you were not a Hornets fan?"

"Yes. We've been waiting four years for..."

"This is astonishing."

"Yes, Danny, I do think a four year wait is unacceptable..."

"I've never had a non-Hornet fan on the show before. Well, I suppose you'll want to talk about Luton Town for a while. OK, I'm a professional. I can hack it. So, Larry, good start to the season?"

"Not too bad, Danny. We have a very young side at the moment..."

"Ah, trot out the excuses early. Are you in mid-table obscurity, then?"

"Not at all! We're competing with the likes of Manchester City and Gillingham for a place in the Play-offs and automatic promotion is still possible, plus we have an attractive tie against Sunderland in the quarter-finals of the Worthington Cup."

"Really. Well, expect a hard game. They're the best team in the Hornets' division this season, apart from the Hornets of course, and sometimes the referee can be influenced by the crowds, you know. Hmm, I'm looking down the list of upcoming Hornets fixtures and we don't seem to have a Worthington Cup game scheduled. At what stage will we enter the competition?"

"Round one, Danny."

"You mean..."

"Yes, Danny, your precious Hornets are already out. You lost in the first round actually."

"To a Premiership side, eh? The plucky Hornets fought bravely but lost to..."

"Mighty Cambridge United of the Third Division, and no, you didn't have a reserve team out."

"Larry, you've astonished me again. I'm gobsmacked. Stunned. Speechless."

"If only that were true, Danny."

"So, everything is rosy for Luton Town?"

"No, Danny. I want to read out a prepared statement. The very future of Luton Town is threatened

by the Government's inability to reach a decision. We have been waiting four years for planning permission to build our new super-stadium, the KohlerDome. All we want is a simple answer. Yes or no."

"Maybe I can help you there, Lol. I've got a pal who's a Labour MP, let me give him a buzz and see if we can get a decision, live on air. I'll just dial his number and.... ah!"

"Hello?"

"Ron, hi, it's Danny."

"Hello, boyo. I'm looking forward to tonight. I've got a sexy rubber suit you'll just love to see me in and...."

"Er, Ron, we're live on air."

"WHAT? Er.... Oh, it's Danny, is it? I thought you said.... er.... Diane, yes, that's it, Diane, brilliant! I thought you said Diane, not Danny. You can forget tonight too. I'll go for a walk on Clapham Common instead."

"Suit yourself. Listen, we need a decision on the KohlerDome. Yes or no."

"The KohlerDome? Oh, right, the big guy is always complaining about being hustled on that one."

"Ron, this is Laurence Lennison, Chief Operating Officer at Luton Town FC. Surely a simple answer is easy to give."

"Well, no it isn't."

"There you have it Lol, live on air, the answer is no. Any reaction?"

"Hey, no I...."

"Thanks Ron, bye. I dunno, MPs always want the last word. Well, Lol?"

"I.... I'm devastated. I.... I...."

"Good Lord, pull yourself together man. Here, borrow my hanky and dry your eyes. Blow your nose. That's it. Right, while my guest recovers let's have a record. This is 'Candle in the Wind' by the multi-talented Hornet Chairman. Take it away, maestro."

Declan McCabe

A fat, Ugly female W*tf*rd supporter had tried every diet known to man but after three months she still tipped the scales at 18 stone.

Defeated, she decided to kill herself by shooting herself in the heart. The only problem with that was, being a W*tf*rd fan, she hadn't a clue where her heart was, so she called her doctor.

"Doctor, where is my heart?" she asked.

"It's directly below your left breast," he replied.

Hanging up the phone, she shot herself in the knee!

Mark Durbridge

MAD MERCHANDISE

What have we got in store?

We haven't abandoned the idea of selling things to you other than the fanzine, we just haven't had space for the ads in recent issues. So, what have we got for you at Christmas?

SHIRTS

We still have a supply of the classic 1970's orange shirts, as worn by Town players between 1974 and 1979. At a price of £28.95, the home version (mainly orange) comes in sizes L and XL. The away shirt, which is mainly white with the navy and orange stripe down the left hand side is also available in both sizes, and is available at £28.95. This shirt will be discontinued when current stocks are sold.

PHOTOS

We have two aerial shots of the Kenilworth Road ground, one taken from behind (and above) the New Stand, the other taken from behind the corner of the Kenilworth Road stand and Executive boxes. The pair of photos will cost you £6.00 including post and packing.

BOOKS

We still have three copies left of last season's best seller, The Definitive Luton Town FC. The statistical work charts Luton Town's entire Football League history and is a vital reference work for the Town supporter. Available from *Mad as a Hatter!* for £9.89, including post and packing.

Of course we also have back-issues of Mad and, more suitable for Christmas presents, subscriptions. Please see the ads for these elsewhere in this issue.

Please send me:

..... home/away* shirts in size L/XL* I enclose £28.95 each

..... sets of aerial photos. I enclose £6.00 per set

..... copies of The Definitive Luton Town FC. I enclose £9.89 each.

Name.....

Address.....

.....
.....

Send your order to: Mad as a Hatter! 38 Twigden Court, Luton, LU3 2RL

RAVING MAD!!!

Mon Cher "Mad",
Ecouter maintenant.

Liberté, égalité, fraternité and nouveau football grounds for all. Yes, mes amis, I was at the Barnsley game and I was moved by the absolute raw power and emotion on display. It took me right back to the barricades in Paris in '68. If we'd had orange bits of paper instead of Molotov cocktails, we surely would have triumphed and the world would be a better place now. No Maggie Thatcher or Saddam, and W*tf*rd in the Isthmian League.

Actually, I'm lying. All that happened to me in 1968 was I got born, which was a nasty enough experience in itself and one to which I trace back all my subsequent travails. All existential despair aside though, what a load of crap. If I wanted to get treated like a spoon fed idiot, I'd go to university or support Manchester United. Still, it's nice to know what people think of you. The bloke on the P.A. must work as an infant school teacher, and I bet the 5 year-olds are going "Alright mate, don't take the piss, we're not that thick y'know." Pilloock. I dread to think what might have happened if people had kept on holding up their bits of paper beyond the permitted 30 seconds. Probably there was a goon squad hidden out the back in case of spontaneity.

I'm all for Mr Kohler, but come on, what did that achieve? Obviously it was in the *Luton News*, cos they paid for it. Front page of *The Sun* though? Mr K legging it across the pitch (in a G-string, please) with 4 painted on his arse and an orange belly and we might have had a chance. Still, fat man Prescott's turned us down so there's still an opportunity. Go for it Davo. Instant fame and none of us'll laugh. Honest.

While I'm here, will all the people who were booing Phil Gray for about a year kindly realise they know nothing about football and keep their mouths shut next time? Unless, of course, Gary Waddock comes back, when they'll have my full support.

Thank you et bon nuit,
Hervé's dyslexic Dad.

Dear "Mad",
I don't think Kohler knows the word marketing even exists!! This is a club that is bleeding to death — circa £40k losses per week we are told — but it goes out of it's way to make it difficult for you to hand your cash over!! For instance, the phone in the ticket office that is always engaged. Ditto Borehamwood FA Cup game — I live 90 miles from Luton, and on the Wednesday before the game the ticket office (when I finally got through) told me I couldn't buy tickets over the phone but had to travel down just to buy the damn things! I explained this was a rather silly suggestion — I don't have that sort of time/petrol to waste — and asked if they could not make an exception. I was told only the Company Secretary could make such an important, high powered, decision (Kohler also hasn't heard of the

word "empowerment"), but as she was in a board meeting I would have to ring them back (engaged tone willing) the next day in order to learn whether they would make an exception just this once..... "Stuff you" was my response, and Daniel and I watched it instead on Sky, saving our money for Lincoln and Sunderland. Final irony? Guess what? They did not sell all the tickets — lots left apparently.

Anyway, if we get the Dome, how much are tickets going to be?? Who is going to be able to afford them? What sort of lease will the football club have? What will the club have to pay Kohler each year? What will breakeven attendance be? Call me a cynical old dog, but I think we need a few more facts before we can say the Dome is going to be the salvation of LTFC — it might be the saving of Kohler's bacon, but I don't take too much for granted from someone who is using his position in the club to draw £83k p.a. plus Range Rover, to run it like a berk who hasn't even got the marketing skills of a first year sales student.

Glad I got that off my chest!

Mick the Brummie Hatter,
Birmingham.

Eds note: This was not the only complaint about ticketing arrangements for the Boreham Wood match. There were several more individuals who chose to watch the game on Sky, simply because they could not get to Luton to buy tickets or could not get through to the ticket office on the constantly engaged telephone lines. What's more, I have become aware of cases of membership renewals being refused to supporters who are now away from the town at university. Does the club realise that every case represents lost revenue? And will the club revise it's policies to reverse this trend?

Dear "Mad",

It was wonderful to hear nearly 2,000 Town fans at Sunderland chanting "We'll support you evermore". But where were they all the following Saturday when we only had just over 4,000 home fans for the cup tie against Hull.

Or have I just missed the meaning of "evermore".

P.J. Smith,
Leighton Buzzard.

SUBSCRIPTIONS

Mad as a Hatter! is available on subscription at £6.25 for the next seven issues (overseas surface mail £7.50, 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.

Ian Feuer

Imagine my surprise when, sitting in a hotel in Montreal, Flicking through the dreadfully dull North American selection of channels, I spot a familiar face — that of Ian Feuer! Ian, of course, now plays for New England Revolution and they were 1-0 down to the L.A. Galaxy midway through the first half. A clip of the goal showed Ian coming out recklessly, scored by a former Premiership player, Cobi Jones. I settled back for an enjoyable match.

Was it me, or did Ian not seem as involved in the game as he was at Luton. Where were the gestures? Where was the passion? Perhaps I am being sentimental, but he did not seem to care as much as he did in his Luton days. He certainly looked miserable! He must have felt at home playing behind the New England defence though — they were terrible, and it must have reminded him of some of the matches played in Division One and Two after the past few years.

Soon it was 2-0. The commentators blamed Ian, but really he was totally exposed by his defence and did his best. Cobi Jones provided the assist for Hermosillo.

The second half, and things got worse. New England were reduced to ten men after a reckless tackle and were soon 3-0 down. Again the commentators questioned Ian's positioning.

Next came the penalty. Up stepped Cobi Jones, and you've guessed it, Feuer dived to his left and saved it, apparently his fifth penalty save of the season so far! Jones however made amends within a minute by scoring again, his second, and he added his third shortly after. Neither of these two could be blamed on Feuer. To cap it all, New England also missed a penalty during this period.

New England did snatch a goal late on, but a 5-1 defeat was what they deserved and what they got. This defeat, incidentally, coincided with Luton's 3-0 defeat at Reading.

Ian's performance over the game was reasonable. As well as the penalty save, he made a couple of other stops to be proud of, and I felt he could only be partly blamed for one of the goals. However, New England looked a poor side, languishing at the bottom of their table.

For those on the Internet interested in following the exploits of Ian Feuer, New England Revolution has a website at WWW.nerevolution.com. I looked at Ian's "Bio" and found the following interesting snippets:

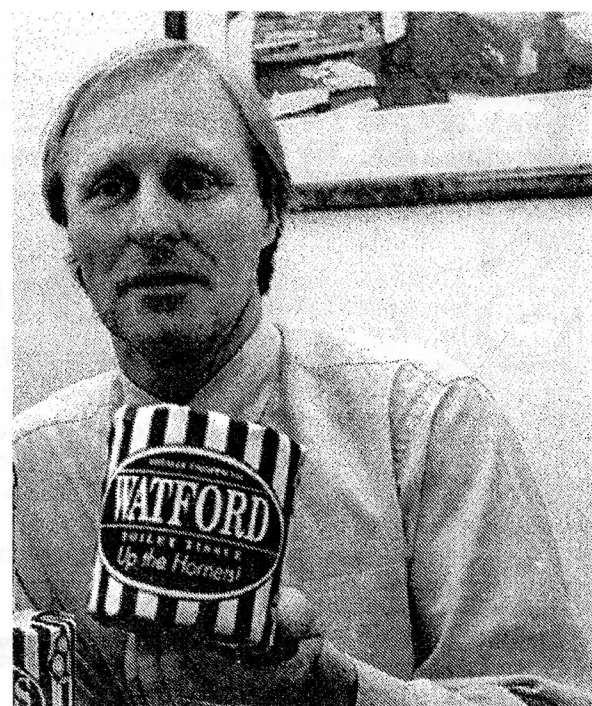
- He is nicknamed 'The Green Monster' by team mates.
- He is the tallest player in MLS history.
- His most prized accomplishment is playing in England for four years and becoming a crowd favourite.
- His most prized possessions are his two Player of the Year awards earned at Luton.
- His most memorable moment was saving a penalty kick against Watford and hearing how quiet the Watford fans became.

Ian is a Luton man through and through!

Russell Bulkeley

SHORT CUTS

Feel free to insert your own W*tf*rd/toilet jokes here. Any of the old bog standards, perhaps?



Luton Town 3 York 0
By PETE KENYON
SUBSTITUTE Phil Gray
nodded home a late goal
to give Hatters another
priceless win.

As a perfect wish...

Ah, those were the days. 5-0-5 formations might sound odd in these times, but there was a time when midfielders weren't needed.

LTFC's strange managerial selection process revealed.....

The fact that we were already 2-0 up and playing against 10 men obviously overlooked by our friends at the *Accuracy on Sunday*. As they say, never let the facts get in the way of a good story!

● **Joe Payne (seated, extreme right) with the Hatters team for the Coventry match at Kenilworth Road. The line-up for the game was: Dolman in goal, full backs Smith and Mackey, half-backs Finlayson, Nelson and Fellowes, and forwards Stephenson, Roberts, Payne, Martin and Hodge.**

Lawrence attended two interviews in London when he had to prove his musical talents, play some instruments and sit some academic exams in literacy and numeracy.

Talk about stating the obvious...

This pearl of wisdom appeared in the Watford programme last week. 'If you're one of the thousands of supporters who are now in possession of a ticket for the Coca-Cola Cup tie v Tottenham - don't forget to bring it with you on the night.' I know they're W*****d fans, but even they might have known that.

PHOTOGRAPHY BY GRAHAM TAYLOR

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Would
you trust this
man with
your wedding
photos?

Two items that require no comment whatsoever.

FA CUP SEMI-FINAL

TOTTENHAM (3) 4	WATFORD (0) 1	
Hodge 2, C Allen,	Allen	
P Allen		46,151
(at Villa Park)		

This item has not been included because of the fabulous result (much as we would like it to be repeated on January 2nd) — but more on the basis of the question "Did Lennie pick the two sides?" Check out the scorers!

"What else could you do? What is Vicarage Road worth without Watford FC there?"

Interesting question. The answer is that it would be worth vastly more than it is now!

Aha. A new way to keep cats, dogs, and all other forms of life out of your garden.



found them. Bontcho's scoring record - a goal every two games - is very impressive.

"We have been lacking a bit of depth in midfield and up front, and Vlado and Bontcho are quality players with a sound knowledge of the game."

A quote from Ipswich general manager John Lyall and, yes, he was talking about Guentchev.

It's likely that after this incident, mentioned in issue 50, every football fan in Bulgaria is talking about Bontcho as well now.

Dome name

THE stadium David Kohler hopes to build would not be called the Kohlerdome.

More likely names would be the Whitbread or Vauxhall Dome.

Mr Kohler told the *Luton News*: "I'm an egotist but, at the end of the day, money talks. A new stadium will be named after whoever pays the most. That could be Whitbread or Vauxhall because both have been tremendous. Whitbread will be a substantial player."

We now have it in official black and white — Luton Town will NEVER play in the KohlerDome (and not a Government minister in sight to tell us that!).

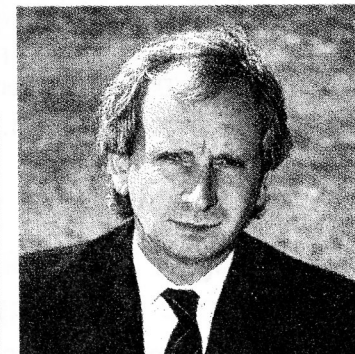
11.00: Film — The Great Escape.

FILM Luton's First Division history on the Big Screen. Starring David Pleat and his silly run.

Don't ask.

EIGHT goals in successive away games without gaining a point? It happened to Luton in 1927 when they lost 4-3 at Charlton on Christmas Eve and 6-5 at Northampton on Boxing Day.

What are the chances of that happening, eh? (and we don't mean matches on Christmas Eve and Boxing Day).



Haircut, haircut.....

THE EVENING AFTER THE NIGHT BEFORE

Swindon Town reserves v Luton Town reserves — Weds 23rd September 1998

Precisely nineteen hours after I had returned home from the euphoric scenes that had greeted Marvin's last gasp winner against Ipswich in the Worthington Cup, I took my seat in the sparsely populated County Ground to witness the Hatters reserves latest match against their counterparts from my home town of Swindon.

I cannot recall a game of football ever being so overshadowed by other events. My grin from the previous night had still not subsided after the agony and ultimate ecstasy of the closing moments of the Ipswich game, whilst all the locals were busily discussing Steve McMahon's departure from the club, announced earlier in the afternoon. Regrettably, many of my Swindon supporting mates are now proclaiming a soft spot for W*tf*rd, whose crushing 4-1 victory in Swindon the previous Saturday finally drove the hated scouser back to Merseyside. Ex-Hatter Chris Kamara, who also had spells at the County Ground in both the 70s and 80s, is currently topping the fans poll in the local paper as his replacement.

Although seven of Swindon's side had tasted first team football, I was confident that Luton's young side would secure a second successive victory in this fixture after the 4-2 win that I reported on earlier this year.

The first half was shapeless affair, with neither midfield able to find the time or space for constructive football. Nathan Abbey pulled off two fine saves early on, while Gary Doherty was looking assured in central defence. Kofi Nyamah spurned Luton's best chance, heading over a fine cross by Lee Lough.

The second half continued in the same vein, before Luton gradually began to take control after the introduction of substitutes Terry Sweeney and Richard Clarke. Their efforts were rewarded on 80 minutes, when Nyamah swept home the only goal of the game after beating the offside trap and calmly rounding the home keeper. Minutes later, however, his evening was soured when he was mysteriously sent off, presumably for speaking out of turn to referee Armstrong. The final minutes saw concerted pressure from the home side, with Abbey again excelling by producing two fine double saves to thwart the Swindon attack.

Glad to have seen another Hatters victory, and this time with only a ten minute walk home, I left the County Ground contented. In truth though, it was Marvin's looping header and distant dreams of Wembley that were causing me to smile.

Hatters team: Abbey, Boyce, Fraser, Lough (Sweeney), Willmott, Doherty, Scarlett, Nyamah, Kandol, Davies, Showler (Clarke).

Scorer: Nyamah (80 minutes) 0-1.

Sent off: Nyamah (84 minutes).

Will Sherwood, Swindon Hatter

IAN FEUER

Ian Feuer says hello, and has asked for his best wishes to be passed on to all the Luton Town fans who supported him during his time here.

Kenilworth Sunset? Inaccuracies, part I.

Not wanting to personally highlight inaccuracies in my own book, I am indebted to my good pal, Mr Mad Michael Flaherty — filing clerk of the Adelaide branch of the Luton Town Supporters Club, for pointing out the following errors:

"I would like to point out some inaccuracies which you might want to change before the second print:

1. Cardiff City v LTFC 20/02/94. Oakes scored our 1st goal against Cardiff, not Hartson (you fool!).
2. LTFC v Shitford 09/03/85. Surely it was Gary Parker not Paul Parker who supplied the pass for Wayne Turner's goal versus the scum.
3. LTFC v Stoke 09/04/96. What I actually shouted at Mr Rennie was "Where ya from Ref, you sexy thing!" which is pretty much the line from the song.
4. LTFC v Crewe 14/05/97. I never apologised to that copper. I just sat there with a stupid smirk on my face whilst he was whispering sweet nothings in my ear. And he was an Inspector (at least). I wouldn't have wasted my time antagonising a mere sergeant!

Apart from that a bloody good read. What have other people said to you about it? Just so you don't get to big headed I want you to know that although your book is better, Kristina Howells is still much better looking than you, you ugly bastard!"

I don't know what the above says about Mr Flaherty's taste and judgement, but I concede that points 1 and 2 were daft mistakes on my part (whereas points 3 and 4 are mere floundering by Mr F). I do feel a little embarrassed about mixing my Parkers — especially as young Gary was one of my faves at the time. I don't feel so sorry about claiming Oakes' goal for Hartson. Scotty may have scored it but in general, and in that game in particular, Johnny certainly wanted it more.

T.P. Kingston, Local Author

FOR SALE

100's of programmes: Luton Town, Rangers, England (all home and away), Internationals, Cup Finals, semis and much more.

Details: Jeff Smith, 78A Hightown Road, Luton, LU2 0DS

THE YOUNG ONES

Luton Town youth 2 Brighton & Hove Albion youth 0 28 November 1998

Short of something to do on a Saturday morning? Find yourself suffering from 'PMT' (Pre Match Tension)? If so, why not get yourself down to Luton Rugby Clu at Newlands Road to watch the stars of the future? Last season's League Champions again sit proudly at the top of the South East Counties League.

As my own visits to God's own county are all too infrequent these days, when I get down to Luton I feel I have to make the most of it. Having moved 'Up North' nine years ago and with the added burdens of two young children and a wife who usually works on Saturdays, I now only get to see about 7 or 8 home games per season.

My own pre-match entertainment to the Man City game involved a morning standing in the rain (and then an afternoon sitting in Block B of the Enclosure getting soaked again!!). The game against Brighton's youth team was only really made difficult by the conditions (which, in truth, were bkloody awful) and Luton missing/resting a few of their stars. Our latest striker — Tresor 'TK' Kandol (who I'm sure will be turning out for the first team within two seasons) scored both goals — the first running onto a through ball to provide the coolest of finishes after 30 minutes, the second despatching a late penalty after he himself had been pushed. The crowd? Well, let's just say that players and subs outnumbered spectators!!

If you decide to go along, you'll find good facilities — a neat clubhouse (including a bar), tea at half-time and decent car parking. If you close your eyes, you can almost imagine yourself in the KohlerDome!!! A word of warning though — if it's raining, take your wellies (the pitch reminds me of my own Sunday football days). If the game itself is a disappointment, you can always spend your time watching the golfers on one side, listening to the M1 traffic on the other side or, if you're particularly sad, watching the planes go overhead. More entertaining in my book is the sight of John Moore and Trevor Hartley sat up on the slope on fold out cahirs, huddling under their umbrellas and bellowing out the occasional instruction!!

As far as I'm concerned though, this is what football is all about — certainly a damn sight more in touch with reality than the over-priced over-hyped crap that is served up in the Premiership. Get along to give the lads your support — it won't cost you anything and you might just be watching some of your heroes of the future. All games kick-off at 11.00 am (providing ample drinking time before the afternoon kick-off!!).

Team: Daniel Tate, Ryan Moran, Matthew Taylor, Anthony Hudson, James Ayres, Darren Howe, Lee Mansell, Jerome Thomas, Tresor Kandol, not sure who number 10 was, Moses Jerry. Subs: Delroy McKoy (for Mansell), Jude Stirling (for Thomas), and some lad called Ezra (for number 10).

The Nottingham Hatter

To fill the gaps, number 10 was John Carroll, who was replaced by Ezra Mentore - Ed

OUR CUP RUNNETH..... OUT!

07.11.98 STOKE CITY 3 TOWN 1

Arrived in Stoke at 10 am (30 minutes from Nottingham shows there are advantages to living in the East Midlands), and made my way straight to the nearest off-licence, then onto pub. Met up with Luton fans who included one guy who for £5 poured half a pint into an ashtray and drunk its contents down, fag ends and all. I was told by his friend that on holiday at Magaluf he'd actually drunk a pint of someone else's vomit for £50! The mind boggles.

Arrived at the Britannia Stadium worse for wear, due to flu-like symptoms — dizziness, sickness and headache!!

Not surprisingly, having not scored all season Judas Oldfield knocked the opener in. Typical!! We found ourselves 2-0 down at half-time and booed the team off for a crappy first half.

Came out fighting for the first ten minutes of the second half, then as usual ran out of steam until Alexander received his marching orders. Funniest moment was seeing normally quiet Lawrence running on the pitch protesting like a madman.

As usual when backs to the wall, the Town turned it up a gear, absolutely destroying Stoke. Scored with Fugee Douglas, and would have equalised but for a cracking save by their big nosed keeper. Finished 3-1 when Stoke scored in the 90th minute. Stoke were shit and if they win promotion, I'll run round Ilkeston wearing nothing but my Luton hat, singing Elton John is ill

Ilkeston

Eds note: The last line of this report is not a misprint, but typed exactly as written.

10.11.98 TOWN 1 BARNSELY 0

The least convincing of our Fizzy Cup wins. Barnsley were easily the better team, with Kelvin making an excellent save from the overrated Ward — although no credit was given when the referee awarded a goal kick — but the only goal came from a deflected effort from Gray. Gray then celebrated in style by doing a Fjortoft-style 'aeroplane' run, perhaps taking the Michael out of the Barnsley striker? The only other decent goal effort by Town was a shot by McLaren, but Anglia didn't even include it in their version of the 'highlights' — surprising as their were precious few highlights in the game.

The game was an anti climax compared to previous exploits, but what the heck..... We're through and off to a new ground at the Stadium of Light.

Steve F.

15.11.98 BORESCUM WOOD 2 TOWN 3

You're scum and you know you are.....

The moment Borescum Wood were drawn out of the hat we all knew it would be us travelling the short distance into Scumfordshire for a 'magic of the FA Cup' first round tie.

Sky TV, sensing the localness of the match, decided to screen it live. We should know by now that in recent years when we've played live on TV we've been crap — and we didn't disappoint this time round.

McLaren was..... well, why did he bother coming back. Nyamah didn't impress and Marvin can fuck off and play non-league football every week, he was that bad.

On the bright side, Gray had a superb game, has been our most consistent player of late, and has finally shown us he can play better than he did last season and the start of this one. We made life difficult for ourselves during the 90 minutes as Wood shouldn't have been any

threat whatsoever — not like two years ago when they had a much better side. On this performance, Peter Reid must be shitting himself over the forthcoming quarter-final in the Stadium of Light.

Oh, and you've got to be so scared of W*tf*rd, haven't you. Some scummers gather in a pub by the ground, wait for us to walk past, then hurl abuse at us from behind a line of policemen and horses. God, you're so hard, aren't you!

Hull at home next. Bottom of the whole league, even worse than Brighton — so we should piss on them. But then again, we should have pissed on Boreas Wood as well.

The Beat

21.11.98 LINCOLN CITY 2 TOWN 2

It was a tough decision — go to support my home town team, Hucknall Town, in one of their biggest ever matches against Conference side Barrow in the FA Trophy, or travel to Lincoln to watch the Hatters for the first time in ages (last season being a barren one for careless Luton fans in the East Midlands). My heart said "LUTON", so I duly went, buoyed by the expectation of a win, or at least a good performance against the worst side in the division. It turned out to be one of those games full of excitement but with all the quality of a 1975 Skoda. Luton played as if they were hardly on speaking terms for most of the first half — nobody was truly awful, not even Marvin, but the general pattern was one of misplaced passes and defensive scares. Generally, the back four made some good clearances, particularly White, but Steve Davis's leadership and presence was sorely missed. Let's face it, Lincoln are not the kind of side one expects to concede two goals against. However, they caused a few moments of threat, and it was no great surprise when they scored first, just when Luton were starting to look like a team. The ball in should have been cleared, and one of their donkeys beat Kelvin with a well struck shot. This was just what we didn't need, but no-one could say it was undeserved. Reward for Luton's improved play arrived shortly afterwards when Gray scored from close up, setting up a potentially cracking second half.

What was to follow from the Hatters was more creaking than cracking, as Lincoln kept attacking. However, their second goal was needless. A Lincoln player who must have been a security guard at some stage in his life was attempting to frisk someone (I couldn't see who). Mr Magoo the referee naturally failed to spot this, enabling Lincoln to break through and score courtesy of McGowan, who had never looked particularly comfortable anyway. Eventually, we began to play some football instead of trying to take on the Imps at their own hoofing game, and were superb for the last twenty minutes — plenty of pacy passing and passion. It can be no coincidence that things improved after the arrival of the impressive Doherty and the departure of Simon Davies. I really want Davies to be given a chance, but he had little influence on the game, constantly overhitting passes. To be fair, it looks as if he is struggling to adapt to this level. His type of pass is fine when you have Ryan Giggs surging along to collect it, but it is rather wasted on Mitchell Thomas. Another factor is confidence, and Davies showed precious little.

Ultimately, the equaliser was deserved, as Gray battled well despite minimal service, and it was just reward for Doherty's efforts, a fine header from a corner not long after Lincoln's second. A mixed performance, in which we went through every conceivable emotion from optimism to frustration and from anger to elation. What a wonderful game football is. It was great to see such great support for the Hatters, but a shame that it was not rewarded by a better show. Much better is needed if promotion is to stay a possibility. Oh, and just in case you wondered, Hucknall won 2-1 in a superb match. Typical....

Graham Johnson

28.11.98 TOWN 1 MANCHESTER CITY 1

Well, it was an effort to drag ourselves out of the Beer Festival, but we had to..... to flog the fanzines. Then I had to seek guidance from a steward at the ground to show me where my season ticket seat was located as it had been bloody ages since I last sat in it and I'd forgotten where it was.....

Anyway, back to the game. What a hideous kit City wore. Poor marking led to their goal and we didn't start playing until twenty minutes before the end. The City defence had looked more than capable until Morrison was injured and didn't appear for the second half. City decided to defend their lead which ultimately proved their downfall. Doherty scored from a free header from a corner and then we all thought we had the winner when Stevo climbed for an unchallenged header but alas the ball sailed wide..... Still, it was important City didn't take 3 points.

Steve F.

01.12.98 SUNDERLAND 3 TOWN 0

The Sunderland Stadium of Light is by far the best of the new grounds we have visited this season. A wonderful ground, very impressive — and even the pies are pretty good. Sadly, the phobia about playing in new grounds this season struck yet again. Let's face it, we all new it would be very difficult to get a result against Sunderland, no matter where we played them — and so it turned out. As we might have expected, Sunderland looked the stronger team in the early stages, but our defence held firm and the first significant event of the match was when Kevin Ball made a really bad tackle on Mitch. Mitch was clearly as unimpressed as the rest of us, and swung a punch at Ball, so it was a huge relief when the ref only showed him a yellow card. It would have been no surprise if both players had been shown red, and in a way this was the turning point of the game. It was probably because of the rather lenient yellow card in that incident that Mr Lomas was so quick to show a second yellow, promptly followed by the red card, when Mitch fouled Quinn in the 35th minute. Now we can all say we thought it was harsh, and it is true that many referees would have given a final warning, but were any of us really surprised? From that moment on, the Town players were not so much up against it, as having to scale something like Beachy Head — upwards. Sunderland took the lead in the 39th minute, when Marvin (who else?) got his head to a ball that may have been going wide (but he had to go for it) and put it past Kelvin into our net.

The second half effort by the Town players was magnificent, and while defending in numbers ambition was not completely given up. While Kelvin, Stevo and Marvin were stopping everything thrown at them, the ten men continued to search for a way through to goal. It wasn't until the dying stages of the match that Sunderland managed to increase their lead, with a quick break after a Town corner and Michael Bridges putting away a good curling shot. The third was a superb lob over Kelvin well into injury time, giving the game a scoreline which was very flattering to the Mackems. In between the second and third goals Paul McLaren had Town's only shot on target for the whole 90 minutes, with a powerful shot from 25 yards forcing a good save from the home keeper. This had been a sterling effort by the thirteen men who played a part in the final hour of the match, but I reserve the right to criticise not the referee, but those who ought to know better — in a young side, we expect a lot of our so called experienced players, but in this game it was our most experienced who got himself sent off for a truly stupid foul, and two more got themselves booked for dissent (stand up Ray McKinnon and Phil Gray). Good effort lads — didn't anyone ever mention to you that discipline usually helps to win matches?

K.F.H.

Answer: We played nothing like the passing style that we had used all season (except for the 10 minutes before half-time). Instead, we played the HIT & HOPE approach without success.

Hull had the better of a scrappy first half hour and DESERVEDLY scored when GOD (kelv) was unable to keep out Morley's hard hit shot. This caused a mini Town recovery which saw PASSING and resulted in a magnificaent goal for Stevo (dribble - dribble - dribble - dribble - one-two with Tippy - dribble - dribble - round the keeper - GOAL!!!!). This recovery ended at half-time and it was back to the style of the first 30 minutes.

Unsurprisingly, we continued to play crap and on the hour our defence fell asleep and left Dewhurst UNMARKED to head home a free kick for the Hull winner. Mighty Kelv had no chance.

The scoreline was only kept respectable by another 10 out of 10 display by Kelv, which saw 2 saves of distinction. The first was to tip a well hit dipping shot over the bar, and the second was a superhuman diving save with his legs to stop a close range opportunity.

How can the Town players (Kelv excluded) justify claiming their weeks wages with that crap display?

Phillip

RAVING MAD!!! (EXTRA)

Dear "Mad",

In issue 50 you published the league table of the top food at the various grounds, in which Cambridge United came out on top for the quality of their bacon rolls.

Evidently, our lads were aware of this a while ago, for at half time in the Cambridge United v Luton Town friendly, pre-last season, I saw paul Showler and Stuart Douglas (or was it Gavin McGowan?) queueing at the tea bar!! Obviously they preferred bacon rolls to the refreshments provided in the changing room.

Geoff King,
Cambridge.

CALLING EXILED SUPPORTERS

Do you struggle to get news of the Hatters where you live? If so, Hatters Matters could be what you need. HM is a monthly newsletter for the exiled supporter. A comprehensive compilation of news of LTFC every month, by first class post. To receive Hatters Matters send a cheque for £6.50 to Hatters Matters, 38 Twigden Court, Luton, LU3 2RL. For a sample copy, send a stamped, addressed envelope.

LUTON TOWN, LET DOWN.

As I step off the train at Luton station, I look around and wonder if I am actually in Luton. This is because there are no football supporters around whatsoever. As I walk out of the station, I stroll down Telford Way thinking to myself, "what will the score be, who will get the first goal (as I have a bet that Steve Davis will)?" Also I wonder how many away supporters there will be and how aggressive they will be. How many Luton fans are going to turn up?

As I have not yet seen a single Luton supporter or even a single away supporter I start to become even more nervous, for instance am I here on the right date, have they changed the time. What is going on! I can just about see the floodlights from here, but have yet to see any supporters of either team. Then, suddenly, just as if they were all waiting for me to turn into Hazelbury Crescent, they all appear as if by magic — a mass of Luton supporters (well, not really a mass, but a mass of about ten), but nevertheless I am not alone.

Now I can make my way up Hazelbury Crescent, I can see old Kenny stadium from here and even more Luton supporters.

So, I am in the ticket office and am greeted by an assistant who has a smile like the grim reaper, so I buy my ticket and make my way to the Main Stand Enclosure.

As I am sat in my seat I look around and notice that I am the odd one out, because I am wearing my Luton Town home shirt. I am pretty sure wearing this shirt is an offence at Kenilworth Road in the Main Stand because I am the only one doing it! Some supporters in Main Stand block G wear Blackburn shirts and so often Man United shirts and no one wearing Luton shirts to Luton games. Why?

At stadiums like Ewood Park, or St James's Park they create the human barcode effect where all the fans wearing the shirts look like one big barcode. Well, maybe not Ewood Park, maybe Sunderland instead, and even, yes, Notts County (I didn't even know you could buy Notts County shirts).

What I am saying is let's cover Kenilworth Road in Luton Town colours. It looks good, shows the rest of British football Luton is a football county! I am saying this because most Luton supporters wear their shirts under their jackets (no good there), so show it off and support your team. Be proud in Luton's football history from the 1959 FA Cup final to the 1988 League Cup win — and our promotion season 1998/99. WE HOPE!

Steven Kilgour

WANTED

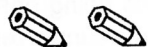
Football Programmes and memorabilia.
Please telephone Nick Albone (01767) 260992

SCRIBER'S CORNER

So, while the Town played in front of 35,000 at the Sunderland Stadium of Light, I was at Saffron Walden Town v Heybridge Swifts in front of 35 at the Stadium of Sh.....

Already a bit peeved at having to miss the quarter-final, I armed myself with my dad's tranny for the trip to Catons Lane (Saffron's ground). Things were looking good when I found 3CR on 95.5 fm (?) in the car park on the car radio, but inside the ground could I pick it up? Could I f..... So, I had to make do with Five Live (it was either that or Radio 3!). To be honest, I did contemplate missing the match and sitting in the car all night, but professionalism won through in the end.

As for the match — it was a cracker. After being 2-0 up after 85 minutes, Saffron somehow contrived to lose the game 6-3. And to think, I could have been sat in the car park.



The Sunderland game was an absolute non-event after 35 minutes. Now, everyone has got their own opinions on the red card — the TV cameras showed the second challenge as a bit clumsy (c'mon ref, Mitchell's naturally clumsy!) and therefore the sending off a tad harsh, but people there had a different view and saw something completely different. To be fair, Mitchell was fairly lucky first time round after that left hook on Kevin Ball. Anyway, afterwards it was damage limitation time — which we did very well. The Hatters went out of the competition with heads held high — and left wondering what might have been.



During the 3CR build-up before the Sunderland game, the phone-in was asking for players names that sound like what they do — i.e. George BEST, Peter OsGOOD, and Ian RUSH (cos he was fast). Sadly, I never got the chance to phone in my suggestions — though surely I'm not the only person to remember the W*tf*rd players Devon Shite, Luther Missett and Gifton Noel-Scumbag.



Staying on the Worthington Cup, nice to see the Town featured as the main game on Anglia against Barnsley (although rumour has it Barnsley were Anglia's local interest in the tie). Even so, as I sat down to watch it I was still expecting Kevin Piper to say: "but first, a 30 minute special report on Norwich City's youth team training session". During the game, one of our best chances was a header by Macca which was cleared off the line. Small question for you, Anglia — in over 20 minutes of highlights how did you fail to show it?



I wonder if we'll see a reappearance of Herve Bacque this winter — or is the weather still not right yet. There was one thing I couldn't understand about Bacque. The official reason why a player signed from Monaco had an unimpressive debut was because it was too hot. Do what? Are we really supposed to believe that Buckinghamshire is hotter than the south of France? Was the real reason not "because he's crap"? A relevant chant (nicked from Fantasy Football League) could well be:

He's French, he's shit,
He's never on the pitch,
Herve Bacque, Herve Bacque.....



I really hope that letter in issue 50 was a wind-up. As if Lars of Norway would be none other than Lars Elstrup, the former Luton Town player. It might have been though — Lars is such a rare name in Scandinavia, isn't it.

Anyway Ed, an enquiry about a letter we received last issue from David of Milton Keynes. I was wondering if this could be none other than David Preece, the former Luton Town player. Or David Oldfield. Or even David Pleat.....



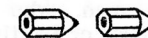
On to more serious matters — the KohlerDome. The goalposts have definitely moved. In fact, it's fair to say that they've been discarded altogether and we're playing with bundles of coats instead. Not wishing to get bogged down in it all, but taking my first cautious steps into becoming a broadsheet political correspondent, a few things show up. The Dome was turned down (at the second time around!) due to car parking fears. Well, the secretary of state would be concerned — where would people park if everyone travelled to the Dome in their two Jaguars? Staying linked to this point, I thought one of New Labour's policies was to improve, enlarge, and get more people to use, public transport? If you concentrate on that, the car parking shouldn't be an issue. Next, at the first decision, the non-widening of the M1 meant a 20,000 stadium was a no-go, but a smaller one would be alright. But, by the time of the second decision, a smaller stadium was not economically viable. What concern is that of yours, Mr Prescott? Isn't that our problem?

Finally, the KohlerDome — with a motorway, airport and new railway station (eventually!) — has been turned down. The Millennium Dome — with a Jubilee Line extension (which has no chance of being completed in time) and a pissing river — has full Government backing. Where exactly is all the concern about car parking, traffic congestion, transport etc, for the latter?

New Labour: same wankers.



Anyway, moving on — Royston won their Herts Senior Cup match against St Margaretsbury last month to give them a third round home tie with the scum. The game is due to take place in January (could be worth a trip down) but his is by no means guaranteed, as the Crows fixture pile-up is huge. If Petit, Alex Ferguson et al think they've got it tough, Royston (at time of writing) have 34 League games to play, and are still involved in SIX cup competitions. They've got eight games in hand over some teams in their division!



Scribes Corner can still be found on ITV Teletext (p178) every Thursday, from lunchtime onwards. Be there — I will be.



The Saffron Walden 3 — 6 Heybridge Swifts scoreline wasn't as impressive as you first thought. It was an Essex Senior Cup match, and went to extra time (it was only 2-2 after 90 minutes!). It was still a good game though — we had 3 own goals, 2 penalties, one floodlight failure and a partridge in a..... (you get my drift).



And finally, a message for Hatfield Hornet (issue 50):

F*** OFF you sad wanker.

You said in 180 minutes of football we managed, "5 conceded and one scored (and that was a deflection)". I suppose that made up for the previous 1080 minutes of football, where we scored 16, conceded 9 (one thanks to Trevor Peake and another no less than six minutes into injury time), and our record stood at won 5, drew 7, lost none.

W*tf*rd superior? I think not.

Chris Lennon

STOP PRESS: Bloody Hull. At the end of November we were in two cup competitions. Five days later and we've got just the league to concentrate on (I couldn't give a toss about the AWS). What the hull (pun intended) is going on?

I know that sometimes big teams (ie. Man United) play weakened sides in the Cup, but were Hull taking the piss or something? Hull are bottom of the whole Football League. If we can't beat their reserve side (at home) then quite frankly we don't deserve to be in the competition (and to rub it in we would have had Villa as well).

Also, I detest Tottenham Hotspur. Almost as much as..... Now I NEVER thought I would ever say this, but come January 2nd:

'Come on you Spurs'

WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

Forgers sought

POLICE are trying to trace these men who used forged Scottish £20 notes to buy cigarettes from a petrol station in St Neots.

The two men, who both spoke with Irish or Scottish accents, walked into the Save Service Station in Huntingdon Street at around 2.50pm on Wednesday, July 15, and

bought a number of packets of cigarettes with three fake notes.

Pc Tim Allpress, said: "Someone, somewhere, will know these two men and I'd like to hear from them."

Anyone who recognises these men should contact Pc Allpress at St Neots police on 01480 456111 ext 5637.



No, we don't mean the bloke in the picture. We were wondering though if the PC Tim Allpress mentioned in this piece is the same Tim Allpress who had a brief league career with the town in the 1980s.

TALKING SHOPS

One of my brothers once told me that he'd been to Watford's club shop, and it was better than Luton's. "What a strange thing to say" I thought. My other brother, during a bout of anti-football sentiment, once told me that he was thinking about getting a yellow, black and red scarf, because he liked the colours. He never got one. I don't think he ever really wanted to, he was just trying (with considerable success, it has to be said) to piss me off.

Anyway, as a town I'm about as familiar with Watford as I am with Diss in Norfolk. All I've ever wanted from Watford is a parking space (as near to allotments as possible) before the match, and plenty of signs for the M1 after it.

However when a colleague of mine had his car serviced in Watford the other week and asked me to drop him off, I did so without boring him (and embarrassing myself) with refusal on the grounds that "I hate the scum". He comes from Woking and wouldn't have understood. Having dropped him off, and got myself a bit lost, I decided follow the "Football coaches" sign and check up on my younger brother's theory about the club shop. And so, with derisory sneer on face and LTFC badge on lapel, I went in - and happily found that he was talking out of his backside. The Watford shop is now the Watford/Saracens shop and hasn't got half the stock of the Town's. I put this to my brother, and he denied making the claim in the first place.

Hats off to Peter Lindau and the club shop staff, they could surely teach some of the ticket office staff a thing or two about customer relations (and they're always very kind when I ask how the book's going). But, and I ask this question in an air of déjà vu, isn't it about time that the club had a retail presence in the town centre?

Who are the most popular club in Luton? If you think it's Luton Town, then you might be suffering under the illusion that red is the in colour for scarves this winter. Manchester United are not only planning two more megastores in London and Dublin (following the success of their first which is stuck away in Manchester of all places), but also looking into opening up a chain of smaller retail outlets. The thought that such a shop could open up in Luton may be abhorrent to people reading this fanzine but, sadly, you can see such shops making good money up and down the country.

Even without an official Manchester United shop in the Arndale (yet), an outlet concerned with the local club is conspicuous by its absence. Somewhere where supporters can go when they're in town, without having to take the time and effort to traipse all the way out to Kenilworth Road (or, we hope, one day, the KohlerDome). Somewhere which sells, not only the shirts (which, admittedly, you can already get) but also scarves and mugs and stationery and pictures and teddy bears and those wonderful LTFC related books. And, importantly, match tickets too.

It could be argued that the club have already tried - but the stall in the corner of Asda in Wigmore (though it was probably cheap) was hopelessly inadequate and misplaced.

We need a proper club shop in the town centre - and it needn't try to be too glamorous, we're not trying to compete with Disney. Actually, I'd say that the best place for such an outlet would be the Arndale market hall where smaller local concerns, like our football club, can thrive away from the glitz (and expense) of the bigger shopping centre stores. My preliminary enquiries into the charges involved suggest that a spot in the market would cost the club between £300 and £600 per month depending on the size of the plot; not that size is important (as I keep telling the wife - ho ho), it's the town centre presence that's crucial.

Luton Town cannot compete with the likes of Man Utd. That's a fact that we need only feel ashamed about if we never try to stick a spoke in their wheels whenever we can. An opportunity to do just that exists in merchandising the club brand in Luton. And, in this respect, Luton Town FC could surely be doing more.

Tim Kingston

Luther Blissett emerges as anarchist hero



Anti-hero: Blissett in AC Milan days

LUTHER Blissett, the former England striker who enjoyed an undistinguished season at AC Milan, has long been forgotten by Italian football fans. But his name lives on.

For no obvious reason, "Luther Blissett" has become a byword for anarchy.

Last week four men, all calling themselves Luther Blissett, went on trial in Rome for travelling on a train without tickets. When asked to identify themselves, all said they were Luther Blissett and argue that "a collective identity does not need a ticket".

This is just one example of how Italy's growing band of Signor

tery. Commentators suggested that his only claim to fame was his ability to miss chances.

Although the Luther Blissetts are not organised, they do conform to type: many are students who enjoy poking fun at authority.

One Luther Blissett, from Bologna, said their goal was to show the public how to fight a dishonest media. "We are a collective ghost — a myth which finds reality in those who take part."

The real Luther Blissett is taking it in his stride: "It's rather funny — bordering on the ridiculous. But I don't mind these people using my name — whoever they are."

by TIM REID

Blissetts are operating. The country's media has been sent on several wild goose chases by the Luther Blissetts.

One 1994 hoax saw investigators from the television programme *Chi l'ha visto?* (Who has seen them?) spending weeks searching for an English artist named Henry Kipper missing in the north of Italy. Another prank concerned an exhibition of chimpanzee art in Venice.

Quite how Mr Blissett, now back at his old club, Watford, as assistant manager, has become a hero is a mys-

POINTS OF VIEW

- Why is it that when we score, there is no major celebration, no Thorpe-like passion, just a few high fives and a gentle pat on the back for the scorer. What's wrong with the players going mental, or at least doing a celebration dance, instead of being miserable bastards. I've seen more excitement on *Ready, Steady, Cook*.
- If we can have a full house for the Man City, Barnsley, Cov City games, why can't the extra 2,000 fans come to the crappy games such as Oldham, Burnley et al. Do you not feel guilty cheering when the Town score, knowing you're a part-time fan and only come out for the big games. If I can travel down from Nottingham for every game then I'm sure you can all travel from Stopsley, Flitwick etc. Sort it out you armchair fans.
- Why are Dumb and Dumber, aka Marvin and Mitchell, still playing? They're both crap, inept and slow. Bring Byker Grove White in, and either play McGowan left back or get a loan player, but pension those deadbeats off, before they cost us any more goals.
- What does Lawrence say to his players at half time to motivate them? Is he even in the dressing room? He's probably watching teletext to see how Middlesbrough/Charlton/Carlisle are getting on. Still, credit to Lawrence, he laid the foundations for the Addicks Premiership campaign, didn't you Robin?
- Why don't I support Ilkeston Town. The ground is only five minutes away, and the season ticket only costs £70, and I'd be back home by 4.55 watching final score.

Enough of the doom and gloom, we're gonna get promotion. I can feel it. That'll stop the locals taking the piss for supporting Luton. They all support sleeping giants like Notts County and Mansfield Town.

Ilkeston

BACK ISSUES

Most back issues are still available. We have sold out of issues 10, 11, 22, 24, 35 to 38 and 47, and issues 3, 13, 23, 26, 27, 28, and 42 are in very short supply. Issue 1 is free, 2 to 34 will cost you 25p plus SAE per copy and all others remain at 50p plus SAE each. When requesting back issues from us (at the usual address - see page 2) 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.

We've carried this story before, but it seems so ludicrous that it bears repetition. Mind you, they've got it about right — the Luther Blissetts are not organised, a bit like the original's legs!

Foreword Review

Luton Town: The Modern Era by Roger Wash

I know it is usual to review a whole book but, for a number of reasons, I've decided to restrict myself to just reviewing the foreword. The first reason is perfectly understandable, as a football supporter I read these sort of books from memory to memory and not cover to cover making a coherent review impossible. Secondly, football books either contain irritating mistakes or, more likely, the truth doesn't match our image of the event. Thirdly, it was a very good book which mirrored my years of support for the Town and any review I gave would not do it justice. Finally, and most importantly, the foreword summed up those 30 odd years so well for me I could nearly have written it myself. Anyway, I bet someone else has reviewed it.

It was written by John Moore, and his (first) arrival at Kenilworth Road was, give or take a few months, at the same time as mine. Some people watching Luton now would have first seen them against the likes of Manchester United or Liverpool. My first two home games were a 4-2 home defeat by Watford and a 0-0 draw against Workington, but surprisingly I am still here. Between us we have all seen some truly dismal times, but we have also reached the peaks. How many other teams of our size have had the success we have had in the last 30 years?

For small clubs good times are down to good management, good players and a good youth policy. We cannot expect to be able to buy success, any success we have is achieved on the back of hard work and dedication. If there is one person who epitomises this it is John Moore. It is typical of the man that he omits to mention that the most successful league campaign at the club was fronted by him and that it was his (and DP's) team that Ray Harford took on to Cup glory.

It is my belief that a good team can only become a successful team if they have an exceptional captain. He picked out Terry Branton, Brian Horton and Steve Foster, these three were certainly my favourites and all three led by example and brought us success (I hope I can add Stevo to the list at the end of the season).

Everyone remembers Bruce Rioch, Malcolm MacDonald, Ricky Hill, Mick Harford etc., but spare a thought for those who were just as important but never got the limelight, Keith Allen, Ray Whittaker, Ian Buxton, Laurie Sheffield, Matt Tees, Max Faulkner, Jimmy Ryan, John Ryan, John Aston, Alan West, Mal Donaghy, Kirk Stephens to name but a few, and, most importantly, John Moore himself.

Give him a contract for life. Let him choose the role he wants, I don't believe he wants to be manager, but as a coach he is the best we have ever had. The youth team and reserves are top of their leagues and the 1st team fortunes have been turned around since his (and his "babes") involvement.

There have been a few gaps in his Hatters employment history but, give or take a year or two, his 30 odd years service must make him the longest serving member of staff at the club. If players can have testimonials and leave the following week then surely JM deserves something. I suggest he has the first testimonial in the new stadium against the likes of Italy or Brazil.

Arise, Sir John.

Derbyshire

A BREAK FROM THE NORM

There has been plenty said about the KohlerDome in recent weeks but I want to question one thing. How is it that Sunderland received planning permission for a 41,000 stadium a long way from any main transport route but we had a much smaller scheme right next to a major motorway rejected. Surely nothing to do with the status of a club? I actually have great sympathy for David Kohler on this issue. The more I hear about the planning process, the more I believe that someone, somewhere, has not been playing fairly. One conspiracy theory I've heard mentioned was the fact that a certain new city up the M1 needs a top class sporting side in order to promote its image.



Was anyone else disappointed by the legendary Pork Roll at Lincoln? It failed to live up to my expectations after all that had been said about it. Personally, I felt it wasn't a patch on Walsall's Balti Pie.



The FA Cup tie at Boreham Wood proved exactly what sad scummers all W*tf*r'd 'fans' are. Didn't we all chuckle at the graffiti outside Meadow Park and apparently some scum had broken into the ground overnight and repeated the process on our terrace. It's sad really that they had nothing better to do on a Saturday night. Then in the 2nd half 4 idiots came round behind our terrace and began taunting the Luton fans — they were of course drowned out by the Hatters. Unfortunately, nothing has been reported about this. I can imagine the uproar if the Luton fans had done something similar. There would have been a week long enquiry on Radio ~~Herts~~ 3CR.



The support at Lincoln and especially Sunderland was brilliant. I hope that we have a similar crowd that we had in the North East for our midweek game at Maine Road in April. Confirming my report of 1st division away support in issue 50, Croftie was orgasmic when reporting '600' scummers at Bury!! I wonder how many we would take if we were in Division 1 and had such huge home crowds?

Stating the blooming obvious we need to sort out the left hand side of the team. Mitchell Thomas is so slow now that if he was a horse he would be shot. Gavin McGowan spend his time either being booked or on his arse. McIndoe and Cox have both done OK there, but are surely for the future whilst Simon Davies appears to have lost any interest in the game. It has to be addressed immediately if we are to continue to sustain a realistic promotion challenge. Stop talking and identify the problem, Lennie, and sort it out. There must be a few Premiership reserve players available for loan.



I have always felt that Marvin should not be in the team. The goals and games he has cost us in the last 10 years must be huge. Alan White seems a much more composed defender and Marvin rarely seems sure what he should be doing. It was comical to see him being embarrassed by non-league players at Boreham Wood. He remains in the team as he appears to be Lennie's favourite and with our manager, like Pleat, if your face don't fit.....

However, I refuse to blame Marvin for his own goal at the Stadium of Light. If it hadn't been

for his injury time goal against Ipswich we wouldn't have even been there.



Finally, with this being the last issue of 1998, here are a few New Year wishes:

- Promotion, if not automatically by the play-offs, preferably beating Man City in the semis and Fulham in the final.
- No sales of any needed players.
- Lennie smiling.
- Kohler revealing the rat in the planning process, turning the first sod at junction 10 and sticking two fingers up at smug Len Elson.
- W*tf*rd returning to their true form and returning from where they came.

Norm

THE TWILIGHT ZONE

After reading the following, you may sympathise with the editor's confusion on receiving this match report. Then, on a second or third reading (sounds like something from Parliament) you may just figure out which match it is a report on. And you may then conclude that the writer should take more water with it..... or let us all into the secret of his time machine!

Got to Walsall at 11 am, and headed for the nearest boozier. Walsall's a crap town and the accent makes them all sound thick. Still, the beer was okay so I ain't complaining. Eventually met up with this geezer who supported Man City, but at 2.50 he was buying another Bacardi Breezer, not heading to City, so I figured just a part-time Les Battersby glory hunter - sleeping giant - Joe Royle Dogs of Shite fan.

Arrived at ground and managed to get in as a junior despite being 24 and stinking of all the ale in Walsall, which made my day. Nearly fainted when I saw Simon Davies was playing, had to confirm with about nine people who he was — I'd forgotten what he looked like! Still, he played okay.

Went 1-0 down to a crappy goal — saw myself on TV wearing the fluorescent orange jacket making gestures to the Walsall scorer. Hope the girlfriends not watchin'.

Equalised when fat Phyllis got his beer gut in the way of a cross sending the travelling barmy army happy. Then went 2-1 down when McGowan scored a superb diving header in the wrong goal. All was not lost, however, as Luton's answer to Niall Quinn scored, going crazy while the rest of the miserable Luton players just trudged back to the halfway line. So much for celebrating lads! Obviously caught the dose of miserableness from Smiler Lawrence.

Ilkeston

The William Hill HatterLeague 4

Another update after a whole 10 matches of the season, in this case being up to the home match against Manchester City. All of the figures are now confirmed, and it is interesting to note that all of the players in the defence have managed to educe their points totals since the last issue, in spite of having played only two matches in that time. Elsewhere it is a different story, and the player of the issue award winner (if we had such an award) would surely be Ray McKinnon, after going from 6 points to 19.

The HatterSix players and their scores are:

Code	Player	£	Pts	Code	Player	£	Pts
<u>Goalkeepers</u>							
301	Kelvin Davis		0.7 m	1	302	Nathan Abbey	0.3 m -10
<u>Defenders</u>							
311	Gavin McGowan		0.5 m	-4	314	Marvin Johnson	0.6 m 18
312	Julian James		0.4 m	-10	315	Steve Davis	0.8 m 27
313	Mitchell Thomas		0.6 m	10	316	Alan White	0.6 m 2
<u>Midfielders</u>							
321	Sean Evers		0.6 m	35	327	Ray McKinnon	0.7 m 19
322	Matthew Spring		0.5 m	22	328	Jimmy Cox	0.3 m 0
323	Graham Alexander		0.7 m	36	329	Michael McIndoe	0.4 m 3
324	Paul McLaren		0.6 m	1	330	Andre Scarlett	0.3 m 0
325	Paul Showler		0.5 m	0	340	Kofi Nyamah	0.4 m 0
326	Simon Davies		0.4 m	2	<u>Strikers</u>		
331	Phil Gray		0.5 m	35	335	Liam George	0.5 m 0
332	Stuart Douglas		0.4 m	23	336	Dwight Marshall	0.5 m 0
333	Herve Bacque		0.7 m	0	337	Gary Doherty	0.3 m 3
334	Andrew Fotiadis		0.4 m	2			

Previously we had a leading pack who were sticking together like glue, but the defensive frailties of the couple of games covered by this issue have dealt with that problem, and Hilary Williams suddenly and (we presume), unexpectedly finds her team with a 8 point lead. However, the manager of the issue bonus points went to Per Axel Petterson (no relation), although you might be tempted to feel sorry for the compiler's son, Peter Bulkeley, who missed out by swapping Mitchell Thomas for Marvin Johnson.

Leading Places:

1	HILARY'S HILARIOUS HATTERS	Hilary Williams (Welwyn Garden City)	162
2	NORWAY SIXPACK	Per Axel Petterson (Norway)	154
3=	CHRISTABEL'S KICKERS	Christabel Orr (Birmingham)	152
3=	SCIENTIAE ET LABOR DETUR	Mick Price (Kensworth, Beds)	152
3=	KENILWORTH KICKERS	Andrew Wallace (Hitchin)	152
3=	ANDY'S STOP HATTERS	Andy Wesson (Luton)	152
7	NEW ENGLAND REVOLUTION	Peter Bulkeley (Walsall)	143
8	MIDTABLE OBSCURITY	Dave Church (Gloucs)	140

You will, no doubt, be delighted to hear that the editor has climbed another place in the table, now being up to 12th, with 139 points. A late entrant to the competition is our own Chris

Lennon who would be level with the editor, if it wasn't for the ten points he was penalised for submitting a late entry. He lies just behind TV stars Elliot Kenyon and Tony Allbones, both on 130 points, who featured recently on Sky Sports' *Soccer AM* show. Should any of you be concerned about insider dealing, with Russell's son being in the top 10, the balance is redressed by his daughter Ceri holding 119th place, not an unassailable distance behind her mum in equal 94th with 95 points. However, it looks increasingly as if Andy Hunt is settling in for a prolonged campaign as the Doncaster Rovers of the HatterLeague, with a less than tenuous hold on bottom place, still with minus 6 points. At least Kevin Roche, occupying the penultimate place has a solid geographical excuse for picking the wrong team.

Bottom End:

119	CERI'S CLOWNS	Ceri Bulkeley (Walsall)	66
120	POD'S PLAYMATES	Karen Paxford (Reading)	62
121	DAVE'S DYNAMOS	David Harris (Southampton)	50
122	THE YOUNG ONES	Kevin Roche (South Africa)	28
123	WHO ARE YA?	Andy Hunt (London)	-6

Should anyone be concerned about our accepting late entries, there were only two, and that was entirely down to Chris Lennon. As a reassurance that there is no real benefit, Chris's dad, Terry, is also in equal 94th place, so there was clearly no attempt to seek an advantage there.

Anyway, that's it for now, we'll be back with another gripping instalment of how the fanzine world's richest competition is going in January or February — fixtures permitting.

K.F.H./R.B.

WANTED

Issues 10 and 38 of *Mad as a Hatter!* and a copy of "The Luton Town Story".

Please contact the editor if you can help.

CONTRIBUTIONS

We are now able to accept contributions in various forms, following our recent entry into the world of modern technology. Of course we will still accept the traditional handwritten or typed copy, but we can now receive your works on disk or even by fax or email. And we still need your help to produce this fanzine. We have three more issues to go this season, and we might even work to a sensible schedule now. The next issue is due out in February (we're aiming for the Wrexham game) and the deadline will be the end of January. So, please send you articles, match reports, press cuttings, photos, letters or whatever to one of the following:

Mad as a Hatter! 38 Twigden Court, Mount Pleasant Road, Luton, LU3 2RL.
Fax: (01582) 653392. Email: khayward@aol.com

The Sharpe End

You may soon find reports of Luton Town matches in your newspaper in rhyming couplets or dodgy doggerel — and the club may shortly acquire a brand new 'celebrity' fan to share the mantle with over-worked Nick Owen.

The prestigious, if less than financially rewarding, position of Poet Laureate is up for grabs.

Appointed by the Queen, on the advice of Tony Blair, who in turn receives a recommendation from his aides, the Poet Laureate is employed to write appropriate lines whenever some major event of national importance takes place.

In return, he or she receives a stipend of about a hundred quid but becomes the envy of all his or her fellow rhymesters.

Ted Hughes, the most recent incumbent, recently died. I've been running a book on his successor and one of the most fancied contenders is a certain John Hegley, who just happens to be a Hatters fan — he's a 14/1 shot at the moment, giving him more chance than the likes of Pam Ayres (33/1), Spike Milligan (66/1) and Des Lynam (100/1 after releasing an album of poetry readings, including one of his own).

If Hegley does get the position I'm sure he won't waste time writing about Charles' nuptials, the Queen's abdication or her Mum's sad demise, but will get straight on to the important topics like the mystery of Andrew Fotiadis' disappearance or why the scoreboard suddenly went mental during the Man City game and kept insisting that 46 minutes had elapsed when the first half still had twenty minutes to run.

Speaking of which game, it was interesting to observe the resigned good humour with which the City fans in my part of the ground discussed their side's current situation and chances of any imminent improvement.

I mentioned earlier the rather glaring lack of Luton Town celebrity fans, which is so pronounced that it leads to the rather depressing situation whereby our esteemed editor and myself often find ourselves being wheeled out to give opinions on Three Counties Radio, etc.

Reading a new book recently I was surprised to discover that we narrowly missed out on a racing cert for more exposure in the shape of BBC TV racing commentator, Julian Wilson — now a dyed in the wool Swindon supporter, but who reveals in his "Some You Win" that the first team his father Peter, a famous tabloid journalist of his day, took him to see at home was Luton.

Mind you, in the same book Julian also reveals details of his assignments with a prostitute — I suspect that he might find it difficult to decide which of these two revelations he now finds the most embarrassing!

On the morning following the Sunderland game I had to appear on BBC TV plugging my new book, "14 Million To One", published by Robson and appearing at all good book shops in your vicinity.

Waiting to go on to do my piece, and having discussed the likelihood of the Spice Girls having the Christmas number One with Fiona Fullerton, who just happened to be wandering around, I was sitting in the hospitality room into which various people associated with the programme were nipping to grab a quick cup of tea or coffee.

The general discussion was about Wimbledon's victor over Chelsea, but one woman piped up, "Poor old Luton lost at Sunderland, wasn't that a shame?" to a chorus of sympathy from most of those in earshot.

And that was a theme taken up by most of the papers that morning — "Plucky" Luton went down fighting, the "gallant" Hatters went out after a "brave" effort. Even Niall Quinn was quoted, saying what a good show we'd put up.

Well, thanks a lot, World, but as far as I'm concerned, you can keep your patronising sympathy. Defeat is defeat, regardless of how it comes about, and I'd rather have stumbled through due to a series of outrageous flukes or diabolical refereeing decisions, than gone out as everyone's favourite lovable loser.

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Yet again, I attended a Sportsman's Dinner with a big name guest and had to sit, disinterested, while the club in question tried to raise money by raffling off souvenirs, signed photos, shirts, etc, which is all well and good except that they always seem to be Man United, Chelsea or Arsenal memorabilia.

Sure, those clubs' items attract a lot of interest and raise decent amounts, but in any given gathering of a couple of hundred people there are going to be at least fifty who don't support one of the 'big six' clubs, yet no-one ever thinks of bringing in the odd item from 'unfashionable' sides which might just raise them an unexpectedly generous donation.

The best Sportsman's Dinner I ever attended featured Frank Worthington, who not only told the funniest football story I've ever heard, about a game he played against Tommy Smith, but also asked to be introduced to me on the grounds that he'd lost so much money to my company as an unsuccessful punter that he wanted me to know just who was paying my wages!

*Graham Sharpe*

## TOWN TRAVELS

What lovelier way to finish off the year, and the long Christmas weekend, than with a visit to Brighton Beach? Well, probably none, but we the nearest the travelling Town fan will get is the Brighton Beach End of Dean Court, home of AFC Bournemouth, which is a good ten minute drive from the nearest beach of any description. So, let's skip all the rubbish about the beach and get on with things. On previous visits I have ascertained that the ground is long way from the station (about 2 miles), that going by car is easy, but getting out of the car parks is a nightmare (comparable to that normally reserved for new stadia), and there is a serious shortage of decent pubs nearby. So, I'll see you there. The usual drinking haunt for away fans is the QUEENS PARK, on Holdenhurst Road, about 15 minutes walk from the ground. There are, amazingly, 6 Good Beer Guide pubs in Bournemouth, but none are close to the ground other than the Supporters Club at the ground, which has very restricted admittance on match days.

Our first match of 1999 is at Colchester's Layer Road, on the day of the FA Cup third round. Oh, how we wanted to be going to Colchester in midweek (but just whisper it, and pray that the match isn't called off). Layer Road is another of those cuddly little third division grounds that has risen above it's true station in life. It could well be all ticket for us, due to the limited space available. Again, the station is a long walk from the ground and for those going by car it is street parking only — but definitely not on Layer Road itself or in the nearby army housing estate. Most of the pubs are in the town centre, but for families THE SUN, Lexdon Road (the A1124) is suitable, and has several real ales. Elsewhere, the ODD ONE OUT, 28 Mersea Road, is said to be the best free house in the town and is close to Colchester Town station (the main station is Colchester, known to locals as the North station).

Next up, a fortnight later, is Preston and I have to say it makes a pleasant change to be going up there on a Saturday. What's more, after the last couple of years when we've been stood in front of the main stand, we should now find ourselves in the new Bill Shankly Kop, just round the corner. This should mean that the pies will be hot right through till half-time, which will compensate for having to pay more to get in. Amazingly, we can also drink at the ground, in LEGENDS, which is normally a nightclub, but opens up as a pub before the game, and welcomes families and away supporters. It's located on Deepdale Road, but I can't help thinking that there's a catch. On the way to the ground from the M6 there is another family pub at THE HESKETH ARMS (corner of Blackpool Road and New Hall Lane), whilst in the town there is an excellent choice of pubs.

Finally, Burnley will welcome us in their own inimitable way. The police advise against recommending specific pubs for "safety" reasons, which is rather handy as I'm running out of page for this article. The best advice is probably to stop on the way to Burnley, and then go straight to the ground. On a previous visit to the town, locals advised us on which pubs we should not even walk past!

*K.F.H.*



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CHALLENGE.



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