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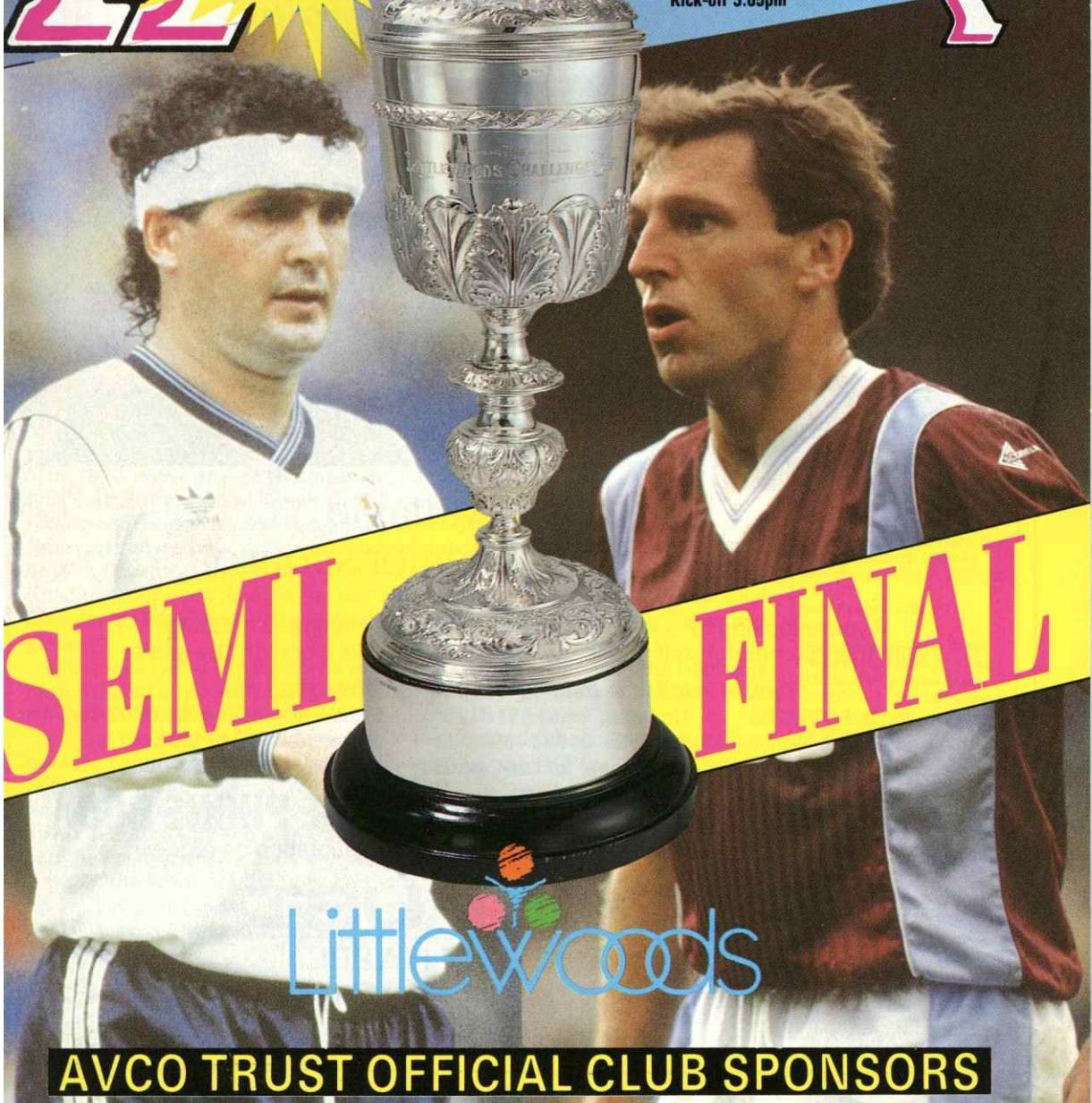


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LUTON TOWN

Sunday, 12th February, 1989
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A CUP PEDIGREE

THERE is nothing like a cup tie to arouse the passion of the crowd and when it is a semi-final well there will be blood, sweat and tears shed out there on the terraces today.

Anyone present can't fail to become engrossed by this highly charged emotional experience generated by their own presence. Upton Park's close confines add an intimacy to the game that is missing at bigger grounds. The closeness of the action allows the onlookers to feel very much a part of the theatre. Nerve ends will tingle both on and off the field of play for so much is at stake. Feelings run deep on these occasions as passions rise to a nervous boiling point. It is athletic drama at its very best.

If experience and history count for anything then West Ham United have deep resources to draw upon. For since the inception of the Football League Cup in 1960 the Hammers have reached this stage of the competition in five previous tournaments.

There has been a strange Midlands influence on our destiny at this stage of the competition as well. Our first semi-final appearance, in 1964, resulted in a 6-3 aggregate victory for Leicester City. Two years later the Hammers disposed of Cardiff City (10-3 on aggregate) to reach the final. Twelve months on WBA proved the victors thanks to a Jeff Astle hat-trick.

In 1972 came one of the most dramatic semi-final's of all time when Stoke City, inspired by a miraculous Gordon Banks in goal, beat us 3-2 at Old Trafford in a second replay. Nine years later a great deal of excitement and drama surrounded our semi-final tie with Coventry City who overcame a 2-0 deficit in the first game at Highfield Road to score three times in the last 19 minutes. . . . It was a last minute goal from Jimmy Neighbour that saw West Ham through to Wembley in the second game.

In contrast Luton Town have no such stories to recall. But while the Hammers have suffered a relatively barren patch in the last eight years the Hatters have striven forward to sample the thrill of success themselves.

Having been barred from competing in the first Littlewoods Cup competition because of their ban on visiting supporters they entered the competition on September 22nd, 1987 at Wigan. A 1-0 win followed by a 4-2 success at Kenilworth Road saw them through to the third round. Coventry City, Ipswich Town, Bradford City and then Oxford United were beaten en route to Wembley and their sensational 3-2 victory over Arsenal.

So Luton Town are the only side who have never lost a Littlewoods Cup tie. . . . The scene is set for what promises to be a thriller in this the Football League's own domestic affair.



By Colin Benson



BILLY BONDS – Scored in the semi-finals against Stoke City (1972) and Coventry City (1981).



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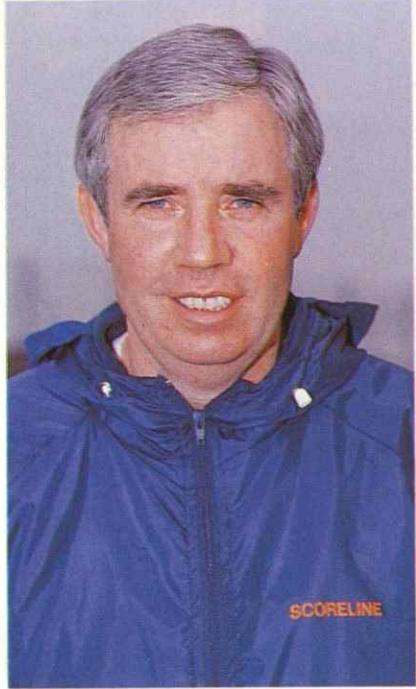
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RON BOYCE - Coach

Born in East Ham. Ron attended the Brampton School. Played Schools soccer for East Ham, Essex and London Boys and won six England Schoolboy caps.

Joined West Ham as a groundstaff boy in 1959 and made his senior debut as an amateur versus Millwall in the Southern Floodlit Cup (13.10.59).

The following year he was capped by England at Youth level and signed as a pro, making his League debut versus Preston North End at Upton Park (22.10.60). Four years later he scored the winning goal against Preston at Wembley in the F.A. Cup Final. In 1965 Ron was back at Wembley again.

In all he made 282 League appearances for the Hammers, the last game being at Filbert Street in December 1972, and played in a further 57 major cup ties.

The busy midfielder recalls some epic semi-final appearances. He scored twice against Manchester United in that mud-splattered F.A. Cup semi-final in 1975 at Hillsborough. "I scored the first two goals and that was a great feeling," he says. "We were in a state, covered from head to toe in mud. I think it was Bonzo who shouted to the bench about it and when physio Bill Jenkins came on next time he threw a bucket of water over Billy."

MICK McGIVEN - Coach

Born at Newcastle-upon-Tyne, he played for Newcastle and Northumberland County at schoolboy level.

Mick started his professional career with Sunderland. A half-back he made his League debut at the start of the 1969-70 season against Coventry City (9.8.69) and remained in the side for the whole season. Capped for England at Under-23 level versus Scotland he went on to complete 113 League matches for the Rokerites (nine goals), before moving south to join the Hammers (22.12.73), after a month's trial.

Made his debut for us in the No. 5 shirt at Liverpool (1.12.73) and completed 21 League games that season. In all Mick played in 48 League matches (two as sub.) for us and seven cup ties, before being appointed player-coach to the Reserve Team in 1979.

Mick has many cup tie memories to recall but says: "The thing that sticks out in my mind was after the second-leg of our semi-final with Coventry. Some of their fans missed their coach home and John Lyall invited them upstairs and gave them drinks and sandwiches while arrangements were sorted out."



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JOHN LYALL "Why be nervous"

WHEN it comes to handling the preparation for a semi-final there are few better equipped managers than John Lyall the longest serving boss in the business. During his 14 years at the helm John has steered the Hammers to no less than four major finals which represents a one-hundred-per-cent success rate at the semi-final stage.

"It would be nice to maintain that record," smiles John. "It is a nice experience participating in a semi-final. This is possibly the most difficult part of any competition. Just two games from Wembley. It becomes very important.

"You have to keep things in perspective. We have achieved something by getting this far and we must be grateful for that. Anything extra is a bonus."

John's first experience of the tensions of a semi-final tie came way back in 1957 when he was a member of the Hammers' Youth team that won through to the final of the F.A. Youth Cup and was eventually beaten by Manchester United. But how much can one fall back on past events to help forge the future?

"I think it does help," says John. "It's experience, the experience of doing something a number of times. You could call it repetitive learning. It isn't just about what I have picked up from those previous encounters either. We draw on all the knowledge in the club. Players and coaches who have been here before."

"Of course you know in the back of your mind that no matter how thorough the preparation it is all down to what you do on the day that finally decides the issue. All we can do is prepare the team tactically and mentally so that they are keen and eager to do well."

Youth will be to the fore in key positions for West Ham United this afternoon but the Hammers boss is confident they will handle themselves well.

"We are lucky. We have senior players like Alvin Martin, Alan Devonshire, Ray Stewart, Phil Parkes and Liam Brady who can help settle and reassure the younger players. They have been an invaluable help this week even though one or two of them will not be playing themselves."

"Inexperience is not necessarily a bad thing anyway. Alan Taylor was a young relatively untried player when he was thrown in for the sixth round tie in the F.A. Cup in 1975. He scored both goals in a 2-0 win over Arsenal, another two in the semi-final replay with Ipswich Town at Stamford Bridge, and two against Fulham in the final. Then there was Paul Allen in our 1980 campaign when he became the youngest player to participate in a Wembley final."

"So all the experience and knowledge can be confounded by one player proving he is an exception rather than the rule."

"There is bound to be some trepidation of course. That is only human nature. We all want to do well. But we have worked methodically and sensibly at our game and are as equipped as we could be to do the task . . . Why be nervous about something you want to achieve?"

"Luton Town are a good footballing side and we respect them for that. Ray Harford produced a very attractive team when he was in charge at Fulham and he has carried on the good work at Kenilworth Road. Their philosophy is right and I'm sure we are in for a very interesting couple of games."

The synthetic surface at Luton has sown a seed of doubt in many people's minds about the second-leg. But John Lyall dismisses the problem with a logical and rational response.

He says: "If you want to be successful you overcome all obstacles. It's as simple as that."

"We shall have four or five good sessions on a similar surface before the game and whilst some players may be uncertain our record shows that we have done quite well on plastic pitches in the past."

"We have reached the semi-final which is an achievement in itself. We should be just grateful for any success. You know there are a lot of people who have given tremendous service and effort to the game yet have never come near to achieving this much."

HAMMERS NEWS

LOSS OF CHEQUES

We would ask any supporters who paid by cheque for tickets for the Aston Villa or Manchester United fixture and whose cheque has not been presented to contact the Ticket Office as a matter of urgency.

TURNSTILE CONGESTION

The Club are concerned at the delay that is arising for supporters entering the North and South Banks, particularly at evening games. Supporters can assist by arriving that little bit earlier at the ground but more importantly by presenting the correct money at the turnstile. We realise that £4.50 is a somewhat awkward denomination but the giving of change does lead to considerable delays.

EAST TERRACE - CUP TIES

East Terrace season ticket holders should be aware of the need to purchase a ticket in advance for all cup ties played at Upton Park. The members only restriction does not allow for cash admission at the turnstiles. Season ticket holders can assist by applying before the actual day of the match. Those that do not must purchase a ticket from the Portakabin on the Forecourt prior to the game but as was evidenced at the Swindon match congestion can occur around the shop area.

PRIZE OF A LIFE-TIME

Friday the 13th did not prove unlucky for Shirley Cook of Leytonstone, East London.

Shirley was the lucky winner of a tremendous trip of a life-time for her and a guest from our Fundraising Department.

Her prize consists of flights to New York and Barbados plus a trip down to Las Vegas with £1,000 worth of chips, to give her the chance to become a millionairess... Shirley, why not make that Friday 13th in Las Vegas - with your luck we are sure you will do the job!

Shirley who beat over 40,000 people in a Super Draw for this fabulous prize, is seen receiving her prize from Phil Parkes accompanied by the Walt Disney characters and Kevin Camfield, Managing Director of Utopia Travel, East London.

DIAL-A-SEAT SERVICE

The Club receive numerous comments from supporters unable to purchase tickets for cup matches through this service. The fact of the matter is that with 8,000 season ticket holders, our existing ticket reservation system could not cope with such demand in what is usually a very short period of time between rounds. In addition I am sure supporters will appreciate how difficult it would be to actually get through on the telephone at such times. We would assure you that methods of improving the quality of service are currently being investigated.

TODAY'S REFEREE

GEORGE COURTNEY is one of the game's most respected officials earning a reputation both home and abroad for his handling of big matches.

The Headmaster of a Primary School, George comes from Spennymoor, County Durham, and started his refereeing career in the Auckland League in 1962. He then used the Wearside League and Northern League as the stepping stones to the League line, to which he was registered in 1971, gaining refereeing status in 1973 and international recognition with F.I.F.A. in 1977.

George officiated at the 1986 World Cup Finals in Mexico and two years earlier was involved in the European Nations Finals - staged in France - and the Asian Championships. The 1981 World Youth Championship; the U.E.F.A. Cup Finals of 1982 and '86 as well as the European Cup semi-final with PSV Eindhoven and Real Madrid in 1988 are other big appointments he has undertaken abroad.

On the domestic front George has taken charge of the 1983 Milk Cup Final, between Liverpool and Manchester United, and prior to that refereed the 1980 F.A. Cup Final when the Hammers beat Arsenal 1-0.

Surprisingly, this is only George's second game at Upton Park, his East End debut being in November 1987 when the Hammers beat Nottingham Forest 3-2 in a thriller.

SUPERSTITIOUS?



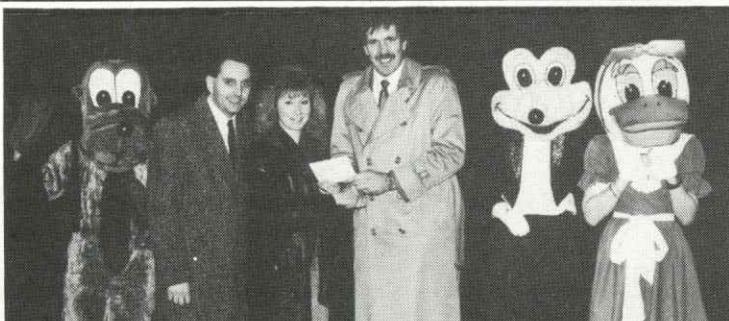
David Taylor (above), Sponsorship Representative of Avco Trust, has received a little bit of stick lately with regards to his pin-stripe suit.

It all started back in September when he wore it for the first-leg of the Littlewoods Cup. Since then he has worn it for all our Littlewoods Cup ties. It's his 'lucky suit'. David says he is wearing it for both legs of the semi-final and then he will have it cleaned and pressed in case it's required for April.

Adrienne Kane, in our Sponsors Lounge is also superstitious. She wears a large pair of gold earrings and has done so for each of the Littlewoods ties.

Do you have any superstitions? Do you wear anything special? Do anything special? Have any lucky charms? If so tell us about them. It could make interesting reading.

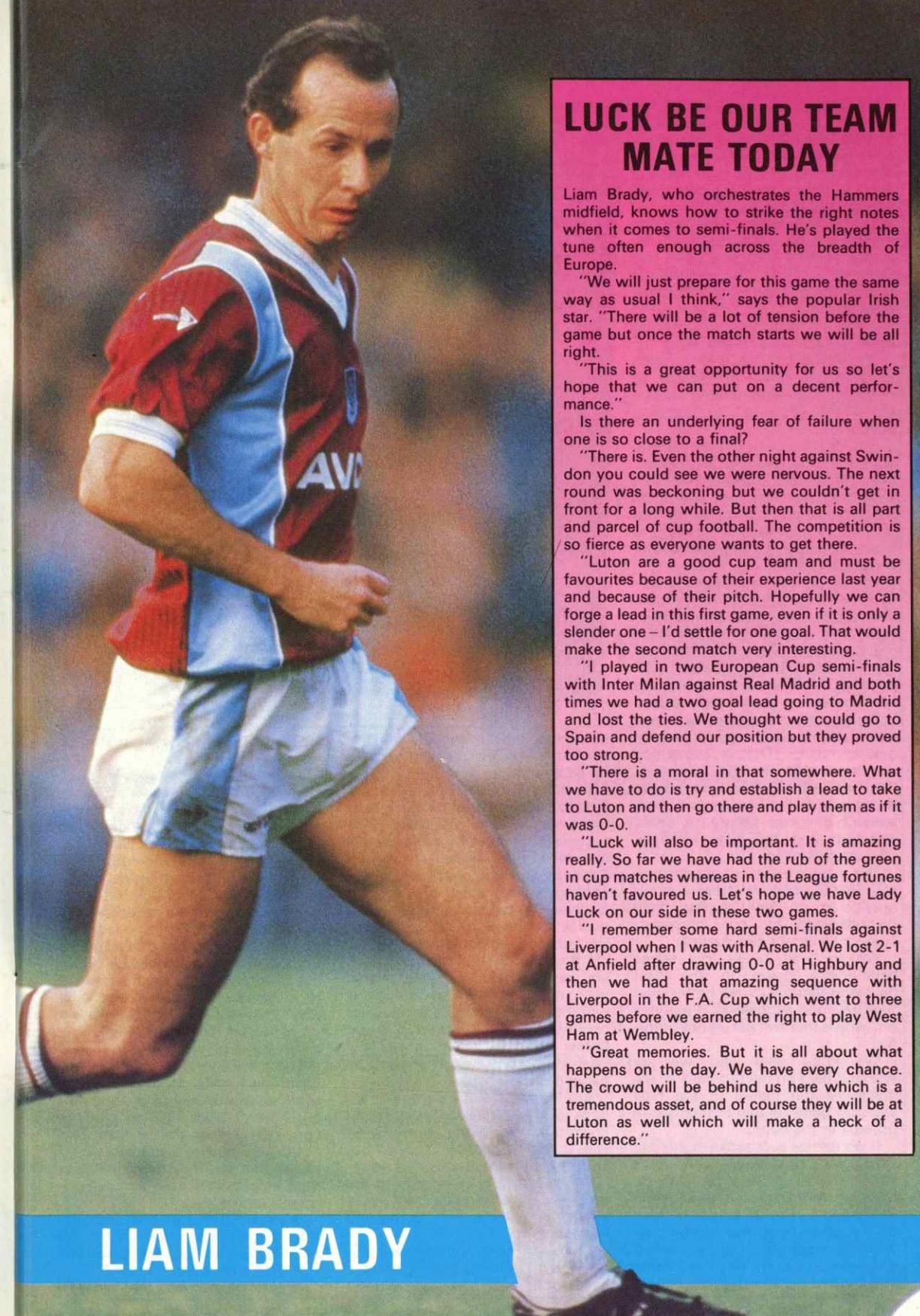
Send your superstitions and lucky omens to Matchday Superstitions, Commercial Office, West Ham United Football Club, Boleyn Ground, London E13.



CROCKER'S CORNER

I have received a few enquiries of late as to Stewart Robson's welfare - the answer was provided by our physio Rob Jenkins in the last programme. A long term injury must be madly frustrating to say the least, but it's nice to know that Stewart has not been forgotten by you. All I can say is who is he exactly? Seriously, I'm sure you'll join with me in wishing him a speedy recovery, and I know he's got a sense of humour! Well, he'd better have! Staying with injuries, I see that Ray Stewart and Stuart Slater have had an arthroscopy, which sounds almost painful. What does it mean in English Rob? Hello to all who went to the Junior Hammers meeting way back on 19th January. In the bundle for food and drinks afterwards, one youngster asked me if I would be doing the PA at Wembley if we got there. Now there's a thought - I rather think they have someone, and if they were totally desperate, they've got 91 other people to ask first! Please send your letters to Ian Crocker, Hammers DJ, West Ham United Football Club, Green Street, Upton Park, London E13 9AZ.

LIAM BRADY



LUCK BE OUR TEAM MATE TODAY

Liam Brady, who orchestrates the Hammers midfield, knows how to strike the right notes when it comes to semi-finals. He's played the tune often enough across the breadth of Europe.

"We will just prepare for this game the same way as usual I think," says the popular Irish star. "There will be a lot of tension before the game but once the match starts we will be all right.

"This is a great opportunity for us so let's hope that we can put on a decent performance."

Is there an underlying fear of failure when one is so close to a final?

"There is. Even the other night against Swindon you could see we were nervous. The next round was beckoning but we couldn't get in front for a long while. But then that is all part and parcel of cup football. The competition is so fierce as everyone wants to get there."

"Luton are a good cup team and must be favourites because of their experience last year and because of their pitch. Hopefully we can forge a lead in this first game, even if it is only a slender one - I'd settle for one goal. That would make the second match very interesting."

"I played in two European Cup semi-finals with Inter Milan against Real Madrid and both times we had a two goal lead going to Madrid and lost the ties. We thought we could go to Spain and defend our position but they proved too strong."

"There is a moral in that somewhere. What we have to do is try and establish a lead to take to Luton and then go there and play them as if it was 0-0."

"Luck will also be important. It is amazing really. So far we have had the rub of the green in cup matches whereas in the League fortunes haven't favoured us. Let's hope we have Lady Luck on our side in these two games."

"I remember some hard semi-finals against Liverpool when I was with Arsenal. We lost 2-1 at Anfield after drawing 0-0 at Highbury and then we had that amazing sequence with Liverpool in the F.A. Cup which went to three games before we earned the right to play West Ham at Wembley."

"Great memories. But it is all about what happens on the day. We have every chance. The crowd will be behind us here which is a tremendous asset, and of course they will be at Luton as well which will make a heck of a difference."

THIS ONE'S FOR THE FANS

"Semi-finals are strange affairs. It is easy to believe that you are already at Wembley. Obviously that is not the case and we have to make sure that everyone is in the right frame of mind to do the business over these two important games.

This is the heartbreak tie. The one that really hurts the losers. If you fail in the final at least you have had some glory and the marvellous experience of playing at Wembley. Lose at this stage of the game and you are left with nothing - having been just an arm's length away.

It's hard but this is a two-match tie and that gives you longer to prepare and to some extent takes a bit of the edge out of this first match.

But they are both big games and we are getting used to 'big games' down here this season. Even the League games now are taking on such proportions because of our position in the table. Every game is vital and we are learning to live with it week by week.

I believe our cup runs have stimulated our supporters. It is more noticeable with them than anywhere. They are able to talk about the cup successes rather than the First Division and that is a nice diversion for them while we are down at the bottom. It gives them a little respite.

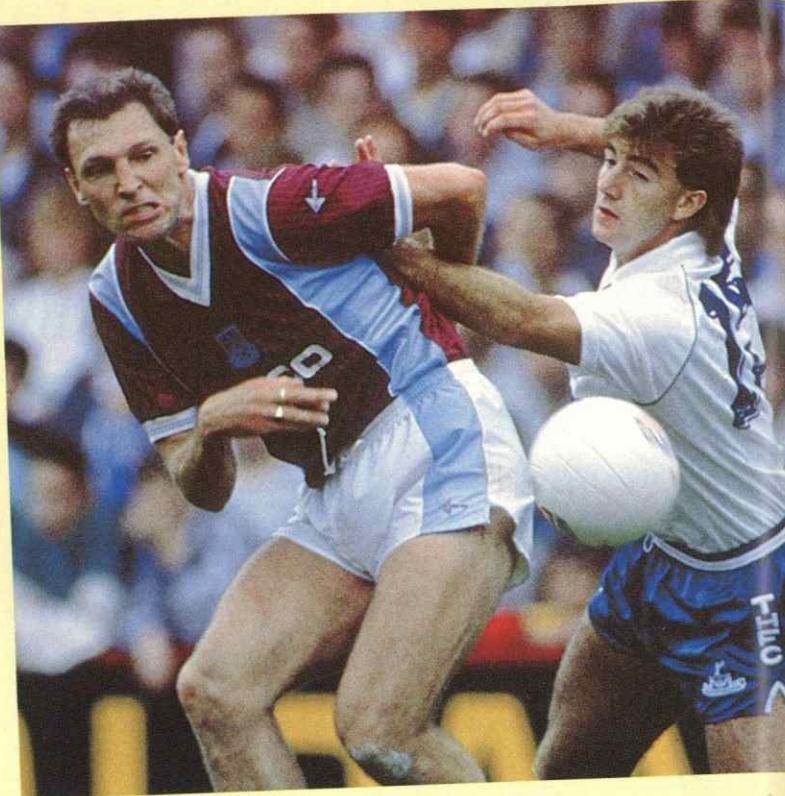
Earlier on in the season we were playing some good football and not getting results. That is something our supporters can live with. But there was a spell when we were not doing well in the League and there weren't any cup games to divert attention and the fans naturally became frustrated.

The players believe in themselves still. We are sure we have enough quality to do well as has been demonstrated by our successes against Liverpool and Arsenal.

We are well aware that teams have gone down in the past believing that they were better than their position suggested. It's points not words that will get us out of this fix.

We know that and we are working hard on the problem. In the meantime our failure in the First Division gives us more incentive to do well in the cups.

If we can be successful in the cup then our supporters will have something to go to work with on Monday morning at a time when they have had to take a lot of stick from Arsenal fans, and maybe Tottenham supporters to a certain degree... It can be very hard when you have to work with those people



all the time. So cup success will give our fans a little bit of ammunition to hit back with.

Looking back to our last semi-final in this competition I can't really make comparisons. We were a very successful Second Division team at the time and were up against

Coventry City who were the up and coming young stars of the First Division. We were winning a lot of games and were full of confidence. We believed we could beat anyone.

I don't think you can look back and say this was the same or that was similar. It is a different game with different circumstances. The only way we can approach it is that Luton stand between us and the final. Who knows what is going to happen on the day?

It is the same as the big games we have played against Arsenal and Liverpool. We didn't know what was going to happen. You go out with the right intentions and hopefully the ball breaks for you in the first few minutes. You can sense when something is going to happen.

Luton, I'm sure, will be coming to do a job on us in the first leg and we have got to make sure that we don't

let them. They will want to stop us scoring.

They will feel they have a good chance against any team at Kenilworth Road but we have played some good games in the cups this season and any side that can win at Highbury must be dangerous.

I'm looking forward to the games and to facing up to Mick Harford. I rate him as one of the best players in the First Division. A strong lad, very good in the air, he has proved over a number of years his consistency. An old fashioned style centre-forward he is the type that gives everyone he plays against a problem. So I have a lot of respect for him and think he is a very good player.

Luton are very similar to us. They have been able to string games together where they have done well but haven't been able to produce consistency over the season. This doesn't mean they are a bad side it just means that they have quality in their side that is able to beat any opposition on their day.

We are in the same boat so hopefully this afternoon we will be able to fulfil our potential and Luton will not. That's all we can hope."

ALVIN MARTIN

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'WE'VE WORKED HARD FOR THIS'

Mark Ward has been to Wembley before. "Now I bet not many people know that," quips the bubbly star whose enthusiasm and commitment is contagious.

It was in the F.A. Trophy and Mark was playing for Northwich Victoria. "We lost 2-1 to Telford but it was our big day," he recalls nostalgically.

"I shall never forget it. There were 40,000 at Wembley which was a huge gate for us and there was no pressure on us at all so we thoroughly enjoyed the day."

The pressure, admits Mark, was felt in the semi-final against Dagenham, which like this tie was decided over two legs.

Says Mark: "We were three goals up in the first game at home then Dagenham got two late goals to make it 3-2. They were favourites to win through after that.

"There was a lot of strain on us at Dagenham. It was a very tense match with the result more important than the performance. But once we scored that gave us a two-goal cushion and we could see Wembley in our sights."

The goal came from none other than Mark Ward himself and is stored in his own personal file of treasured memories. "The scenes after that game were very emotional," he tells. "It meant so much to so many people connected with the club some of whom had been involved for 30 years. The manager and some of the officials were in tears. It was a very moving experience."

There is going to be a lot of emotional involvement in this semi-final tie as well – there is so much at stake. "I'll be very excited," says Mark, "although to some extent this is much more like a quarter-final really with another game to come."

"I must admit I don't like playing on Luton's pitch and in fact don't believe they should be allowed to use it as it is a distinct advantage to them. We have worked so hard to get this far I think it is a shame that the odds should be tilted in their favour because of the pitch. I would fancy our chances much better over two games on grass."

"The manager's view is that we have to adapt and adapt we will because there is no way we are going to let them get away with this."

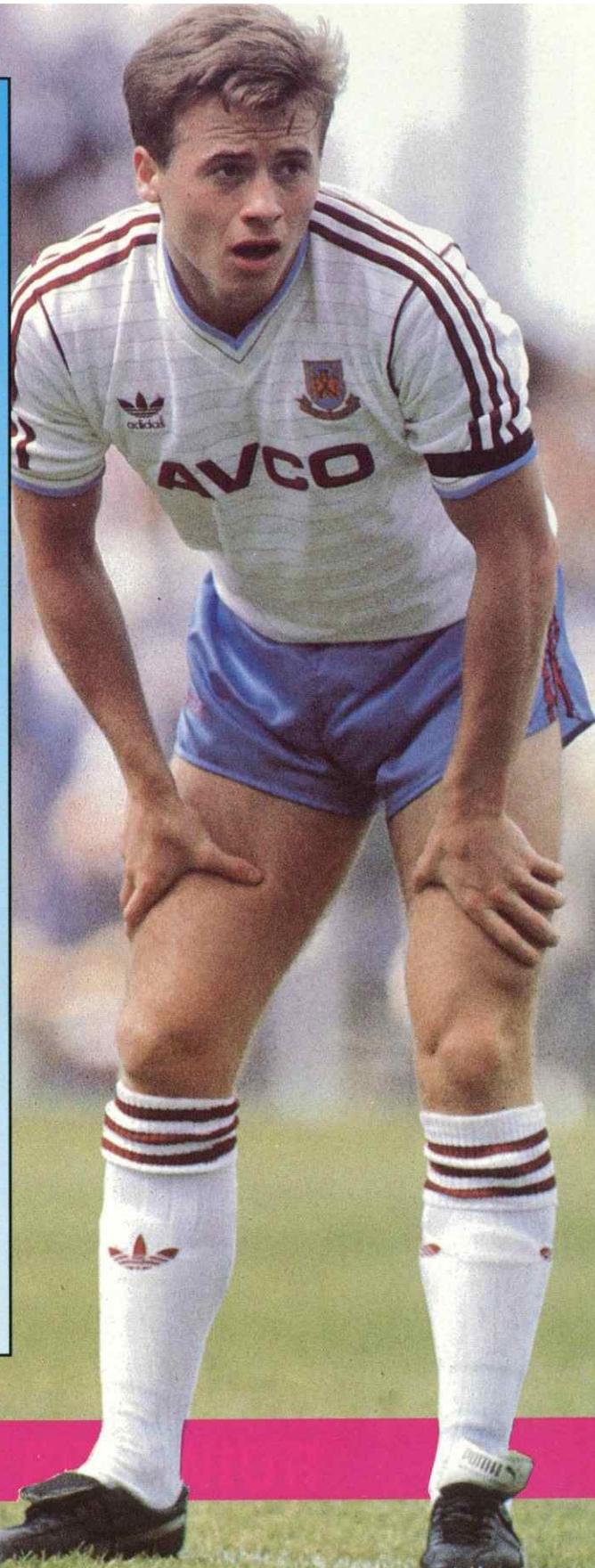
This will undoubtedly be one of the biggest days in Mark's career since he was introduced to League football by Oldham Athletic in 1983. "I was going to ask Alvin and a couple of the lads what to expect," says Mark, "but I really will not know until this afternoon."

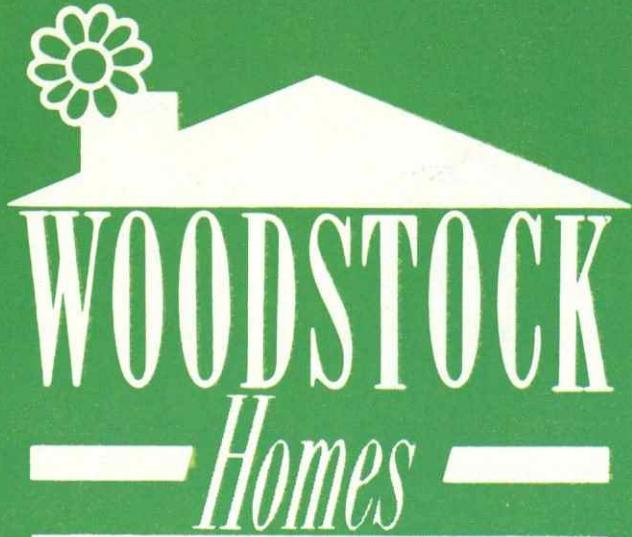
Has the little number seven planned anything different to his normal routine before the game?

"No. I will have been up out of bed at my normal time, had my breakfast and then sat down to play with baby Melissa. I just do my normal things. There is no set routine. I simply eat what takes my fancy at the time and so on."

"We will be all wound up for this game and eager to go. I'm sure our win over Liverpool was a turning point really. We have done well in both cup competitions and with a little bit of luck would have achieved more in the League as well. But no one gave us a chance in this competition when we were drawn against Liverpool and because of our League form Luton Town, the holders, are the hot favourites today. But that's the way we like it and I think you will see us respond well."

MARK WARD





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THE CHEER FACTOR

WHEN it comes to finding the net there have been few with better records than that of Leroy Rosenior who has blasted seven cup goals this season.

'Sidney', as he is affectionately known, is a firm favourite with the Upton Park crowd and when it comes to cup semi-finals, well, he has been here before.

Says Leroy: "I was involved with Queens Park Rangers in their Milk Cup run in 1986. We played Liverpool at Anfield in the second leg of the semi-final and got the draw which took us through to the final. So hopefully that will be a good omen for me."

Leroy didn't actually get on in that game but he made a spirited appearance in the Final against Oxford United when he came on for Martin Allen in the 61st minute.

There can be few more daunting prospects than having to go to Anfield to obtain a result so Leroy sees Kenilworth Road as a comparative haven. He smiles: "People keep mentioning the Luton pitch but I think that might perhaps prove an advantage to us in the long run. They expect to get a result on it and if we can establish a good result here this afternoon we can put a lot of pressure on them in the second game."

"I think they will find it a little different anyway because they are going to have to let our fans into Kenilworth Road so it will not be the hostile atmosphere that most away teams encounter when they go there. It will make a hell of a lot of difference to us. When we played there earlier in the season there was absolutely no atmosphere at all and that can be offputting.

"But I think we will have a lot of fans there. It will be a great atmosphere and that will suit us fine. We have risen to the big games and the important occasions and nothing comes bigger than a semi-final."

Leroy's form in front of goal has been much more effective in cup football this season than it has in the First Division and he says: "I can't fathom it out. I wish it was going as well in the League as it has done in the cups. I can't put my finger on it but maybe the tension has been getting to me. I don't seem to be getting as many chances in the league either."

"At the moment I'm not worried about it, I'm just trying to take one game at a time and if I score in that game then I'm pleased. Obviously I need to start scoring in the First Division to keep us out of trouble but I want to keep scoring in the cup as well. A couple this afternoon will be very welcome."

"Beating the likes of Liverpool and Arsenal in cup games this season gives you a lot of confidence. We have no fears. If we play to the best of our ability then we should be good enough to get to the final. If it's not good enough then that's the way it is going to be. But we will go out over these two games and give it all we have got."



LEROY ROSENIOR

HAMMERS v THE HATTERS

When the draw was made for the semi-final of the Littlewoods Cup we were paired with Luton Town or Southampton. Reference to the records produced the information that we had never previously met either club in the League Cup or its successors – the Milk Cup and the Littlewoods Cup. So in that respect the Hammers were breaking new ground, although there had been earlier ties between the Hammers and the Hatters in the F.A. Cup.

As events turned out, Luton Town upset the odds by winning at The Dell, so this issue of "Hammers History" will deal with our trio of F.A. Cup games against the Bedfordshire club.

Saturday, 11th January 1936 (Third Round) at Upton Park
West Ham United: Herman Conway, Albert Walker, Ted Fenton, Jim Barrett, Joe Cockroft, Peter Simpson, Dr. James Marshall, Dave Mangnall, Len Goulden, Jimmy Ruffell.

Luton Town: Joe Coen, Tom Mackey, Tom Smith, Jock Finlayson, John Nelson, Bill Fellowes, Wilf Crompton, George Martin, Jack Ball, Fred Roberts, George Stephenson.

42,000 fans had a splendid afternoon's entertainment, with the Third Division (South) continuing a run of success by forcing a 2-2 draw against promotion-contending Hammers (holding seventh place in

CLYDE BEST – who scored against Luton in that 1972 F.A. Cup third round tie.



CUP TIES



the Second Division with games in hand). Mangnall and Ruffell were our scorers, the visitors' replies being netted by Ball and Roberts.

Luton had not lost a game for three-and-a-half months, and they stretched the series with a four-nil victory on the following Wednesday before a 17,527 attendance at Kenilworth Road. Ball, Crompton, Roberts and Stephenson scored.

Saturday, 8th January 1949 (Third Round) at Kenilworth Road

Luton Town: Bernard Stretton, Tom Wilson, Billy Cooke, Bob Morton, Les Hall, Dave Gardiner, Bobby Brennan, Joe Kiernan, Billy Arnason, Charlie Watkins, Billy Waugh.

West Ham United: Ernie Gregory, Jack Yeomanson, Steve Forde, Norman Corbett, Dick Walker, Tommy Moroney, Terry Woodgate, Eric Parsons, Ken Wright, John Dick, Don Wade.

Once again we met a Luton Town on 'the crest of a wave', as they were undefeated at home that season. Town opened their account just on half-time (Watkins was the scorer), and the Hammers had another set-back when Wright twisted his knee. The centre-forward moved to the wing, but was a 'passenger' (and there were no subs in those days). Arnason and Kiernan made it three-up for the homesters before Wade scored for us late in the game.

The attendance was 22,229 (not as quoted in some statistics).

Saturday, 15th January 1972 (Third Round) at Upton Park
West Ham United: Bobby Ferguson, John McDowell, Frank Lampard, Billy Bonds, Tommy Taylor, Bobby Moore (captain), Harry Redknapp, Clyde Best, Geoff Hurst, Trevor Brooking, Bryan ('Pop') Robson. Sub: Peter Eustace.

Luton Town: Tony Read, John Ryan, Alan Slough, Mike Keen (captain), Chris Nicholl, John Moore, Peter Anderson, David Court, Vic Halom, Don Givens, Gordon Hindson. Sub: Don Shanks.

The visiting 'manager' was Alec Stock (although styled by the club as 'Chief-Executive'). His chief coach was ex-Hammer Jimmy Andrews.

Town had clocked up another undefeated run – this time of eight games duration. Both teams had mid-table positions – West Ham in Division One and Luton in Division Two.

This time the gate amounted to 32,099.

We went off to a flying start with Geoff Hurst netting in the second minute. Six minutes later Bobby Moore went off injured and Peter

Eustace replaced the skipper. Clyde Best made it 2-0 by half-time, but seven minutes after the restart Don Givens put Luton back in contention.

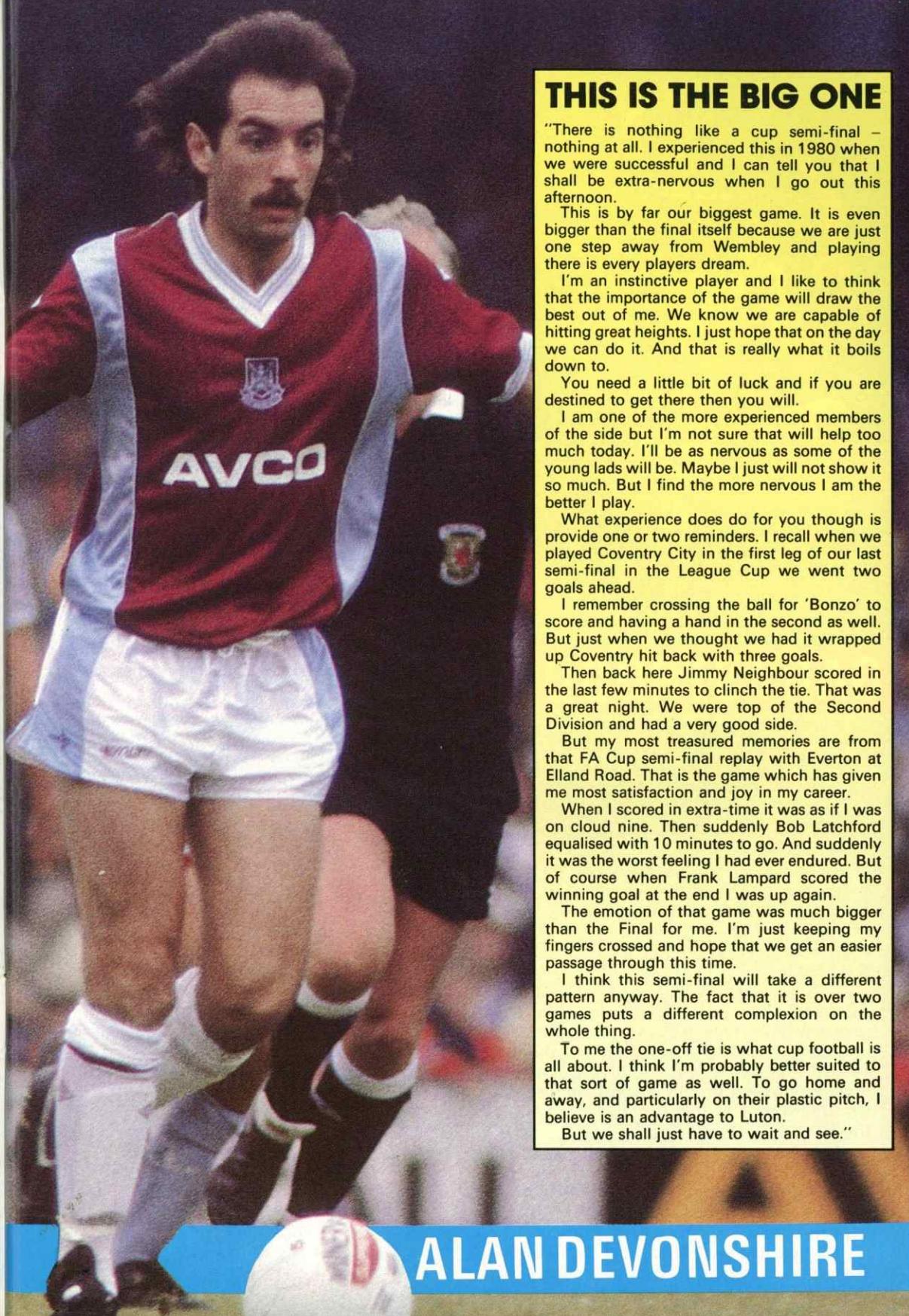
Geoff Hurst (for once!) missed a penalty and the pressure maintained after the interval by the visitors equalled that by the Hammers in the opening 45 minutes.

The subsequent match-reports were effusive in their praise, and commented that although Hammers merited their 2-1 victory the Hatters came very near to forcing a draw in 'a typical cup-tie'.

There are many familiar names among the listed teams, and it is a 'time-passing exercise' to link them with the players' subsequent careers. Particularly interesting is to note that Luton's team-captain here 17 years ago was Mike Keen; his son, Kevin, is a current member of Hammers' senior squad, and Mike is manager of Harlow.

The players mentioned in those line-ups include several other managers. They include Ted Fenton (who succeeded Charlie Paynter as Hammers' 'boss'); Dave Mangnall (Queens Park Rangers); Len Goulden (Watford and Banbury Town); Tommy Moroney (Cork Hibs); Bobby Moore (Southend United); Harry Redknapp (now at Bournemouth); and Peter Eustace (now in charge of Sheffield Wednesday). Bryan 'Pop' Robson is on the coaching staff of Hartlepool United – a club undergoing a 'new lease of life'.

JACK HELLIER



THIS IS THE BIG ONE

"There is nothing like a cup semi-final – nothing at all. I experienced this in 1980 when we were successful and I can tell you that I shall be extra-nervous when I go out this afternoon.

This is by far our biggest game. It is even bigger than the final itself because we are just one step away from Wembley and playing there is every player's dream.

I'm an instinctive player and I like to think that the importance of the game will draw the best out of me. We know we are capable of hitting great heights. I just hope that on the day we can do it. And that is really what it boils down to.

You need a little bit of luck and if you are destined to get there then you will.

I am one of the more experienced members of the side but I'm not sure that will help too much today. I'll be as nervous as some of the young lads will be. Maybe I just will not show it so much. But I find the more nervous I am the better I play.

What experience does do for you though is provide one or two reminders. I recall when we played Coventry City in the first leg of our last semi-final in the League Cup we went two goals ahead.

I remember crossing the ball for 'Bonzo' to score and having a hand in the second as well. But just when we thought we had it wrapped up Coventry hit back with three goals.

Then back here Jimmy Neighbour scored in the last few minutes to clinch the tie. That was a great night. We were top of the Second Division and had a very good side.

But my most treasured memories are from that FA Cup semi-final replay with Everton at Elland Road. That is the game which has given me most satisfaction and joy in my career.

When I scored in extra-time it was as if I was on cloud nine. Then suddenly Bob Latchford equalised with 10 minutes to go. And suddenly it was the worst feeling I had ever endured. But of course when Frank Lampard scored the winning goal at the end I was up again.

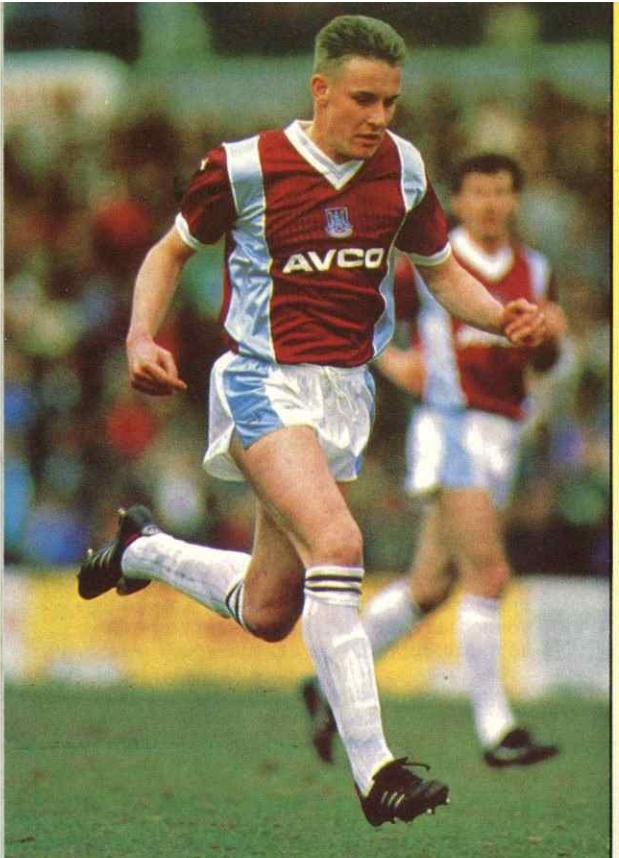
The emotion of that game was much bigger than the Final for me. I'm just keeping my fingers crossed and hope that we get an easier passage through this time.

I think this semi-final will take a different pattern anyway. The fact that it is over two games puts a different complexion on the whole thing.

To me the one-off tie is what cup football is all about. I think I'm probably better suited to that sort of game as well. To go home and away, and particularly on their plastic pitch, I believe is an advantage to Luton.

But we shall just have to wait and see."

ALAN DEVONSHIRE



THE A.A. MAN

Big defender Gary Strodder says he doesn't know if he will be involved this afternoon in the starting XI, "but it is a big game for the club and something for everyone to look forward to."

Cup football this season has kept the big Yorkshireman in touch with first team football. He was called on at Highbury in the F.A. Cup third round replay to replace Alvin Martin and the Hammers skipper was injured again in the fourth round replay with Swindon Town after only 15 minutes.

"Cup football is being good to me," he laughs. "It was quite unexpected the other night against Swindon. I had just got sat down on the bench. Saw Alvin go down and thought here we go again... They are going to start calling me the A.A. Man."

So once again Gary came in to save the day: "It's good experience for me," reflects Gary. "When you are substitute you are not really expected to be on so early in the game. Maybe you will get on second-half although for a central defender that is not very likely. But it takes you a while to get into the flow of the game when you are rushed on like that."

"It is all down to mental preparation more than anything but I was quite happy with my game."

Gary, still only 23, has played in the Associate Members Cup Final for Lincoln City. He says: "It was a good few years ago and we were beaten by Millwall 3-2. That was nothing compared to the Littlewoods Cup."

Gary will be on standby as usual and if John Lyall is short of a central defender he certainly knows a man who can.

▲ GARY STRODDER

EXCITED

"One tie away from Wembley. That is all the motivation we need. There are only a few players in the team who have been there before so it is all a new experience for us. Let's hope we get there."

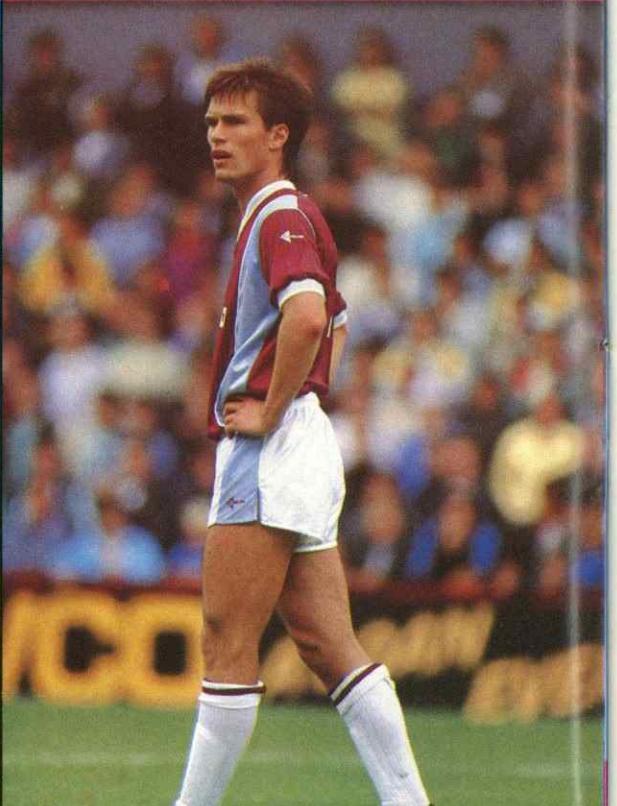
"To tell the truth we have had so many games lately I haven't had time to really brood about this one. The closer the game comes the more I think about it but I'm keeping it in perspective as much as possible."

"I don't think it is nerves as much as excitement that has gripped me. There will be a few butterflies in the stomach but once you get out onto the pitch and the game is started these soon vanish. It is a matter of just getting on with the job and treating it as a normal game. As if you were out playing in the park on a Sunday."

"It is a case of having to do that. If you worry too much then you will not perform. Obviously it wouldn't be normal if there weren't a few nerves but they have to be kept in check."

"I think the worst period is the time between arriving at the ground and actually playing. Sitting around can put you on edge a little but once the whistle goes everything

▼ STEVE POTTS



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—THE TROPHY—

The Littlewoods Challenge Cup is an impressive solid silver trophy made in the late nineteenth century. It is elaborately engraved and has a detailed Victorian footballer surmounting the lid. The Cup stands 2' 9" on its plinth, and the combined weight of the Cup, lid and plinth total 3.789 kg.

The Cup represents a perfect example of the Victorian silversmith's art. It is superbly hand chased and it was assayed in London in 1895 bearing the mark of Turner Bradbury, who was registered as a plate worker on 30th May 1889.

The Cup was first competed for as the Viscountess Furness Football Cup by the employees of Furness, Withy and Co., a renowned firm of shipbuilders in the North East of England. The Cup formerly bore the names of the sections in the shipyard winning the trophy such as The Platers Helpers in 1923. Presented by the Viscountess Furness in 1898, the trophy is arguably the oldest football trophy in Great

THE HISTORY OF THE LITTLEWOODS CUP



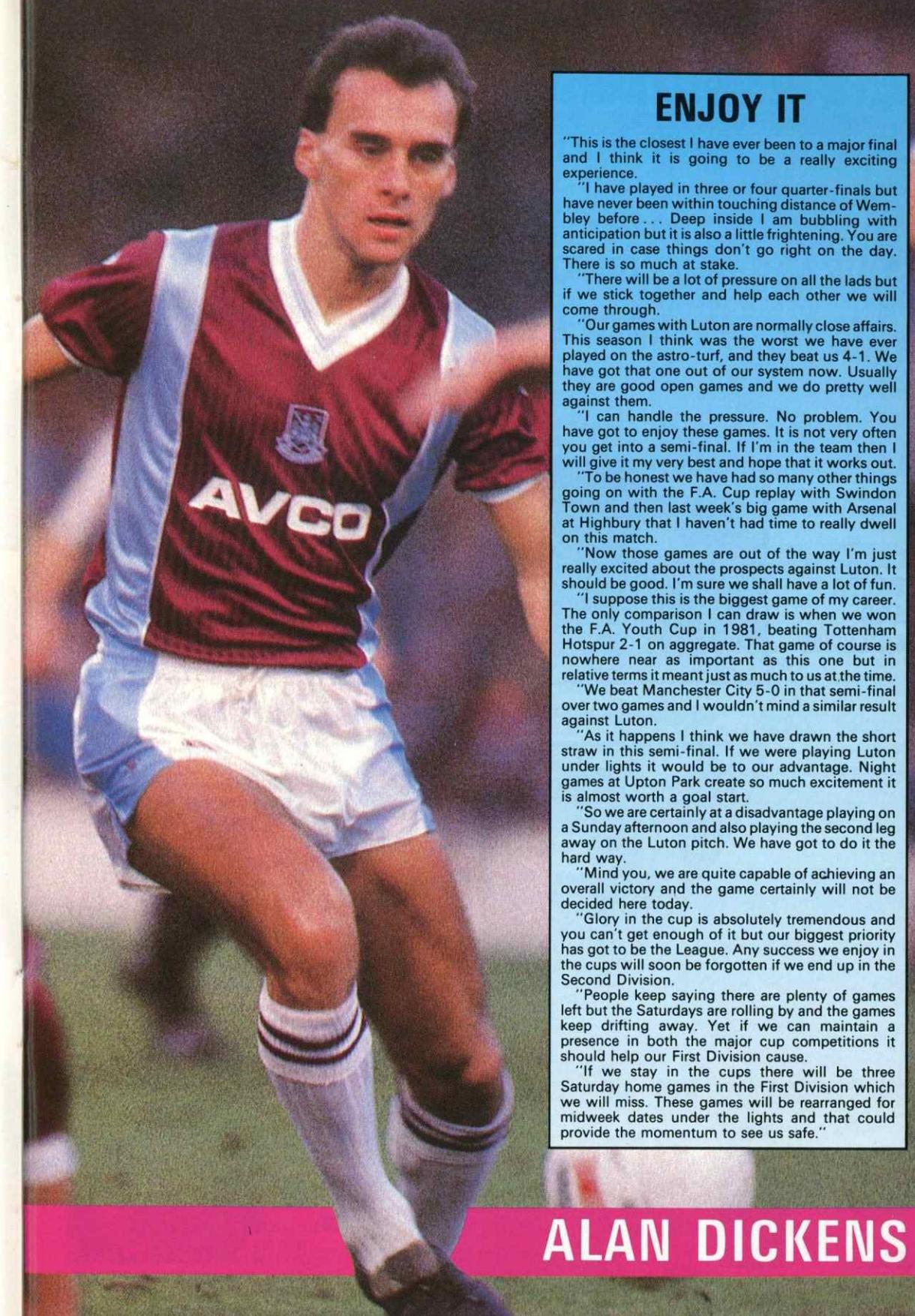
Britain and probably the world.

Furness and Co. was founded in 1891 by Christopher Furness who concentrated the business on the use of steamships. In 1893 a shipbuilders' yard owned by Edward Withy was taken over and Furness, Withy and Co. Ltd. was founded.

The final competition for the Viscountess Furness Football Cup was won by the Welders in 1966. The trophy was locked away and left to tarnish until 1986 when it was re-discovered by Prodigy Guha, Group Marketing Director of The Littlewoods Organisation.

The Cup was refurbished and restored to its former glory by a long established firm of silversmiths in Sheffield. As the LITTLEWOODS CHALLENGE CUP the trophy has now become one of the most prestigious awards in football.

The names of Arsenal and Luton Town have now replaced those of the welders, platers and shipwrights of the Furness yard.



ENJOY IT

"This is the closest I have ever been to a major final and I think it is going to be a really exciting experience.

"I have played in three or four quarter-finals but have never been within touching distance of Wembley before . . . Deep inside I am bubbling with anticipation but it is also a little frightening. You are scared in case things don't go right on the day. There is so much at stake.

"There will be a lot of pressure on all the lads but if we stick together and help each other we will come through.

"Our games with Luton are normally close affairs. This season I think was the worst we have ever played on the astro-turf, and they beat us 4-1. We have got that one out of our system now. Usually they are good open games and we do pretty well against them.

"I can handle the pressure. No problem. You have got to enjoy these games. It is not very often you get into a semi-final. If I'm in the team then I will give it my very best and hope that it works out.

"To be honest we have had so many other things going on with the F.A. Cup replay with Swindon Town and then last week's big game with Arsenal at Highbury that I haven't had time to really dwell on this match.

"Now those games are out of the way I'm just really excited about the prospects against Luton. It should be good. I'm sure we shall have a lot of fun.

"I suppose this is the biggest game of my career. The only comparison I can draw is when we won the F.A. Youth Cup in 1981, beating Tottenham Hotspur 2-1 on aggregate. That game of course is nowhere near as important as this one but in relative terms it meant just as much to us at the time.

"We beat Manchester City 5-0 in that semi-final over two games and I wouldn't mind a similar result against Luton.

"As it happens I think we have drawn the short straw in this semi-final. If we were playing Luton under lights it would be to our advantage. Night games at Upton Park create so much excitement it is almost worth a goal start.

"So we are certainly at a disadvantage playing on a Sunday afternoon and also playing the second leg away on the Luton pitch. We have got to do it the hard way.

"Mind you, we are quite capable of achieving an overall victory and the game certainly will not be decided here today.

"Glory in the cup is absolutely tremendous and you can't get enough of it but our biggest priority has got to be the League. Any success we enjoy in the cups will soon be forgotten if we end up in the Second Division.

"People keep saying there are plenty of games left but the Saturdays are rolling by and the games keep drifting away. Yet if we can maintain a presence in both the major cup competitions it should help our First Division cause.

"If we stay in the cups there will be three Saturday home games in the First Division which we will miss. These games will be rearranged for midweek dates under the lights and that could provide the momentum to see us safe."

ALAN DICKENS

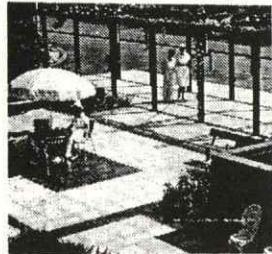
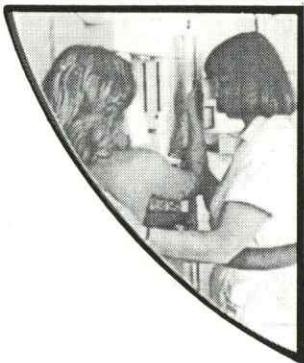
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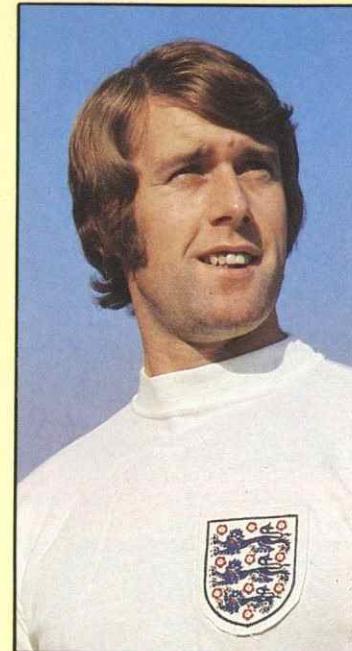


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HAMMERS CUP FACT FILE



GEOFF HURST HAS SCORED
MORE LEAGUE CUP GOALS
THAN ANY OTHER WEST HAM
UNITED PLAYER.

Since our very first game in this competition in September 1960, against Charlton Athletic at Upton Park, the club have used 91 different players.

Of these, the players who have made the most appearances in the competition for West Ham United are:

Name	Appearances
BILLY BONDS	67
TREVOR BROOKING	52
FRANK LAMPARD	51
BOBBY MOORE	49
GEOFF HURST	47
ALAN DEVONSHIRE	44

Goals have been in plentiful supply during these past 23 years of League Cup action. The very first came from John Dick in that inaugural game against Charlton Athletic and our 251st was scored by David Kelly against Aston Villa in the previous round of this current tournament.

Two hundred and fifty one goals in 120 games! That's an average of 2.09 goals a game home and away and this is one of the reasons why the Hammers are so popular with the fans.

The 10-0 drubbing of unfortunate Bury, takes pride of place but over the years there have been some other high scoring achievements.

In the season of 1962-63 we hammered Plymouth Argyle 6-0 at Upton Park in a Second Round tie and repeated that dose against Workington the following season in the fifth round. Then in 1966-67 one of the best results to date, when Leeds United were hit for seven, again at Upton Park, this time in the fourth round.

Two years later a second round tie here finished with a 7-2 win over Bolton Wanderers and in 1974-75, Tranmere Rovers were on the wrong end of a 6-0 defeat after holding us to a scoreless draw in the second round.

Plenty of goals then but who have been our most prolific scorers in the League Cup? Well former England striker Geoff Hurst – the only man ever to score a hat-trick in a World Cup Final – stands head and shoulders above the rest with 43 goals, but there is one of the current squad in the top six which is listed below:

Name	Goals
GEOFF HURST	43
JOHNNY BYRNE	15
RAY STEWART	14
DAVID CROSS	12
PAUL GODDARD	12
MARTIN PETERS	10

While on the subject of goals, Johnny Byrne was the first Hammer to score a hat-trick in the League Cup, against Plymouth Argyle in 1962. The following players have all recorded hat-tricks in this competition in our colours: Johnny Byrne (twice), Geoff Hurst (twice),

Winger Harry Redknapp (pictured here) holds the distinction of being the first ever West Ham United substitute to be introduced into a Football League Cup match. Harry came on at Huddersfield in a fourth round tie in the season of 1967-68 but could not prevent the Yorkshire side winning 2-0.

Harry made 149 appearances for us between 1965-72 and was a member of the Hammers' team that featured in the League Cup semi-final marathon with Stoke City in 1972.

Transferred to Bournemouth in August 1972 he later had a spell with Brentford before hanging up his boots in 1976. Now back at Dean Court as coach and currently as caretaker manager Harry made a surprise comeback last season when he turned out for the Cherries in a League Cup tie at Manchester United.



John Dick scored our very first League Cup goal when he netted against Charlton Athletic in September 1960. This was the first of only four League Cup goals by the tall rangy Scot who netted 153 League goals for the Hammers between 1953 and 1962 the club's fourth all-time highest scorer behind Vic Watson (306), Geoff Hurst (180) and Jimmy Ruffell (164).

John Sissons, Bryan Robson, Bobby Gould, Billy Lansdowne and Francois van der Elst.

Four goals have been recorded by Geoff Hurst v Bolton Wanderers in 1967 and by Tony Cottee against Bury in 1983.

ATTENDANCES

Our highest League Cup attendances:
HOME:
40,870 v Liverpool Rd 4, season
1971-72

AWAY:
49,125 v Tottenham Rd 4, season
1975-76

Our lowest League Cup attendances:
HOME:
9,714 v Plymouth Rd 2, season
1962-63



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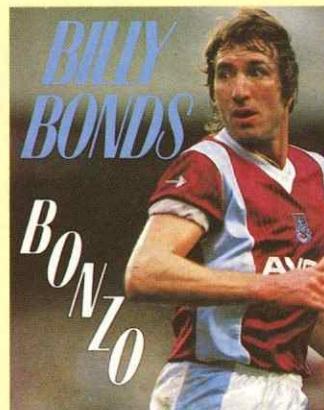
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IT WILL BE DECIDED AT LUTON

"I have been involved in two semi-finals in the League Cup during my career. One with Queens Park Rangers, which we lost to Villa in a replay, and then of course success with West Ham in 1981 when we beat Coventry."

"That was a hell of a feeling. It was lovely. The funny thing was we played away in the first-leg and were winning 2-0 and then were somewhat lucky to hold on to a 3-2 defeat. It was that sort of game. Coventry could have had five or six goals that night."

"We needed to win by two goals in the second tie and did so."

"The thing about these two-match semi-finals is that it doesn't really matter what the score is here today. Win, lose or draw, providing neither side opens up a three or more goal gap, the result will be decided at Luton."

"That gives them such an advantage that it is almost like playing one and a half games away or only half a game at home for us."

"Personally, I have always enjoyed playing on the Luton surface. It is a bit softer than the one which used to be at Queens Park Rangers and because it has a little more give in it you can dive around without too many problems. Some 'keepers worry a little bit too much about it, I think, and they let this determine their mood."

"Actually, it is not so bad for goalkeepers. At least we can pad up and wear tracksuit bottoms so we don't suffer the nasty burns that the outfield players have to contend with. You just get a pounding on your hips, elbows and knee joints."

"The ball does fly off the surface very quickly but the beauty of it is that it is very true. You know where it is going but your reflexes have to be a shade sharper than they are on grass to deal with the pace of the ball."

"Having not played this season I find myself in a funny situation. I am still training the way I did and with having to share the reserve games with Tom it has been a bit awkward. You need a run of matches to keep you sharp. You need to feel sharp in games as well as in training. If I make a mistake in a match it has been a long wait before the next game and you like to come back quickly to get it out of your mind."

"The mental preparation is vital. Obviously I could be called into first team action at any time and that will be really strange. You need a couple of days' notice ideally to get yourself properly attuned."



PHIL PARKES

L



George Eastham lifts the League Cup on high following Stoke City's epic triumph over Chelsea.

T was branded: "ill-timed, ill-conceived and a devious ploy by the Football League to undermine the sovereignty of the Football Association," when Alan Hardaker, the Football League secretary at the time, launched the Football League Cup in 1960.

Hardaker, a crusty Yorkshireman, explained some years later. "I saw the League Cup simply as a fresh source of income for the clubs and a new source of entertainment for the fans."

Soccer's influential crusader was to be proved right on both counts. The League Cup, which with the advent of sponsorship was to become known as the Milk Cup and now the Littlewoods Cup, is currently in its 28th season and what a lucrative source of revenue it has proved with already over £51 million invested in the football kitty. As for the fans - well the packed terraces here this afternoon tell their own story.

The fans love it. That is why over the past five years attendances have taken an upward trend. In this season's competition 1,283,602 people had watched the 152 ties up to and including the fourth round stage. Success in the competition can bring rich rewards as Luton Town will vouch after beating Arsenal in that dramatic final last year. The Hatters pocketed £300,000 as their share of the gate plus £75,000 prize money for winning at Wembley.

Yes the competition has certainly come a long way since those first wobbly steps in 1960, when it was first launched on an unresponsive public.

Dismissed as a further encumbrance on an already cluttered programme by many of the more sophisticated clubs, whose eyes were turning towards the lucrative European circuit, the League Cup was virtually relegated to a second class status before it even began.

Certainly the media treated it with disdain even though in yet another of those periods of crisis that seem all too frequently to haunt the game, the idea had been conceived by the Football League Management Committee as a means to generate more liquid assets through the turnstiles, for its impoverished and hard-up clubs.

Alas many of the established bastions of the League's hierarchy felt that the closed-shop competition was designed more to help the minnows than themselves, but even so it is strange to relate that despite the opposition the clubs did agree by 31 votes to 15, to inaugurate the Football League Cup competition at their A.G.M. in May 1960.

Prudently the organisers made entry optional and surprise, surprise, only five clubs abstained from that inaugural competition. True within two years the entrants had decreased to 80 clubs but even so the majority were obviously gaining some recompense from the enterprise.

TAKEN-OFF

The format was quite simple with the first five rounds being played on a straight knock-out basis and the semi-final and final played over two legs home and away. It was perhaps the idea of playing those two final games over two legs which took the spice out of the League Cup... the magic of the sudden death game was sadly missing.

Then in 1966 the competition was revitalised when it was decided to move the final to a one off game at Wembley Stadium. The prospects of a Wembley final sparked off a flood of enthusiasm and the entries for the 1966-67 competition rose to 90. At last the Football League Cup had taken off.

Since then there have been several minor adjustments to the rules such as making the second round a two-legged affair in order to give the smaller clubs a chance of two bites at the cherry and of course earn additional revenue. But the two major factors in making the League Cup one of the major domestic competitions it has now become, is the fact that the winners automatically qualified for a place in the U.E.F.A. Cup and the lucrative financial returns at the end of the rainbow.

Just see how the gate receipts rocketed. In that first Wembley Final in 1967, a crowd of 97,952 paid £57,000 for the privilege of watching. By 1976 those returns were up to £299,601.16p to be precise and by 1981 a full-house paid £603,000 to watch Liverpool draw with West Ham United... yes the Football League Cup had become a major source of income.

Although cash and the lure of a place in Europe undoubtedly secured the support of the major clubs and made the League Cup an essential ingredient to the season there is far more to it than that. It has quite clearly developed its own tradition. The League Cup is about people and clubs no matter what their status.

If you really want to send the adrenalin pumping then what better way than seeing David slay Goliath and the Football League Cup has certainly provided its fair share of upsets in this direction. Right from the kick-off in that very first round in the autumn of 1960 when Colchester thrashed Newcastle United 4-1, Darlington beat Crystal Palace 2-0 and Ipswich Town lost at home to Barnsley 0-2, the little clubs have made the headlines and basked in the glory and unlike the F.A. Cup, they have managed to go all the way.

Unfashionable Rotherham United reached the Final in that first season and took a 2-0 lead over Aston Villa in the first



Billy Bonds challenges Kenny Dalglish during the 1-1 draw with Liverpool at Wembley.

Pictures - Colorsport

leg, through Webster and Kirkman, before 12,226 jubilant fans at Millmoor. However, Villa stormed back before their own fans (27,000 of them) and goals from O'Neill, Burrows and McParland secured a 3-2 aggregate win and so Aston Villa became the first holders of the new trophy.

The cause of the minnows was further boosted the following season when Rochdale became the only Fourth Division side to reach the final of a major competition. They lost 4-0 on aggregate to Norwich City who were then in the Second Division, but although the memories of that glorious achievement will slowly fade with time, the record of Rochdale's final will never be erased.

FIRSTS

Even the prospect of playing at Wembley could not keep the upstarts down. In that first final in the famous old stadium West Bromwich Albion, seemingly had an easy test against Third Division Queens Park Rangers who had made history by becoming the first Third Division club to reach a major final.

It was real Roy of the Rovers stuff with Albion cruising comfortably into a 2-0 lead. With only 15 minutes left all looked lost for the Londoners until the flamboyant, and at times miraculous, Rodney Marsh took over and ripped the Throstles apart. Amazingly Rangers pulled back the deficit through Morgan and Marsh and then clinched victory with a third goal from Mark Lazarus in what must be one of the most exhilarating finales to any final. Q.P.R. had become the first Third Division side to win a Wembley final.

No sooner had the euphoria of that magnificent triumph died down before the feat was being repeated. It was 1969 and the mighty Arsenal afresh from their semi-final victory

over rivals Spurs, were set to meet little Swindon Town.

The result seemed a foregone conclusion as the Gunners firing on all cylinders pounded the Swindon goal in the opening 20 minutes but they could not beat the defiant Peter Downsborough.

In the 34th minute Roger Smart made the most of a defensive mix-up in the Arsenal area and Swindon were in front. It was a lead they were to hold until four minutes from time when Bobby Gould gratefully slipped in the equaliser to force extra time.

GREATEST HOUR

Arsenal who had been struck by flu the week prior wilted on what must have been one of the heaviest and worst prepared Wembley pitches ever. Their strength sapped by the atrocious conditions they offered no further resistance when Don Rogers finished a long run to shoot past Bob Wilson on the stroke of half-time. Rogers added a second to seal a formidable 3-1 scoreline over one of the most famous clubs in the world.

Swindon Town had experienced their greatest hour and secured their first trophy since winning the Southern League in 1911. "Summat out of the ordinary," is the way their manager Danny Williams described it.

But then success in the Football League Cup has proved to be the right of the underdog. In 1971 another Third Division club made the final in the shape of Aston Villa. They lost 2-0 to Tottenham Hotspur but were back again in 1975 - this time as a Second Division club - to play Norwich City.

And then in the 1979-80 series Swindon Town nearly did it again losing 4-3 on aggregate to Wolves in the

A LEAGUE LEADER

Colin Benson traces the history of the Football League's own cup competition

semi-final. The League Cup has undoubtedly shared the glory around the more unfashionable corners of the League.

Who will forget that magnificent footballing final of 1972 when Stoke City thrilled us all and overcame Chelsea to win their first major title since their inception in 1863. It was a personal triumph for one of the master craftsmen of the game George Eastham, who scored the winning goal.

Then there was the memorable Dennis Tuett goal when he fired the ball over his head to clinch victory for Manchester City over Newcastle in 1976 and the titanic struggle between Nottingham Forest and Southampton in 1979 when Forest became the first side to retain the trophy by defeating the Saints 3-2.

THE HAMMERS

West Ham United and Liverpool took centre stage in the 21st final. The game proved a bit of a stalemate with the drama packed into the final minutes of extra-time. With five minutes to play Ray Kennedy shot for goal. Sammy Lee, stranded behind the Hammers back line, ducked and the ball flashed past Phil Parkes. Incredibly referee Clive Thomas signalled a goal deeming that Lee 'was not interfering with play'.

However, the Hammers, drawing on all their reserves of character, stormed back and forced a replay with a last minute penalty conversion from Ray Stewart.

The replay, at Villa Park, was an absolute classic. A spectacular goal from Paul Goddard gave the Hammers an early lead but Liverpool then produced the kind of performance that even great teams can only occasionally achieve. They won 2-1 to take the trophy for the first time. It was to be the first in a remarkable hat-trick of triumphs for the Anfield masters.

Tottenham Hotspur were their next victims and just prior to the final the Football League pulled the wraps off a unique sponsorship deal with the National Dairy Council. The League Cup was to become the Milk Cup.



1

3



2



3

The partnership worked well and Liverpool were given the original Milk Cup trophy for keeps after their third successive triumph in 1983 against Manchester United.

Oxford United were the last side to win this trophy, beating Queens Park Rangers in an entertaining final in 1986, before the sponsorship was taken over by Littlewoods.

In the first Littlewoods Cup Final, on Sunday, 5th April, 1987, George Graham's Arsenal rookies turned over the favourites Liverpool, to engrave their name at the top of the honours list. Twelve months later Arsenal, back again and this time the firm favourites to defend their title against lowly Luton, were themselves the victims of a shock result.

In one of the most exciting games seen at Wembley the fortunes of both sides ebbed and flowed. Luton took a shock lead and looked the part of winners until the Gunners took command, only to have victory snatched from them in a climactic finale.

Luton Town had won their first major trophy in 91 years of League participation. The underdogs had once more wagged their tails.

The curse of the 20th century is that more and more there is less time for looking back and reflecting on deeds of glory such as those we have mentioned here. There have been many more of course, for the magic of cup football is that you don't have to reach the final to be a winner. But the tempo of life allows us little else than flashes of nostalgia, the odd fleeting recall, a momentary glance.

Thankfully the League Cup in its many guises has given us plenty to be happy about. Those who scoffed at Hardaker's dream have had to eat humble pie.

Drama in the final minute of the 1981 Final. Liverpool's Terry McDermott saves Alvin Martin's header with his hand (pic. 1).

Cross and Pearson appeal for the penalty (pic. 2) and Ray Stewart (pic. 3) celebrates his successful spot-kick.

Pictures – Colorsport

A LEAGUE LEADER



HELPING THE GAME

The Football Trust receives £9 million annually from the Spotting-the-Ball competition run by Littlewoods, Vernons and Zetters and spends it all on projects which benefit football throughout the United Kingdom.

Since 1979 it has been committed to the development of the game at every level and its broad and varying initiatives have ranged from essential safety work at Tottenham to social work at Toxteth; refurbishment at Wembley to repairs at Weiling; closed circuit television at all League clubs to community facilities at Oldham Athletic; transport improvements at Sheffield Wednesday to storm damage in the South East of England; from policing costs at Hull City to an artificial pitch at Hyde United.

1988-89 will see The Football Trust increase its commitment by investing further sums in closed circuit television, transport facilities for supporters and projects to bring Football League clubs closer to their local community.

WARNING

At the beginning of the season more than 110 League grounds in England, Wales and Scotland will be equipped with CLOSED CIRCUIT TELEVISION which has been funded by The Football Trust.

It is there to increase crowd safety and to help the police. Recording facilities enable film and photographs to be taken of disorder, which may subsequently be used in a court of law.

CLOSED CIRCUIT TELEVISION

SAFETY FIRST

Football grounds in England and Wales have reached their highest ever level of safety thanks to the £23,671,425 invested by the Football Grounds Improvement Trust since 1975.

Almost every League club has been assisted with essential safety work and further substantial sums have been spent to enable them to improve facilities. In the past year alone FGIT grants to Football League clubs totalled

	£
Safety Improvements	2,254,723
	770,561

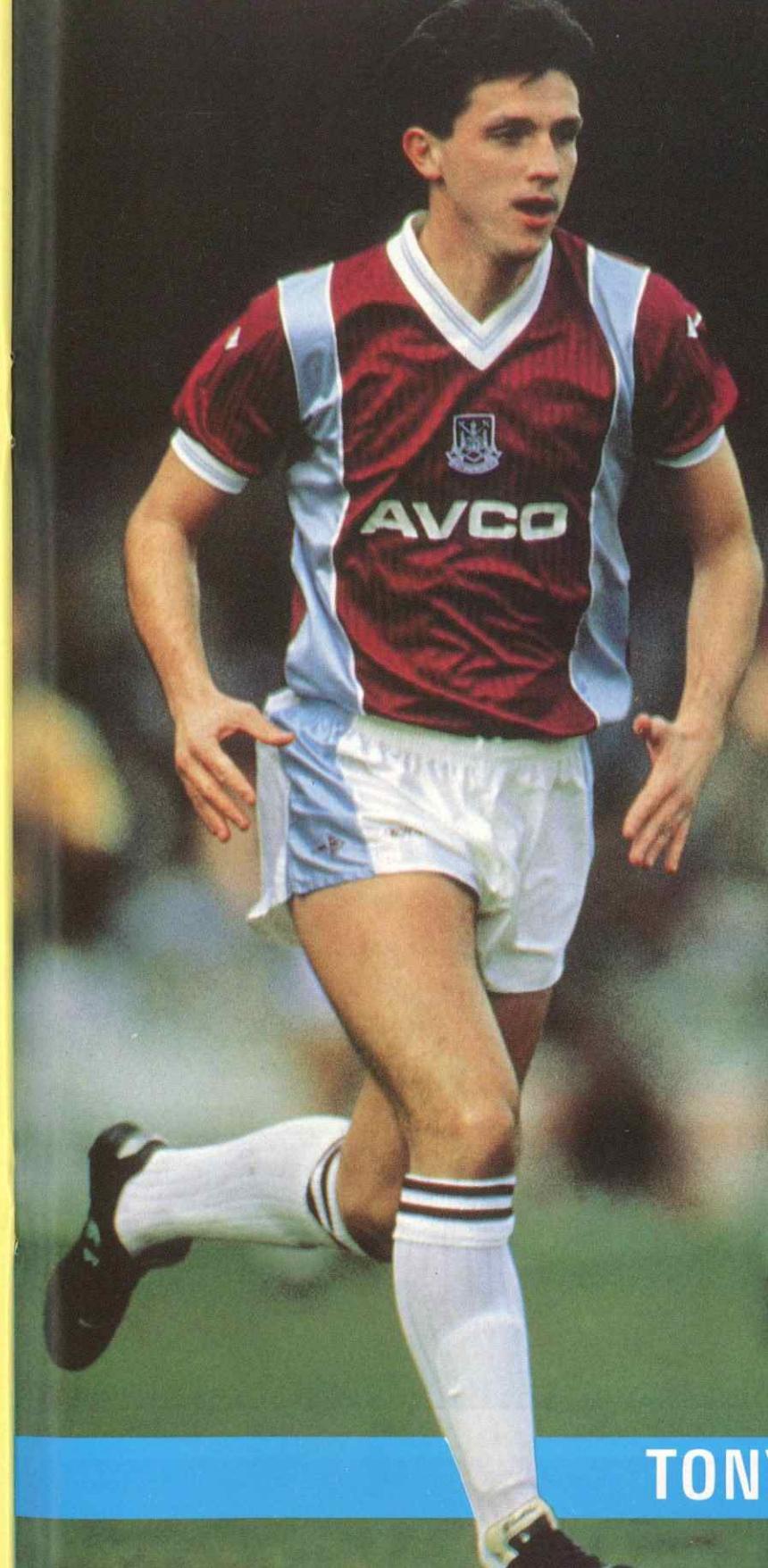
In addition to its safety programme, FGIT has also allocated £1.5 million to build or improve family and disabled facilities at League grounds during 1988.

WE HAVE OVER 1,000,000 MEMBERS IN OUR SUPPORTERS CLUB!

GLEN TOP OF THE LEAGUE FOR LOCAL COMMUNITY NEWSPAPERS

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GREATER LONDON & ESSEX NEWSPAPERS 2 Whalebone Lane South, Dagenham, Essex RM8 1HB. Tel: 01 593 8100. Fax 01 592 7407 (ADoc DX 52006 DAGENHAM)



LET'S GET ON WITH IT

"This is the first time I have been involved in a cup semi-final and I'm really looking forward to the two games.

Prior to this the furthest I have ever got is the quarter-final, and that was with West Ham in season 1986-87 when we lost to Tottenham Hotspur in a replay. The year before we had also reached the quarter-final stage of the FA Cup when having beaten Manchester United at Old Trafford in a replay we were then forced to take on Sheffield Wednesday a couple of days later. We suffered from the effects of being shattered.

People have been asking me about pressure but I can't tell how this is going to affect me. In the previous rounds we have just got on with the game and enjoyed it. After the disappointments in the First Division the cup games have been more like a relaxation really.

There have been some great evenings. Tense evenings certainly but tremendous to be involved in with the crowd getting right behind us. You can't help but want to do well when the atmosphere is like that.

I have never been to Wembley and it would be lovely to get there in one of the cups this season and as we are closer to it in this competition let's go for it.

Ray Harford was at Fulham when I was at Craven Cottage and I have the utmost respect for him. Luton will play good football and having seen them on the television in that replay with Southampton it is obvious that they are a team that can soak up pressure and then hit you on the break. So we are going to need to be careful, particularly in this first leg at Upton Park, because we don't want to leave ourselves with too much to do in the second game at Kenilworth Road.

But I can see it turning out to be two very tight games and I don't think there will be much in it at the end.

The two-legs turns this semi-final into a kind of European fixture. It is certainly like travelling away to a foreign venue when you go onto the Luton plastic pitch because you are up against the unknown a little bit. We have played there of course but we don't encounter that surface on a regular basis.

But we are just all looking forward to the adventure. I can't wait to get into it.

There is a danger of making that Luton pitch too much of an obstacle. As this is a semi-final I don't think it will matter all that much. Everyone will be so keyed up I think those fears of the plastic will be cancelled out."

TONY GALE

LUTON TOWN



Back Row: David Preece, Mark Stein (now Queens Park Rangers), Gary Cobb, Ian Allinson (now Colchester United), Richard Harvey, Kingsley Black, Rob Johnson.

Middle Row: David Galley (Physio), John Faulkner (Coach), Roy Wegerle, John Dreyer, David Oldfield, Les Sealey, Mick Harford, Alec Chamberlain, Marvin Johnson, Ashley Grimes, Darron McDonough, Jim Ryan (Coach).

Front Row: Steve Williams, Danny Wilson, Steve Foster (Capt.), Ray Harford (Manager), Mal Donagh (now Manchester United), Ricky Hill, Tim Breaker

President: J.A.C. Bain
Chairman: D.J. Evans.

Directors: A. Aleyan, R.J. Smith, E.S. Pearson LLM, BSC, B. Cole, T.W. Bailey, J.R. Smith, M. Watson-Challis.

General Secretary/Commercial Director: W.J. Tomlins.
Executive Director: J.R. Smith.
Team Manager: Ray Harford.

LUTON'S LITTLEWOODS CUP ROUTE

Rnd.		F-A Scorers
1	Burnley	(H) 1-1 Johnson
	Burnley	(A) 1-0 Hill
1	Leeds United	(A) 2-0 Wilson, Oldfield
4	Manchester City	(H) 3-1 Oldfield, Wegerle 2
5	Southampton	(H) 1-1 Hill
5R	Southampton	(A) 2-1 Harford, Hill

FOOTBALL LEAGUE RECORD

1897 Elected to Division 2; 1900 failed re-election; 1920 Division 3; 1921 Division 3(S); 1937-55 Division 2; 1955-60 Division 1; 1960-63 Division 2; 1963-65 Division 3; 1965-68 Division 4; 1968-70 Division 3; 1970-74 Division 2; 1974-75 Division 1; 1975-82 Division 2; 1982- Division 1.

HONOURS

Football League: Division 1 best season, 7th, 1986-87; Division 2 – Champions 1981-82; Runners-up 1954-55, 1973-74; Division 3 – Runners-up 1969-70; Division 4 – Champions 1967-68; Division 3(S) – Champions 1936-37; Runners-up 1935-36. **FA Cup:** Runners-up 1959. **Football League Cup:** previous best season: Winners 1987-88.

BEST WISHES FOR 1989 MAKE IT A SONY YEAR

item what kind of products the public does not know what we do. So instead of doing market research, we refine our product and its use to create a market for it by educating the public. A product idea strikes me as natural.

As an example I can cite a product everybody knows of, the Walkman. It took shape when Ibuka came one day with one of the stereo tape recorders and our standard-size headphones.

He built a cassette deck. It had been mulling an idea in my mind for a while, and now it came into focus as Ibuka talked from my own experience at how young people cannot seem to live without music. Almost everybody has it at home and in the car. In Nippon in Tokyo, I had seen people tape players and radios perch on shoulders blaring out music. I remembered that one time when my daughter, Naoko, came home from a trip upstairs before even greeting her mother and first put a cassette into the deck, I said,

In a short time the first external unit with new, miniature headphones was delivered to me, and I was delighted with the small size of it and high-quality sound the headphones produced. In conventional stereo loudspeakers, most of the energy to produce the sound is wasted, but with the Walkman, use only a fraction of it goes to the user's ears. The rest of the sound goes off the walls and the windows. The tiny unit needed only a small amount of power to the amplifier and the tiny lightweight headphones that came through the

tell us that the Sony Walkman was successful, not to say a sensation, that would spawn many imitators. This small item has literally changed music-listening habits of millions of people all around the world. Many friends in the music world, conductors Herbert von Karajan, Claudio Abbado, and Lorin Maazel, and virtuoso Isaac Stern, have contacted me and more Walkmans, a very confirmation of the excellent idea and the product itself. It is developing small, light headphones for the Walkman series, very ably.

He started playing a cassette player set and watched his expression. He was surprised and delighted to see his wife, Hiroko Nakamura, a pianist, playing the Grieg piano. He smiled broadly and said something, but he couldn't be sure. They were both hooked up to the Walkman. He recognized this as a potential problem. His solution was to have my staff button-activated microphone for him to be listening to his modulation. Buyers began to see the portable stereo sets as very popular while I expected people to buy Walkmans. We found that



of our new stereo experiment or no more than thirty thousand. The accountants protested but I told them I was confident in making our new product. The numbers and our cost went down as volume climbed. Then we should start from a cheap model than the Pressman, but I chose the configuration of the Pressman. We made many parts for the Pressman available worldwide at our service, and we knew the unit well. Therefore we could start without worrying that the thing would

THE RIP-OFFS.

THE ORIGINAL.

DIAL-A-SEAT 01-472 3322

FROM THE TICKET OFFICE

v LUTON TOWN AWAY

Littlewoods Cup – Semi Final – 2nd Leg
on Sunday, 26th February, 1989. Kick-off 3.05pm.
OR Wednesday, 1st March, 1989. Kick-off 7.45pm.

Seats (limited) £7.00 : Terrace £4.50

SEASON TICKET HOLDERS to apply as follows using VOUCHER 'L':

Tuesday, 14th February onwards between 9.30am – 5pm.

There will be a limit of ONE ticket per voucher.

It is anticipated that our allocation of tickets will be SOLD OUT to season ticket holders, and as the match is "ALL TICKET" there will be no cash admission at the turnstiles on the day of the game.

v CHARLTON ATHLETIC AWAY

Barclays League Division One
Saturday, 18th February, 1989. Kick-off 3pm.

All our allocation of seat tickets have been SOLD to season ticket holders.

The match is NOT "ALL TICKET" and admission to the terraces is by paying at the turnstiles on the day of the game. West Ham United supporters should enter via the turnstiles in Holmesdale Road. Admission price £4 for Adults – £2.50 for children under 16 and OAPs.

REPLAY?

If next Saturday's match versus Charlton is drawn, the replay will take place at Upton Park on Wednesday, 22nd February – Kick-off 7.45pm

Season ticket holders to apply as follows using VOUCHER 'N':

Sunday 19th Feb – 10am to 1pm

Monday 20 Feb – 9.30am to 5pm

Non season ticket holders may apply on

Tuesday 21 Feb 9.30am to 5pm

Wednesday 22 Feb 9.30am to 3pm

It is anticipated that seat tickets will also be available at the turnstiles prior to the match.

TICKET PRICES

East Stand Cat. One, West Stand (Upper) 'C' Block, West Stand (Lower) Cat. One: £9. West Stand (Upper) 'B' and 'D' Blocks, West Stand (Lower) Cat. Two: £8. Family Seating Area: £7.50 Adults; £4 Children; East Terrace: £5.

West Ham United F.C.
1988-89
VOUCHER
No. 19

Please note that if we play Luton Town away on Sunday, 26th February our League match versus Queens Park Rangers will be postponed

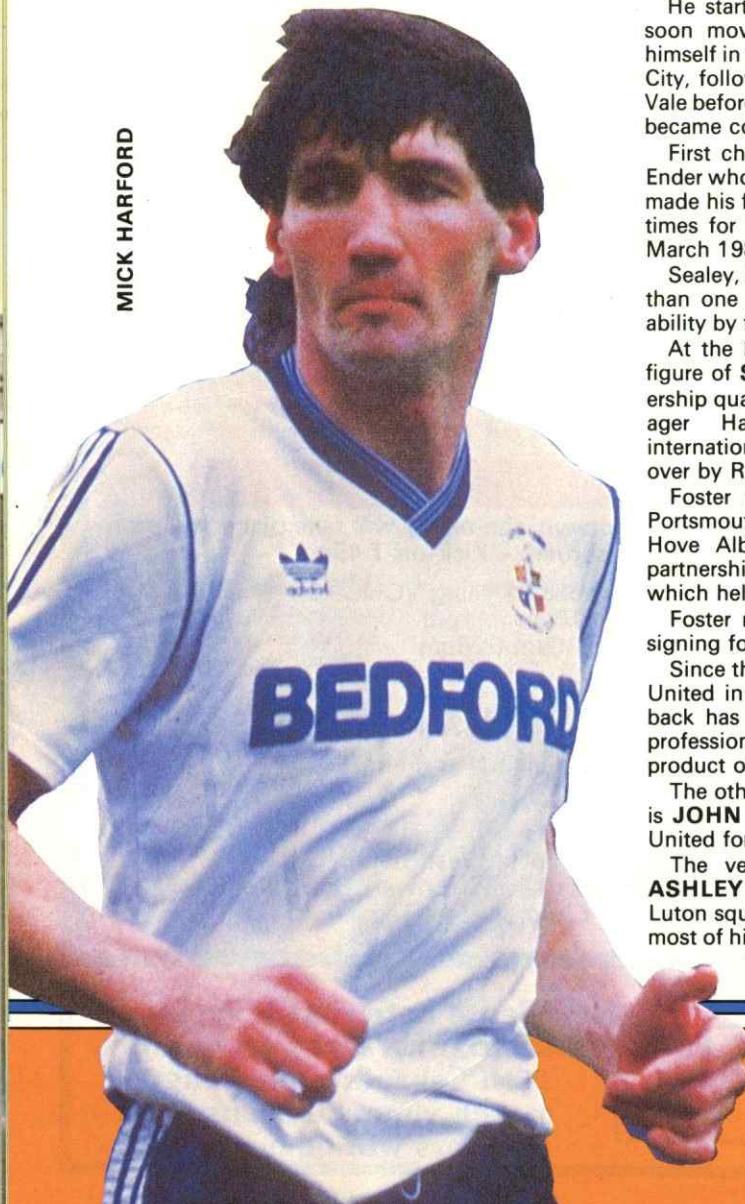
LUTON TOWN, like West Ham, have saved their best performances this season for the Littlewoods Cup, defying their moderate League form to reach the semi-finals.

The Hatters have disposed of Burnley, Leeds United, Manchester City and Southampton to date as they seek to retain the trophy they won in dramatic style at Wembley last April.

Goalkeeper Andy Dibble, now with Manchester City, was the hero that day, with his fine penalty save from Arsenal's Nigel Winterburn coming at a vital stage as Luton went on to beat Arsenal 3-2. Brian Stein (2) and Danny Wilson were their goal scorers with Martin Hayes and Alan Smith scoring for the Gunners.

Wembley became a second home for Luton last season with Ray Harford's team making no less than

MICK HARFORD



three appearances on the hallowed turf. First they crashed to Second Division Reading, losing 4-1 in the Simod Cup Final, and later in the season a good run in the League earned them a place in the Mercantile Credit Centenary Festival.

They nearly made it an incredible four appearances in one season but were beaten 2-1 by Wimbledon in the F.A. Cup semi-final at White Hart Lane.

All this represented a remarkable first season for **RAY HARFORD**, who succeeded John Moore as manager in June 1987, having already spent a year as first-team coach.

Prior to moving to Kenilworth Road, Harford had served as manager at Fulham for two years. He had arrived at Craven Cottage from Colchester United, where he had concluded a playing career as a central defender which spanned 354 League appearances.

He started at Charlton Athletic back in 1965, but soon moved to Exeter City, where he established himself in the first team. His next move was to Lincoln City, followed by spells at Mansfield Town and Port Vale before finishing his career at Colchester, where he became coach.

First choice goalkeeper is **LES SEALEY**, an East Ender who began his career at Coventry City, where he made his first-team debut in 1976. Sealey played 178 times for the Sky Blues before moving to Luton in March 1983 for £100,000.

Sealey, 31, has found himself out of favour on more than one occasion but has shown his courage and ability by fighting back to reclaim his first-team place.

At the heart of Luton's defence is the impressive figure of **STEVE FOSTER**, whose exceptional leadership qualities were immediately recognised by manager Harford, who appointed the England international as club coach - a position since taken over by Richie Barker.

Foster made his debut for his home-town club Portsmouth in 1976 before moving to Brighton and Hove Albion, where he struck up an impressive partnership at centre-back with Mark Lawrenson which helped Brighton to the 1983 F.A. Cup Final.

Foster moved to Aston Villa for £200,000 before signing for Luton in December 1984 for £70,000.

Since the departure of Mal Donaghy to Manchester United in October, Foster's regular partner at centre back has been **MARVIN JOHNSON**, who signed professional forms only last season. Johnson is a product of the successful Luton youth team.

The other man to have partnered Foster this season is **JOHN DREYER**, who joined Luton from Oxford United for £140,000 during the close season.

The versatile former Manchester United player **ASHLEY GRIMES** is an experienced member of the Luton squad, able to play in most positions, although most of his Luton appearances have been at left-back.

Capped 17 times by the Republic of Ireland, he has not enjoyed the best of luck with injuries, but is now back to fitness.

Another youth team product is full back **RICHARD HARVEY**, who toured South America with the England under-19 team in June 1987. Harvey made his debut against QPR in November 1986 and is beginning to challenge for a regular place in the first team.

The Hatters' only ever-present last season was right back **TIM BREACKER**. He is an England under-21 international who has impressed with his overlapping play since his debut against Ipswich Town in March 1984.

Full back **ROB JOHNSON** joined Luton as a professional in the 1979-80 season, but had to overcome two serious knee injuries which required complicated surgery before establishing himself in the first team.

In midfield, Luton look to the experience of **DANNY WILSON** and **RICKY HILL** to pull the strings. Wilson, a Northern Ireland international, (10 caps before last week's World Cup qualifier against Spain) numbers Nottingham Forest and Brighton among his former clubs. Hill is in his 13th full season at Kenilworth Road, having joined the club directly from school. He made his debut in 1976 and is now approaching 500 appearances for the club.

Another hard-working member of the midfield is **DAVID PREECE**, who joined Luton from Walsall in 1984. His busy style makes him a favourite with the fans.

Twenty-year-old **KINGSLEY BLACK**, who plays wide on the left, made a name for himself in last season's Littlewoods Cup Final, after which Billy Bingham selected him for the Northern Ireland team. A dangerous player when on song, he had won five international caps before last week's World Cup game.

England international **MICK HARFORD** (two caps) leads the attack, with his ability in the air always posing particular problems. Born in Sunderland, he has also played for Lincoln City, Newcastle United, Bristol City and Birmingham City, from where he signed for a then-Luton record £275,000 in December 1984.

South African-born **ROY WEGERLE**, 24, has been in impressive goal-scoring form this season. He was signed from Chelsea last July for £75,000 after moving to this country from Tampa Bay Rowdies in Florida.

Another attacking option open to Harford is Australian-born **DAVID OLDFIELD**. Oldfield, 20, came to this country as a youngster and later joined Luton as an apprentice.

Currently on the comeback trail from an ankle injury is midfielder **DARRON McDONOUGH**, who joined Luton from Oldham Athletic for £85,000 in September 1986. He will be hoping that Luton reach Wembley again having missed last year's Littlewoods Cup Final

through injury.

Unable to command a regular first team place has been former Southampton and Arsenal midfielder **STEVE WILLIAMS**, who joined Luton for a club-record £300,000 last July.

More recently, manager Harford bought striker **IAN DOWIE** for £30,000 from non-League Hendon, where he had an impressive goal-scoring record, and defender **DAVID BEAUMONT** from Dundee United for £150,000.



TIM BREACKER

LUTON TOWN

This is the first appearance of the Hammers in a semi-final of the Littlewoods Cup (now in its third season); prior to the original tournament changing its name to the present sponsorship it was under the Milk Cup nomenclature, for four years, during which time also our team did not reach the last four.

However, the Hammers had a remarkable record during the 22 seasons of the Football League Cup,

Banks, John Sjoberg, Richie Norman, Frank McLintock, John King, Colin Appleton, Billy Hodgson, Bobby Roberts, Ken Keyworth, David Gibson, Mike Stringfellow. West Ham Utd: Jim Standen, John Bond, Jack Burkett, Martin Peters, Ken Brown, Bobby Moore, Alan Sealey, Ron Boyce, Johnny Byrne, Geoff Hurst, Peter Brabrook.

The Hammers' fans among the 14,087 spectators were shocked as

Byrne laid on a centre for Hurst to make it 2-4, and then Moore's pass through a spread eagle defence left Sealey to beat Banks. The City keeper was again by-passed by Byrne, but King blocked the ball on the line to keep the final count at 4-3.

Due to F.A. Cup and other commitments nearly seven weeks elapsed before we could play the second leg on 23rd March; during that period we had qualified for the F.A. Cup Final, so a victory over Leicester would have made it a unique double-Final achievement.

Our XI showed two changes – Eddie

1965-66 En route to the semi-final we disposed of four clubs from outside the First Division – Bristol Rovers, Mansfield Town, Rotherham and Grimsby Town; but replays were necessary against the Rovers and Grimsby.

Our opponents – Cardiff City – had similar opposition in the early rounds, defeating Crewe Alexandra, Portsmouth, Reading and Ipswich Town.

The match drew a 20,013 gate, the teams being: Hammers: Jim Standen,

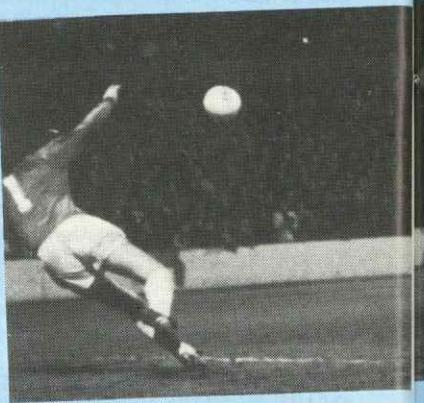
"The Ninian fans came in hope and left in wonderment."

Unfortunately, the first team from Division One that we met in that season's competition put paid to our hopes of winning the Trophy. West Bromwich Albion lost the first leg of the final by 2-1 at Upton Park, but swamped us by 4-1 in the return at The Hawthorns.

1966-67. We had another good run during the next season, beating Spurs (1-0 at home), Arsenal (3-1 at

Park for the second meeting. Many were attracted in the hope of seeing our team salvage a seemingly lost cause, and Byrne's 13th minute goal raised their expectations; but "hope was forestalled by Hope," as the Albion striker equalised nine minutes later. Hurst revived the prospects with acceptance of a half-chance ten minutes prior to the interval; but with nearly half-an-hour left on the clock Clark ensured his

HAMMERS' SEMI-FINAL SAGA



Bovington and John Sissons replaced Peters and Sealey. City used Graham Cross in place of Keyworth.

Keyworth, Roberts and Stringfellow put the Filberts three up inside 20 minutes; the second and third goals were achieved by ten men, as McLintock was off the field with a gashed ankle being attended to. Although Hurst pulled back a goal before City returned to full strength, the Leicester wing-half hobbled in to make it 4-1 soon after the interval. Then came a tremendous revival by the East Londoners; switching to more direct tactics, there were several threatening runs by Sealey (playing in the senior side for the first time since November, when he broke his leg).

Leicester beat Stoke City by 4-3 on aggregate in the final.



PAUL GODDARD (third from right) scores in the second leg v Coventry.

Joe Kirkup, John Charles, Eddie Bovington, Ken Brown, Bobby Moore, Peter Brabrook, Martin Peters, Johnny Byrne, Geoff Hurst, John Sissons. City: Bob Wilson, Alan Harrington, Peter Rodrigues, Barry Hole, Don Murray, David Houston, Gregg Farrell, Terry Harkin, George Andrews, Gareth Williams, Peter King.

It was all pretty one-sided for the first 85 minutes, despite the Bluebirds' "roughing up" tactics. However, European competitive experience saw us through that episode, and goals by Bovington (6 mins.), Byrne (42), Brabrook (65) and Sissons (75) put the visitors in their place. Andrews shattered any complacency on our part with a two-goal "blitz" in the 86th and 88th minutes, but Hurst's last-minute counter gave us a 5-2 advantage for the second leg.

That game took place on December 20, but we again came upon problems that deferred the second leg until February 2. We had three changes, Dennis Burnett and Jack Burkett at full-back, and Martin Britt at centre-forward. City fielded only six "survivors" from the first-leg, and one – Bernard Lewis – scored their solitary goal; Terry Yorath was one of the newcomers in the home line-up.

We totted up another quintet: they came from Hurst (five mins.), Peters (29), Hurst again (49), Peters again (64) and finally Burnett (82). Hurst's second was his 29th of that season, and he had scored in every League Cup tie. Two minutes from time the 14,315 attendance saw Johnston miss a penalty. Trevor Bond of the "Stratford Express" summarised it thus:

Highbury), Leeds United (a record-setting 7-0 at Upton Park) and Blackpool (3-1 at the seaside). Then came West Brom again!

The first leg was at The Hawthorns, and the W.B.A. manager Jimmy Hagan fielded this XI: Rick Sheppard, Bobby Cram, Graham Williams, Ian Collard, Stan Jones, Doug Fraser, Tony Brown, Jeff Astle, John Kaye, Bobby Hope, Clive Clark.

Ron Greenwood's XI included the three Hammers from the England team which had won the World Cup some six months earlier. Our side against Albion lined up: Jim Standen, Dennis Burnett, Jack Burkett, Eddie Bovington, Ken Brown, Bobby Moore, Peter Brabrook, Martin Peters, Johnny Byrne, Geoff Hurst, John Sissons.

Alas, the first blow fell within 60 seconds of the kick-off. A long ball into the area was met by the head of Astle, and it was one-nil to Albion. Clark scored from five yards in the 16th minute, then Astle went on to complete a hat-trick before half-time with further counters in the 23rd minute and in the closing seconds before the interval. 0-4 to Albion, but no reply from our side who at that time were the leading scorers in the First Division.

Hammers' manager drafted five new players into his twelve-man squad for a League match on the following Saturday, but apart from Ron Boyce taking the place of Burnett in a reshuffled XI he reverted to the earlier line-up for the second leg of the Cup three weeks later. Albion made one change: Ken Foggo for Astle.

The attendance at The Hawthorns had been 29,796, but surprisingly that

was exceeded by the 35,790 at Upton team's final appearance with an on-the-night equaliser. Aggregate 6-2.

The first League Cup Final to be played at Wembley in the following month (March) left Q.P.R. as winners; they defeated W.B.A. by 3-2.

1971-72 Volumes could more-or-less be written about the 1971-72 semi-final series between the Hammers and Stoke City which stretched over four games and opened at the Victoria Ground on December 8 1971.

Stoke City: Gordon Banks, John Marsh, Mike Pejic, Mike Bernard, Alan Bloor, Stuart Jump, Terry Conroy, Jimmy Greenhoff, John Ritchie, Peter Dobby (capt.), George Eastham, Sub: John Mahoney.

West Ham Utd: Bobby Ferguson, John McDowell, Frank Lampard, Billy Bonds, Tommy Taylor, Bobby Moore (capt.), Harry Redknapp, Clyde Best, Geoff Hurst, Trevor Brooking, Bryan Robson. Sub: Bobby Howe.

The 36,400 gate witnessed an ill-tempered match, with referee Tony Morrissey booking four players and awarding a 28th-minute penalty against Bloor for obstructing Best.

The spot-kick conversion by Hurst levelled Dobby's 14th minute goal for the Potters, and from thence onwards the Hammers provided more skill to the contest. 18 minutes after the interval Redknapp opened up the homesters' left flank and crossed for Best to hit in a volley off the underside of the bar. McDowell nearly made it a "repeat", but his shot rebounded from the woodwork, so we had to be content with a 2-1 lead to bring back to Upton Park. It was an evening for the Hammers to celebrate!

The only change in the line-ups for



'BONZO' heads the first goal at Coventry.

By JACK HELLIER

the return was Eric Skeels for Jupp in City's team.

It would be fair to say that the majority of the 38,771 in the stands and on the terraces were anticipating a formality-result at the Boleyn Ground. However, (to quote Donald Saunders of the *Daily Telegraph*): "West Ham contributed to their own failure; some of their finishing was, inexcusably casual." Defensively, we missed out as Taylor failed to head away a centre in the 72nd minute, and Ritchie put the ball netwise to level the aggregate and force extra time.

Three minutes from the end of the additional half-hour Banks literally saved the game for his colleagues. Two reporters at least used a similar phrase: "... the greatest save of his illustrious career" to describe the manner in which the England 'keeper fisted away Hurst's spot-kick. Referee Keith Walker had awarded it after Banks rushed out to take the ball from Redknapp, following which the Stoke custodian allowed the ball to elude his grasp – and then grab the Hammers' winger's ankles.

Stoke won the toss to decide the venue for the replay, and their manager Tony Waddington picked Hillsborough. 35-year-old George Eastham was outstanding for Stoke, but Banks hit the headlines again with a classic save from Best in the 33rd minute. There was another referee in



charge on this occasion, but Bob Mathewson controlled the game well in an atmosphere that was possibly Northern-biased with the majority of the 46,916 fans on Stoke's side. It ended goalless after extra time.

It was with a sense of disbelief that we found Tony Waddington insisting on another toss-up for choice of venue for the second replay; we had reasonably assumed that it was "our turn" to make a selection, but the City manager was adamant; he won again, so the game went to Old Trafford instead of Highbury. The rules are different nowadays.

That was the prelude to our eventual exit. "Blinding rain, swirling wind and ankle-deep mud" was an apt description of conditions. Then Conroy crashed into Ferguson – and it put the Hammers' 'keeper off the field for 20 minutes after a seven-minute delay. The fourth-nominated referee-in-charge – Pat Partridge – awarded City a penalty, so Bobby Moore (who had donned the green jersey) was faced with saving Mike Bernard's spot-kick. Our skipper beat out the shot, but the opposing half-back netted the rebound.

Incredibly, we drew level as Bonds drove home a 25-yarder (37 mins.); then further goals by Brooking and Dobby made it 2-2 during the extra minutes added before the delayed interval.

Four minutes after the resumption Conroy netted to give Stoke a 3-2 lead which they maintained until the end. However, there was no disputing the fact that the early injury sustained by our goalkeeper had a telling effect; indeed, it subsequently transpired that "Fergie" was playing for much of the time by instinct after his return to the field – a tribute to his courage and that of his colleagues. Peter Eustace was our sub in that game – replacing Harry Redknapp in the closing stages.

Those four matches aggregated a 171,334 attendance – the most for any tie in the League Cup's 12-year-history to date.

Paul Brush, Billy Bonds (capt.), Alvin Martin, Alan Devonshire, Paul Allen, Paul Goddard, David Cross, Trevor Brooking, Geoff Pike. Sub: Jimmy Neighbour.

We were credited with two remarkable goals in the first half. In the 28th minute a linesman flagged to indicate that Sealey had failed to prevent Bonds' header crossing the line before being caught by the Coventry 'keeper; then, seven minutes later, the opposing centre-forward, Thompson, was debited with an own goal.

However, Thompson more than balanced his error with a couple of second-half goals as manager Gordon Milne urged his team to a late winning rally. A 71st-minute counter was followed by Daly's equaliser five minutes afterwards; then during the odd minute allowed for overtime by referee George Courtney, Thompson gained his side a one-goal advantage.

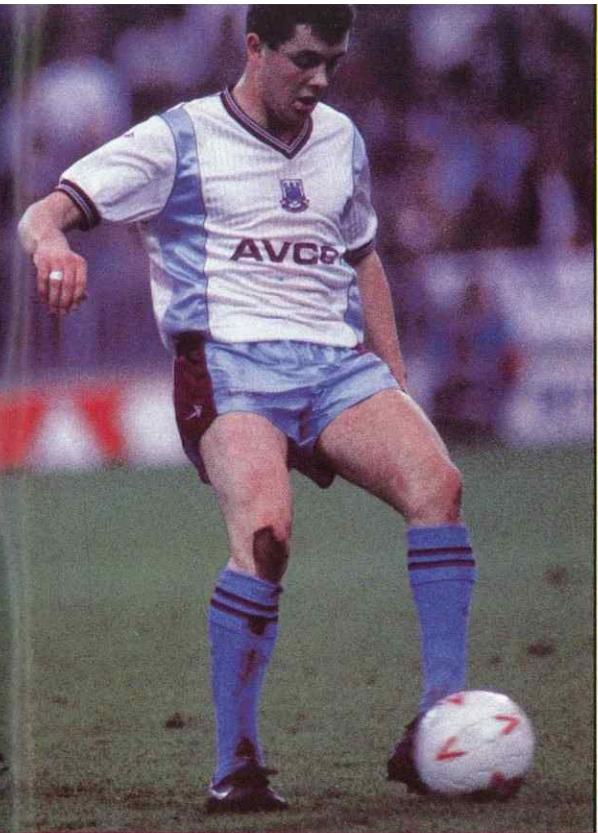
The second leg was Hammers' 14th Cup tie of that season (we were also in Europe). Frank Lampard was in at left-back and Neighbour took over from Allen on our side. Coventry's line-up was the same as at Highfield Road.

The game really went the full distance, providing peak-level excitement for the 36,551 present with a last-minute decider. Goddard levelled the aggregate with a goal on the hour, and with a minute to go Neighbour made it two-nil on the night and 4-3

JIMMY NEIGHBOUR's last minute winner.
on aggregate.

Prior to that we had eliminated Burnley, Charlton Athletic, Barnsley and Spurs, thereby qualifying for those memorable meetings with Liverpool in a twice-played final at Wembley (1-1) and Villa Park (1-2).

Overall our League Cup Semi-Final statistics amounted to a couple of victories and three eliminations. A less-than-hoped-for ratio of success, but a series that brought back a wide spectrum of happy – and occasional disappointing – memories.



▲ JULIAN DICKS

GEORGE IS PLAYING HIS PART

Although George Parris is not a regular selection at the moment he played a significant role in our opening Littlewoods Cup tie at Sunderland back in September, and was on the subs bench for the fourth round tie with Liverpool.

"I am caught up in the atmosphere even if I'm not directly involved", says George. "It has been great and hopefully the lads will keep it going and get to Wembley."

"I'm hoping to get another chance of course. I'm not too disappointed because obviously if the side is doing well the manager has got to stick by them."

"I shall be cheering them on from the line if I'm not involved myself. It is more nerve-racking watching as it happens because you want the lads to do so well and can't actually do anything positive to help them out there if things are not going to plan. But this success is good for everyone at the Club."

George has been travelling regularly with the first team and so has not been able to play regularly in the reserves. He says: "Even at that level it takes you a while to get back if you haven't been playing games regularly. Training keeps you fit but when it comes to match play it is just a notch or so up on normal fitness."

THERE'S NO PRESSURE

"This is the biggest match of my career and I just can't wait to get on with it."

Any game at this stage of the cup competition is going to be hard and I think Luton and ourselves are well matched. We were thumped at Luton earlier in the season I know but a couple of those goals were lucky ones and when it comes to the cup we are a different proposition.

We have all been playing well so I don't see why we cannot continue the run. Nobody seems to know why our cup form differs so much from our league form. Maybe it is because in the league there is always another Saturday to fall back on.

The crowd seem to respond better to cup-tie football as well. They really get behind us and the more they cheer the better we play.

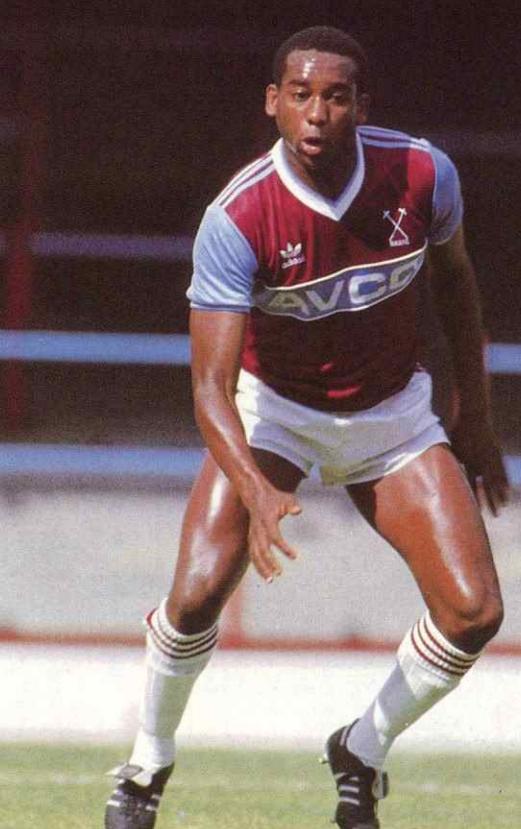
I don't think anyone thinks about our league form when we play in the cups. It is completely different. Almost like another world.

But we are not getting carried away. Wembley is still a long way off so at the moment this is just another game to be won. The way things are for us every game is a big one.

Really I don't think there is any pressure on us at all. Luton have the Wembley experience, the plastic pitch, and a better position than us in the First Division. So where's the pressure?

On a personal note, I am pleased with my form and feel that my game is improving. When you have people like Liam Brady and Alan Devonshire in front of you, you can't help but play better. They are great players and it is an honour to be on the same pitch with them.

▼ GEORGE PARRIS



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DAVID KELLY

STRIKING IT RICH

For striker David Kelly, the build-up to this afternoon's semi-final has not been unfamiliar. For he was involved in Walsall's semi-final clash with Liverpool a few years back when the competition was known as the Milk Cup.

Recalls David: "We went up to Anfield and drew 2-2 and Wembley looked a real possibility. But Liverpool came back to Walsall and beat us 2-0.

"I wasn't directly involved because I was in the reserves but there was a great buzz around the club as there is here now.

"At Walsall it was slightly different because they had done so well getting through to the semi-final. Being a Third Division club anything was a bonus so it was enjoyable.

"I think that is the main thing. You have got to try and enjoy the game. Not many players get into the position of being one step away from Wembley."

David has cracked in four goals in the Littlewoods Cup campaign so far this season but he hasn't been finding the net perhaps as regularly as he expected to with the Hammers.

He says: "It has been a disappointing season for me. I have found it tough at the top, as they say, but I'm sure if I can keep going and can continue to give a hundred-per-cent then things will work out okay.

"We are in a slightly different position to the one we faced against Liverpool as this tie is over two legs. I think it will benefit us to be home for the first game and hopefully we shall be able to establish a lead to take to Luton.

"I'm sure you are fully aware of what most people think of plastic pitches. It will not be easy but we have got to get a job done. It makes no difference what surface you play on you still have to win the game."

The highlight of David's career has been his first game for the Republic of Ireland when he scored a hat-trick against Israel. A trip to Wembley could surpass that success.

If there is any blarney about this young man then it has only been manufactured by the media. The Irish connection is through his Dublin-born father and David spurned the chance to play for the England Under-21 team to wear the emerald green shirt instead. But when it comes to superstitions there are none.

Yes he did sport a beard when we drew 2-2 with Arsenal in the F.A. Cup. And yes, the papers did run a story that he was wearing it for luck and would not shave until we were beaten. But David laughs as he gives us the real lowdown on the facts.

"I shaved the beard off when we lost against Manchester United so this is a new one," he reveals. "But I won't have a shave now until after the Luton games. To tell you the truth I don't like shaving. I shave as little as possible. It's not got to the stage yet where I have to shave every day so it is very good."

Still, the 23-year-old striker, who fired 70 goals in two seasons for Walsall, hopes to be able to trim Luton to size this afternoon. He is revelling in the hype and says: "The media build you up then knock you down. It is just a matter of getting out there and showing them you can do better... The media doesn't worry me anyway. I don't speak to many of them.

"My only real concern is to do my part for West Ham in this semi-final. If we can overcome Luton it will be a great boost for everyone connected with the club."

HAMMERS ON THE BIG SCREEN

The second-leg of this Littlewoods Cup Semi-Final at Kenilworth Road will be an all-ticket match.

As you know the date of the match has not yet been settled as the TV programme selectors have yet to decide whether to screen this game live or to cover the Bristol City v Nottingham Forest tie.

If television do decide to screen the Luton v West Ham game then the match will take place on Sunday, 26th February, at Kenilworth Road. Should this be the case then please note that our First Division game with Queens Park Rangers, scheduled for Saturday 25th, will be postponed.

However, if our tie is not selected for live-transmission then the Luton v West Ham United second-leg will be played at Luton on the following Wednesday, 1st March.

Should this be the outcome we are aware that many of our supporters will be unable to get tickets because of the limited allocation. In order to make it possible for all of our supporters to see this game we are intending to screen the match live at Upton Park.

You will be able to see all the action on giant screens situated on the playing area. Our initial impression is that admission to Upton Park for this big screen spectacular will be 'pay on the gate' so that there will be no need to buy tickets in advance.

Admission details will be announced if our second-leg tie with Luton is played on Wednesday, 1st March.

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Avco Trust will be entertaining 60 of their Management Staff and business associates this afternoon.

We also take this opportunity of thanking Avco for their long association with West Ham United Football Club. We wish Avco and their guests a very enjoyable and memorable Semi-Final here at Upton Park.

We also welcome Peter Stewart, of Shoot! Magazine, our Matchball Sponsor and also Sponsor of today's Matchday Mascot. Peter, over a number of years, has become a great friend of everyone at West Ham United and we take this opportunity of thanking him for his support.

It's also a big welcome to Brian Moore and his team from ITV, who are covering today's Match. I am sure Brian will pass on a big welcome to those home viewers watching the game.

We do hope it's a classic and memorable match.

STAFF WANTED NOW!

We have a full-time position available in our Commercial Department for a counter-assistant and VDU operator. Applicants must be over 25-years-old with good references. If you are interested, apply immediately to Darron Wilson on 472 5756.

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All the Commercial Staff send get well messages to Carole Reynolds, who for the past six years, has been one of our team looking after the Matchday Sponsors. Carole was recently admitted to Princess Alexandra Hospital in Harlow. Our thoughts are with you Carole.

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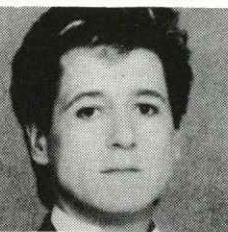
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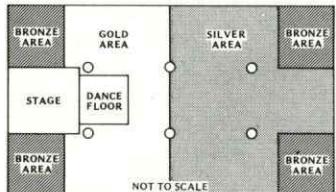
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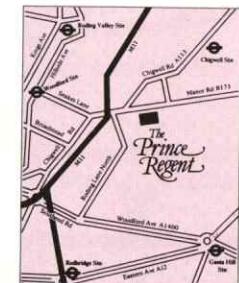
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TIME TO SETTLE

"Semi-finals are big occasions for anyone and maybe it is more so for myself as this is my first season in English football.

Not that I am not used to these big games, having played in several semi-finals in Irish football and in the Scottish Cup Final with Celtic last year. So I am prepared and am really looking forward to the game.

Nerves will not come into it. It is more an anxious tension just wanting to get on and get involved with the game than anything else.

No-one wants to come this far and lose out. Again this is a two-leg semi-final which is a funny situation to be in. It will probably not be the same intense build-up as it would be if it was a straight knock-out game.

I think that this will be reflected by the atmosphere just before the game. Everyone here knows it is not going to come off on the one day. It is very similar to European cup football. Last season I played for Celtic when we won 2-1 at home to Borussia Dortmund. That gave us a mountain to climb in the second leg in Germany. Hopefully we can make better use of home advantage today.

Luton already have a win over us this season. They caught us on an off-day and we blamed a lot of it on their plastic pitch. But really that was an easy excuse.

But we know what to expect when we go there and will not be caught out in the first fifteen minutes as we were in November.

I think I am slowly acclimatising myself to the English game. It seems to take everybody quite a while to settle in. If you look around the League you will find that quite a few who came down from Scotland have gone straight back. Players like Robinson from Hearts; while Jim Leighton, at Manchester United, and Bryan Gunn, at Norwich City, have both needed time to settle.

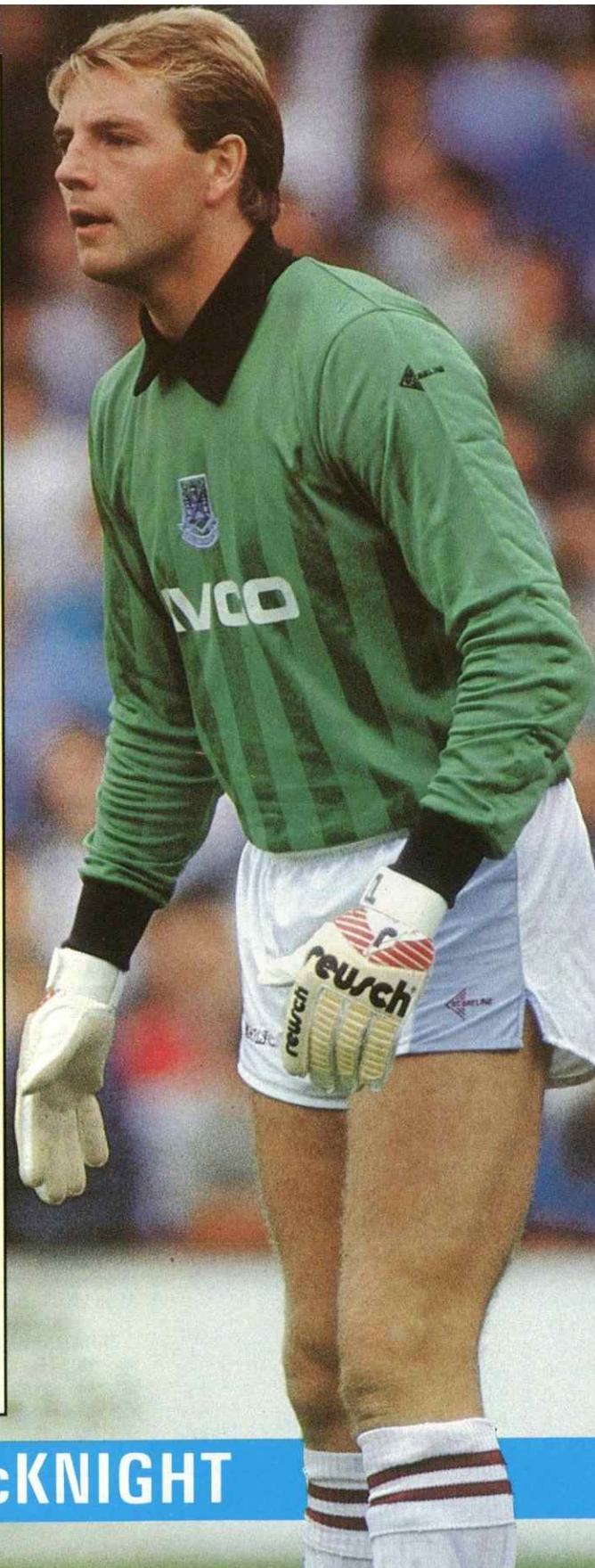
Now I have got half a season behind me I am beginning to read the game a little better. They play a different style of football entirely from that in Scotland. The ball is moved a lot more here whereas in Scotland there tends to be a lot more individual players. The John Barnes type of player, although maybe not the same quality, but definitely with the same approach.

In England such players are few and far between. The players tend to release the ball more often and quicker and that means that the goalkeeper needs to adjust his position quicker.

The object is to stop the other side scoring so I am fairly pleased when I keep a clean sheet. I think my best game so far was at Coventry although I had a good second half at Derby County as well.

I don't consider myself as superstitious even though I might have some little ones. I don't tend to think of them, I just do them. I prepare in the dressing room doing things in the same order every time – like putting the boots on in a particular way and so on. I shall follow the same routine today and hopefully our cup luck will not change and we will get the same result as we have achieved in the previous rounds."

ALLEN McKNIGHT



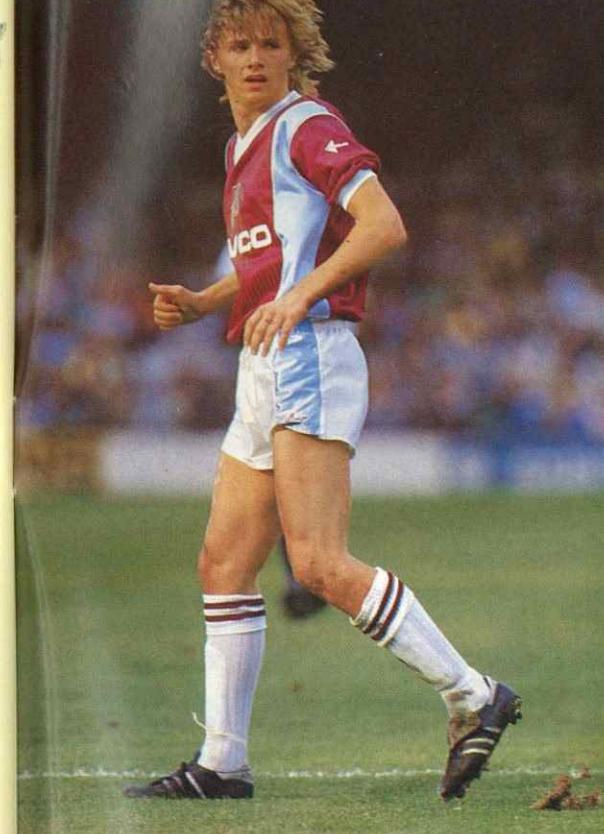
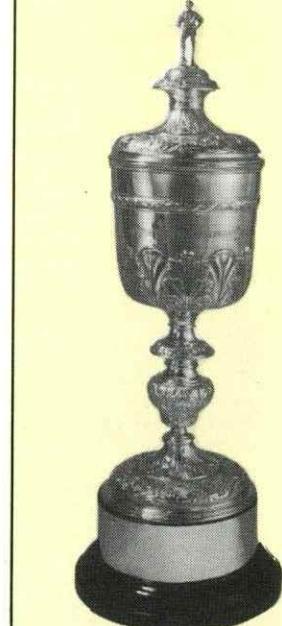
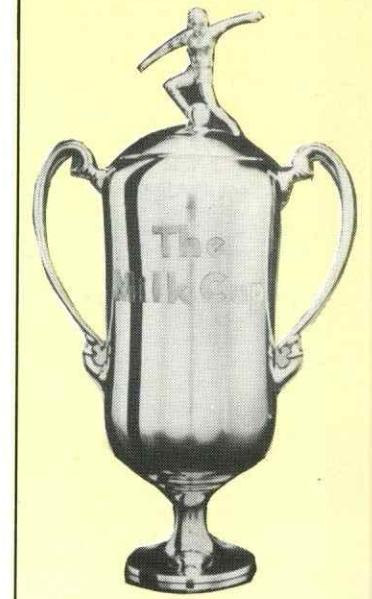
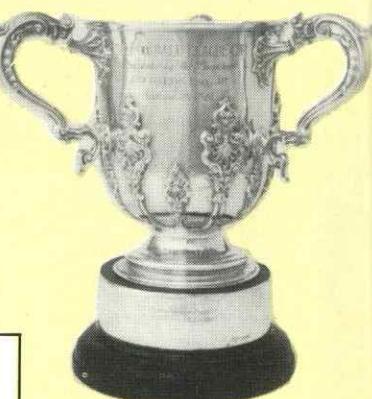
OUR LEAGUE CUP RECORD

FOOTBALL LEAGUE CUP

Rnd	H	A	1977-78	2	Queens Park Rangers	0-2	
1960-61	2	Charlton Athletic	3-1	1978-79	2	Nottingham Forest	0-5
	3	Darlington	2-3	1979-80	2	Swindon Town	1-2
1961-62	2	Plymouth Argyle	3-2		3	Barnsley	3-1 2-0
	3	Aston Villa	1-3		3	Southend United	1-1 0-0
1962-63	2	Plymouth Argyle	6-0		4	Sunderland	5-1
	3	Rotherham United	1-3		5	Nottingham Forest	2-1 1-1
1963-64	2	Leyton Orient	2-1	1980-81	2	Burnley	0-0 0-3
	3	Aston Villa	2-0		3	Charlton Athletic	4-0 2-0
	4	Swindon Town	4-1 3-3		4	Barnsley	2-1
	5	Workington	6-0		5	Tottenham Hotspur	1-0
	SF	Leicester City	0-2 3-4		SF	Coventry City	2-0 2-3
1964-65	2	Sunderland	1-4		F	Liverpool (Wembley)	1-1
1965-66	2	Bristol Rovers	3-2 3-3	1981-82	2	Derby County	1-2
	3	Mansfield Town	4-0		3	West Bromwich Albion	2-0 3-2
	4	Rotherham	2-1				0-1
	5	Grimsby Town	1-0 2-2				
	SF	Cardiff City	5-2 5-1				
	F	West Bromwich Albion	2-1 1-4				
1966-67	2	Tottenham Hotspur	1-0				
	3	Arsenal	3-1				
	4	Leeds United	7-0				
	5	Blackpool	3-1				
	SF	West Bromwich Albion	2-2 0-4				
1967-68	2	Walsall	5-1				
	3	Bolton Wanderers	4-1				
	4	Huddersfield Town	0-2				
1968-69	2	Bolton Wanderers	7-2	1982-83	2	Stoke City	10-0 2-1
	3	Coventry City	0-0 2-3		3	Lincoln City	2-1 1-1
1969-70	2	Halifax Town	4-2		4	Notts County	3-0 3-3
	3	Nottingham Forest	0-1	1983-84	2	Bury	1-2
1970-71	2	Hull City	1-0		3	Brighton & H.A.	1-0
	3	Coventry City	1-3		4	Everton	2-2 0-2
1971-72	2	Cardiff City	1-1 2-1	1984-85	2	Bristol City	6-1 2-2
	3	Leeds United	0-0 1-0		3	Manchester City	1-2 0-0
	4	Liverpool	2-1	1985-86	2	Swansea City	3-0 3-2
	5	Sheffield United	5-0		3	Manchester United	0-1
	SF	Stoke City	0-1 2-1				
	Hillsborough	0-0	1986-87	2	Preston North End		
	Old Trafford	2-3		3	Watford	4-1 1-1	
1972-73	2	Bristol City	2-1		4	Oxford United	3-2
	3	Stockport County	1-2		5	Tottenham Hotspur	1-0 5-0
1973-74	2	Liverpool	2-2 0-1	1987-88	2	Barnsley	2-5 0-0
1974-75	2	Tranmere Rovers	6-0 0-0	1988-89	2	Sunderland	2-1 3-0
	3	Fulham	1-2		3	Derby County	5-0
1975-76	2	Bristol Rovers	0-0 3-1		4	Liverpool	4-1
	3	Darlington	3-0		5	Aston Villa	2-1
	4	Tottenham Hotspur	0-2 0-0				
1976-77	2	Barnsley	3-0				
	3	Charlton Athletic	1-0				

SUMMARY

	P	W	D	L	F	A
Home	63	44	11	8	164	54
Away	53	19	14	20	83	91
Neutral	4	0	2	2	4	6
TOTAL	120	63	27	30	251	151



▲ KEVIN KEEN

COMPETITION FOR PLACES

Paul Hilton was on the substitutes bench at Highbury last week and that is a great boost for a player who, but for illness and injury, could well have been playing instead of the injured Alvin Martin.

Explains Paul: "Since Christmas, when I was ill with a virus and a throat infection, I have found it difficult to regain my fitness. I lost six pounds in weight in a week and it left me very weak."

"Since then I have only played three or four reserve games so it is nice to be back."

"Gary got the chance to fill in for Alvin but I will be putting pressure on him now. It is healthy for there to be a bit of competition for places."

"It is lovely to be involved in a semi-final and I just hope the lads get a good start against Luton today. It was a little disappointing at Arsenal last week because it was a game we could have won. One good thing we could glean from it though was that we created some openings and if you are doing that there is always a chance."

"I was substitute at Luton earlier this season and played up front against them in a 1-1 draw here at Upton Park in January last season. We were a bit short of players at the time and I didn't mind it was a challenge."

Paul is looking forward to renewing his friendship with Danny Wilson who was at Bury when he first joined them as a 17-year-old.

'WE HAVE A GOOD CHANCE'

Kevin Keen is another star player on the fringe of the action at the moment although this highly talented young midfielder surely has a bright future beckoning.

Kevin stepped into the Littlewoods Cup just two minutes from the end of our second-leg Second Round tie against Sunderland when he replaced Alan Devonshire. But the real glory came in the following round when he netted a simply superb goal against Derby County.

That success heralded a run of seven successive first team games which terminated just before that sensational win over Liverpool in the fourth round.

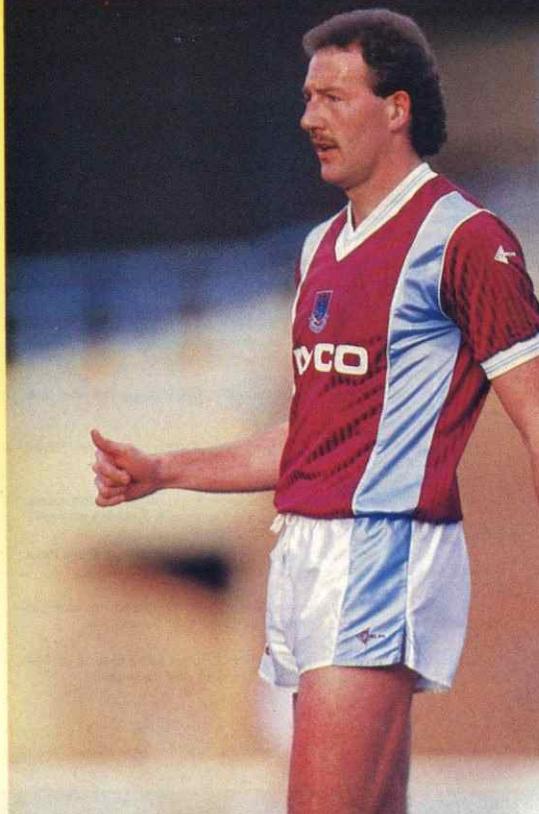
A quiet, reserved young talent, Kevin, who is 22 later this month, has not fully blossomed as yet. When he does you will be hearing much more about him.

In the meantime he is honing his creative talents ready to step into the breach should Alan Devonshire or Liam Brady be unavailable.

Says Kevin: "I think we have a good chance against Luton. They beat us badly at their place earlier in the season but we carved open a lot of openings for ourselves and had we taken them it could have been a different story."

"Our best form this season has been in the cups so let's hope we can continue that trend against Luton. A win over them in this semi-final would give us all the boost we are looking for."

▼ PAUL HILTON



WEST HAM UNITED

1 ALLEN McKNIGHT

Signed from Glasgow Rangers, he picked up his 10th cap for Northern Ireland v Spain in midweek. Makes his sixth appearance in the Littlewoods Cup.

2 STEVE POTTS

This will also be Steve's sixth game in this competition. Born Hartford, Connecticut, U.S.A. He is 21.

3 JULIAN DICKS

Scored his very first goal for the Hammers at Highbury last week. Has played six League Cup games for Birmingham and five for the Hammers.

4 TONY GALE (Captain)

Scored his first Littlewoods Cup goal for us against Liverpool. Makes his 15th appearance. Played 22 times (two goals) for Fulham.

5 GARY STRODDER

Signed from Lincoln City in March 1987, he made his third Littlewoods Cup appearance v Aston Villa. Played eight games for Lincoln City.

6 ALAN DEVONSHIRE

Has netted two goals in 44 League Cup games. Played in the two semi-finals against Coventry in 1981.

7 MARK WARD

This will be Mark's 15th League Cup appearance for the Hammers (two goals). Played five games for Oldham Athletic.

8 ALAN DICKENS

His record shows three goals in 16 League Cup games. Returned to the centre of midfield at Arsenal last week and had a tremendous game.

9 LEROY ROSENIOR

Has scored two goals in four Littlewoods Cup games for the Hammers. Scored two goals in five games for Queens Park Rangers and one goal in four appearances with Fulham.

10 LIAM BRADY

Makes his sixth appearance for the Hammers. Scored 10 goals in 23 League Cup games for Arsenal.

11 PAUL INCE

Three goals in his last two Littlewoods Cup appearances. This will be Paul's eighth game all told in this competition.

12

14

LUTON TOWN

1 LES SEALEY

The cousin of former Hammer Alan Sealey, Les was in Coventry's goal when we beat them in the 1981 Milk Cup semi-final.

2 TIM BREACKER

In his sixth season of first team football. An England Under-21 international he has played in all Luton's Littlewoods Cup games.

3 ASHLEY GRIMES

Made one and scored one in last year's second-leg semi-final against Oxford United. Bohemians, Manchester United and Coventry are his previous clubs.

4 DAVID PREECE

Signed from Walsall for £150,000 in December 1984. He played in that Final victory over Arsenal last April.

5 STEVE FOSTER (Captain)

Was the only member of last season's winning team to have appeared in a Wembley final before Luton's Simod Cup decider.

6 JOHN DREYER

Cost Luton £140,000 to sign from Oxford United last summer. Had loan spells with Torquay United and Fulham.

7 DANNY WILSON

Was Ray Harford's first signing for Luton - £150,000 from Brighton. Played in the final v Arsenal.

8 ROY WEGERLE

Signed from Chelsea for £75,000 in the summer. Is Luton's leading scorer. Previously with Tampa Bay Rowdies. Had spell with Swindon on loan.

9 MICK HARFORD

Scored v Southampton in the previous round. Won the first of his three England caps last February in Israel.

10 RICKY HILL

Also scored in that replay with the Saints. Made a remarkable comeback in last year's final after breaking his leg at Everton on Boxing Day.

11 KINGSLEY BLACK

Made his fourth Littlewoods Cup appearance in last year's final, at 19. The England Under-18 international then chose to play for Ireland.

12

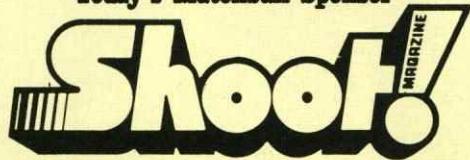
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Today's Matchday Mascot

Today we welcome Adam Flanagan as our Matchday Mascot. Adam, 11, lives at Hornchurch, Essex. He attends St. Mary's RC school and his hobbies are football, swimming, golf and table tennis. Adam is top scorer for his school, but plays centre-half for his Echo League club EMH. He attends the Charlton School of Excellence in Brentwood. His ability as a player is not surprising as Dad, Mike, is coach at Charlton and has played many times against the Hammers. Adam supports both clubs. His Upton Park favourites are Tony Gale and Phil Parkes. We wish him and his family an enjoyable afternoon.



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Today's Officials

Referee: **GEORGE COURTNEY**

(Spennymoor)

Linesmen: **D. S. Josham** (Red Trim)

F. R. Martin (Yellow Trim)

The Reserve Official has been appointed by the Ilford Referees' Society.

WEST HAM UNITED **SCORELINE**

NEXT HOME ACTION HERE
AT UPTON PARK

BARCLAYS LEAGUE DIVISION ONE

QUEENS PARK RANGERS

SATURDAY, 25th FEBRUARY. Kick-off 3pm

*subject to cup commitments.