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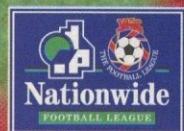
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Nationwide League Division Two

v. LUTON TOWN

Wednesday, 12th March, 1997 Kick-off 7.30pm.



2



Wrexham F.C.

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■ Tony Humes consoles Andy Marriott after the final whistle at Chesterfield on Sunday.

The Mother of all Sundays

There can be little doubting the disappointment etched on the faces of the 2,000 Wrexham fans who made their way home from Derbyshire last Sunday.

A tantalising glimpse of the Twin Towers had been snatched from their grasp by a Chesterfield side who, on the day, deserved their success.

"It was just one of those days where we didn't perform to the standards we have set ourselves during this cup-run," explained assistant-manager Kevin Reeves after Sunday's 1-0 F.A.Cup Quarter-Final defeat at Saltergate.

"Our success this season has been built around team play. We've won matches as a team and we've lost today as a team. The players know that, it's collective responsibility and there will be no blaming of individuals.

"Full credit to Chesterfield, they kept to their game plan and made things very difficult for us. We looked to be getting on top during the first-half but they took over after the interval.

"We wish John Duncan, Kevin Randle and their players the very best of luck in the Semi-Final against Middlesbrough."

It would be far to easy to look back at what went wrong on Sunday. What is really important now is that we get back on the Play-Off trail and, who knows, that could yet see us end up at Wembley.

We have 15 games left to go and each one becomes a cup tie in itself. A win tonight, coupled with another three points on Saturday against York City, would see the Reds rocket up the table.

"Obviously, we have to get back on track in the league," added Reeves. "The season is still very much alive for us and the Luton match now becomes an even more important one for us.

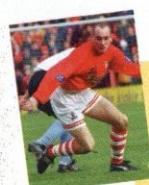
"The supporters will play a vital part themselves on Wednesday. They've got to try and help lift the players after Chesterfield. The support away from home this season has been fantastic, now the fans need to get behind the lads even more at the Racecourse.

"Together, we can do it."

Front Cover Caption

"Return of the Messiah". Gary Bennett returns to his beloved Wrexham to aid their promotion push.

(Photo: Les Evans, Wrexham Leader.)



Calls cost 45p per minute cheap rate
50p per minute at all other times

"After Sunday, we have to pick ourselves up quickly"

BRIAN

FLYNN

A new beginning

Good evening and welcome back to the Racecourse, as we once again turn our attention to league matters and a vital encounter with high flying Luton Town.

After the extreme lows felt by everyone following the Chesterfield result, we have a chance to quickly lift ourselves and the task of facing Luton Town means we have no time to feel sorry for ourselves.

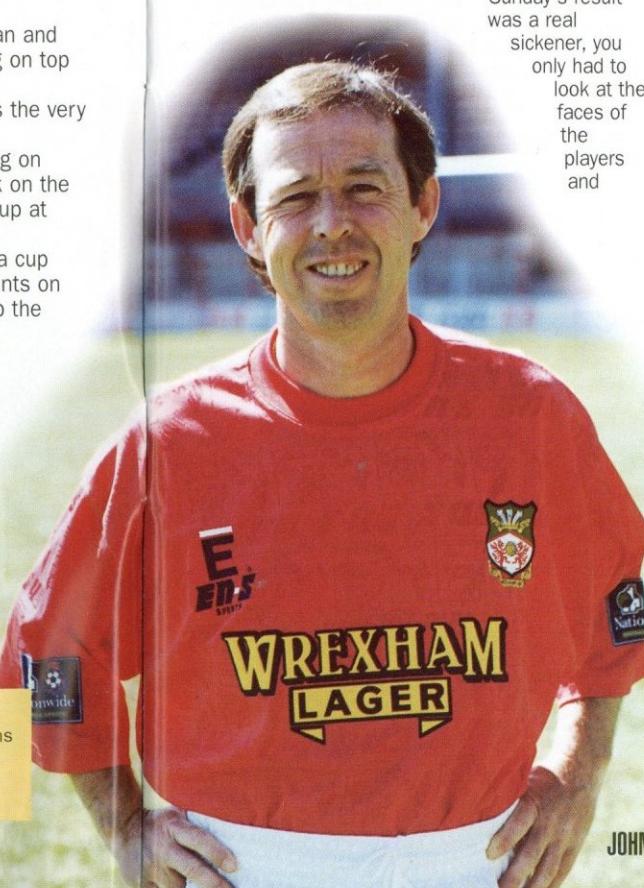
The best way to put our F.A.Cup exit behind us, is to get back to normal tonight and our visitors will ensure that we have to concentrate 100%.

We have 15 games left in the league and with them coming at the rate of two a week, there is no time for a cup hang over. We need to pick ourselves up and knuckle down to the task at hand.

My concern is that the cup defeat will either ruin us or help us. We saw a few years ago what happened following the trip to Old Trafford, it's so important that doesn't happen again this time.

There is a strong character in the side, which as been shown time and time again this season and I really do believe they are resilient enough to go on and get success in the League.

Sunday's result was a real sickener, you only had to look at the faces of the players and



Missing Home

Our involvement in getting through to the sixth round of the F.A. Cup has sparked a flood of letters from a round the world.

Many come from exiled locals now living in all the corners of the earth, others are people caught up by the romance of the cup, plus we have also been contacted by supporters of the clubs that we have played to get this far.

On Monday morning, there was a steady rumble of the fax machine churning out letters from Chesterfield fans congratulating us on the conduct of both our players and supporters.

This caught staff at the Racecourse a little off guard, but it's nice to know that even in their moment of triumph, there were Chesterfield supporters kind enough to think of the losers and their feelings.

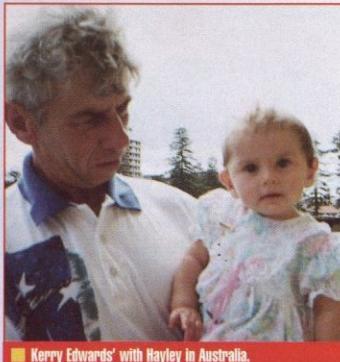
Going into Sunday's game, several Birmingham fans wrote to wish us good luck and recall the afternoon of our meeting at St. Andrews. It seems that the football we played and the vocal support from the Railway End, had an effect on the Blues supporters.

From the exiles, were letters recounting the days when they were able to get along to the Racecourse. Typical of these, was Kerry Edwards' message of encouragement and a photograph of himself with little Hayley, with the promise they would both be on the first plane out of Sydney, Australia, if we managed to reach Wembley.

Kerry's brothers Wynn and Malcolm are still regulars with us, so please pass on our thanks to your family down under.

CAMPING OUT

Despite the terrible disappointment at missing out on a place in the semi-final, we



Kerry Edwards with Hayley in Australia.

hope that everyone who queued up through the night for their tickets for the Chesterfield game, still felt it was worth it.

The tales we have heard from those who endured the wet weather and cold, gave the impression of a Dunkirk spirit amongst fans.

We certainly take our hats off to everyone who made the effort and to all those that were unlucky enough to have missed out.

As best as we can work it out, if you arrived in the queue by 5.30 a.m., then you should have been rewarded with a ticket.

It's such a shame that your loyalty could not have been further paid back, with that elusive place in the semi-final.

A special word of praise for Allen Thomas and his staff in the Club Shop, for staying open all night and doing their bit to make the wait a little bit more bearable.

Later in the week a policeman arrived at the Racecourse and enquired had we come across an upholstered pub chair that was

BRISTOL ROVERS TICKETS

Will supporters wishing to travel to our Easter Monday game at the Memorial Ground, the new home of Bristol Rovers, please note that this match is ALL-TICKET.

We have been supplied with an allocation, which is for the terraces off Alton Road. They are priced at £8.00 with no reductions offered.

These will go on sale from Monday, 17th March. There should be plenty to go round, so no need to camp out overnight this time!

Postal applications will be accepted in the usual manner, enclosing a SAE and cheque made out to "Wrexham FC". Please put your address and card number on the reverse of the cheque.

Rovers do operate a family area and were happy to allow in visiting supporters at Twerton Park. If you want to make further enquiries for this trip, then their office number is (0117) 986 9999.

Arnold Roberts, Malcolm Taylor, Dave Griffiths and Malcolm Davies of John R. Boyle (Wrexham) Ltd present Mark McGregor with the matchball prior to the Burnley game.

taken from the Nags Head. Apparently someone had suggested, that it was seen in the queue on the Yale Car Park, there was certainly plenty of rubbish left behind, but no pub chairs in sight!

Also thank you to the supporter who bought his ticket and on returning home, realised that in all the rush, he had not actually handed over his £10. He phoned up the office to tell the staff and the following morning arrived to hand over his cash. Tales like that restore your faith, especially after hearing some of the abuse that was directed at the staff.

REACHING OUT

Following our game against Birmingham City, which was shown on television, we received a letter from David Ellis, of Llanrumney, Cardiff.

He was watching the highlights, when the camera picked out an old friend of his, Bob Kerckham.

If Bob would like to get in touch with us, we have a letter to pass onto you from David.

YOUTH CAPS

Congratulations to four of our YTS players, on their selection for the Wales Under-18 squad to take part in an international tournament soon, in Milan, Italy.

Those chosen are David Walsh, Steve Hopkins, Steve Thomas and Steve Roberts and they will fly out to the games from 23rd to 28th March.

Before tonight's game, Schoolboy officer Mike Buxton, will be presenting Darren Johnson with his Wales Cap for playing against Northern Ireland. Darren is also in the squad for a game against Scotland on 20th March.

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50/50 WINNER

Collecting £430 as his winnings after the Burnley match, was a delighted Andrew

NORTH WALES FOOTBALL SEMINAR

The Football Association of Wales, in conjunction with the Association of Football Coaches and Teachers, the North Wales Coast FA and the Sports Council for Wales, have finalised details of the 1997 North Wales Football Coaching Demonstration.

There will be four coaching presentations hosted by Brian Eastic, Dave Sexton and Mike Rigg.

The date for the seminar is Sunday, 23rd March, with the venue being Deeside Leisure Centre, Queensferry.

The cost is £10.00 per person (cheques to AFCAT), but those who wish to attend will need to get in touch with the AFCAT at Cathedral Chambers, Great George Street, Leeds. LS2 8BD. The closing day for entry is today, but if you hurry there should still be places available.

MICKEY THOMAS TESTIMONIAL

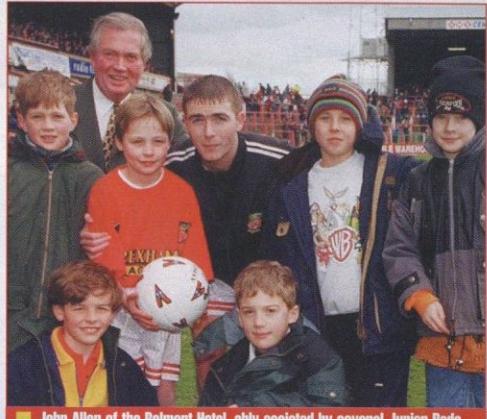
Just to confirm that Mickey's testimonial game has now been arranged against Wolverhampton Wanderers for 30th July.

Further details will be confirmed in the press nearer the date. Please do not contact the football club direct, as we are not organising this match.

RUMOUR CONTROL

Despite the rumours circulating, our league fixture at Shrewsbury Town goes ahead on Saturday, 12th April.

Due to the



John Allen of the Belmont Hotel, ably assisted by several Junior Reds members, present Bryan Hughes with the Burnley matchball.

weather and a couple of extra cup games, we have quite a backlog of fixtures to clear. We are now able to confirm the dates for these outstanding matches:

Tuesday, 18th Match - Preston (a)

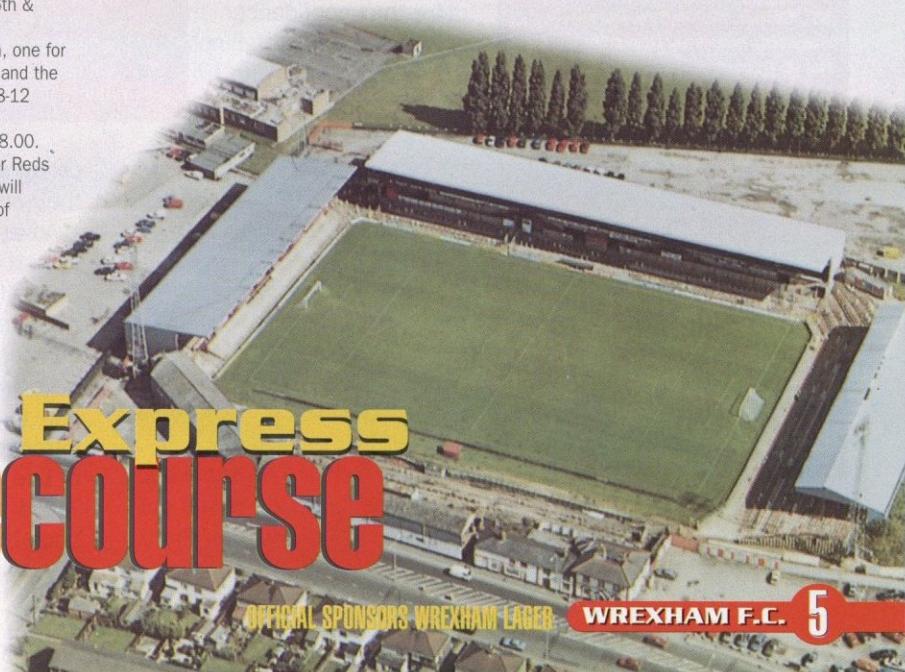
Tuesday, 25th March - Brentford (h)

Tuesday, 8th April - Rotherham (h)

Tuesday, 15th April - Bristol City (a)

Tuesday, 22nd April - Crewe (h)

Our home game over Easter is against Millwall and will be played on Good Friday, 28th March, with a 12 noon kick-off. This is due to the Wales-Belgium World Cup Qualifier taking place at the National Stadium, Cardiff on the Saturday.



Express Racecourse

Rotherham
Wrexham0
0

Dateline

Saturday, 22nd February, 1997

Competition

Nationwide League Division Two

Venue

Millmoor Ground, Rotherham

Attendance

2,539 Away Support 512

Scorers

None

Rotherham United

Pilkington, Bowman, Roscoe (Bowler 85), Garner, Monington, Gale, Hayward, Judejean, Druce (Berry 46), Hurst, Dobbin.

Wrexham

Marriott, McGregor, Brace, Hughes, B. Jones, Carey, Chalk, Russell, Connolly (L. Jones 15), Watkin, Brammer. Sub: Ridder, Owen.

Cautions

Rotherham - Garner (foul)
Wrexham - McGregor (foul)

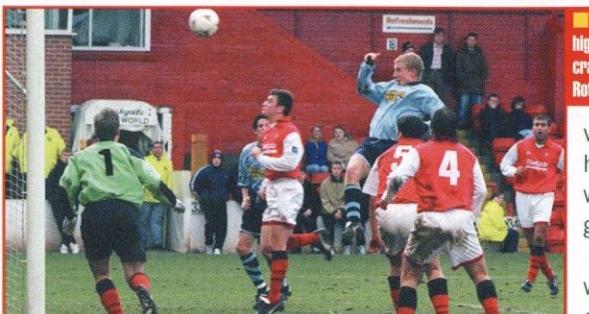
Dismissals

None

Referee

Neale Barry (Scunthorpe).

Dropped Points



Steve Watkin climbs high to send his header crashing against the Rotherham crossbar.

victory would have been well within our grasp.

As it was, we still created

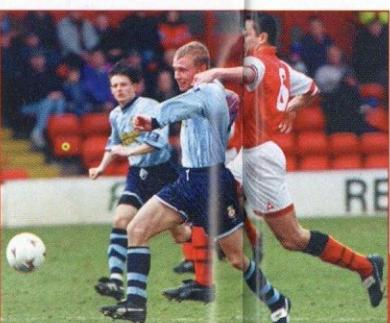
enough chances to have won comfortably, even if this was only in limited periods. Manager Brian Flynn's comments about not being ruthless enough in

front of goal, were certainly justified.

With Peter Ward and Tony Humes missing, in came Barry Jones and Dave Brammer and to be fair to both players, they

certainly caught the eye with their efforts.

An injury to Karl Connolly after just quarter of an hour, saw the introduction of Lee Jones and soon his



Deryn Brace finds his path to goal blocked at Millmoor.

pace on the right hand side, caused plenty of problems for United.

It was Jones' crosses which caused panic on more than one occasion, just missing the advancing Watkin and then Hughes.

Then he had a great opportunity himself, as Pilkington's poor clearance ran straight to his feet. Jones was away in a flash, but as he neared the goalkeeper, he over ran his effort and the Manchester United man was able to make up for his initial mistake.

Bryan Hughes then caused Pilkington to touch his effort onto the bar, before the ball was safely cleared.

Next came two Steve Watkin misses; as he first found the keeper equal to a shot,

It looks a penalty but Brian Gayle escapes punishment for his challenge on Steve Watkin.



then when Hughes placed the ball perfectly the striker managed to direct his free header, wide of an open target.

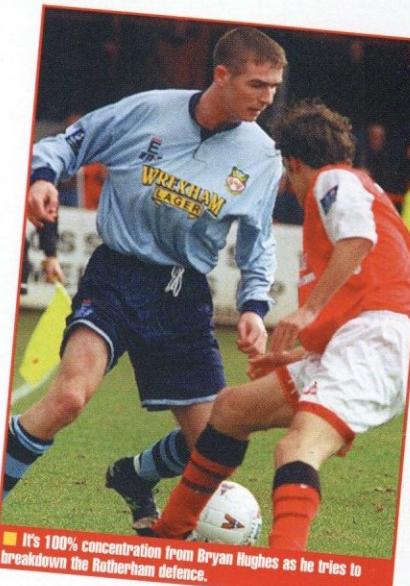
Brammer saw one his long distance specials just miss the target and Hughes was wide with a header from a Kevin Russell cross. Defender Andy Roscoe also came to his side's rescue, clearing off the line as Yosser closed in.

The second half started in controversial style, as a Brammer through ball sent Watkin racing away down the middle. As Steve prepared his attempt on goal, defender Brian Gale made a tackle from behind to touch the ball away.

In doing so, he also put and arm over Watkin's shoulder. As the Wrexham man tumbled to the floor, cries for a penalty were ignored by the referee.

Having survived another scare, Rotherham seemed to show more determination and Andy Marriott had a livelier time in the Wrexham goal.

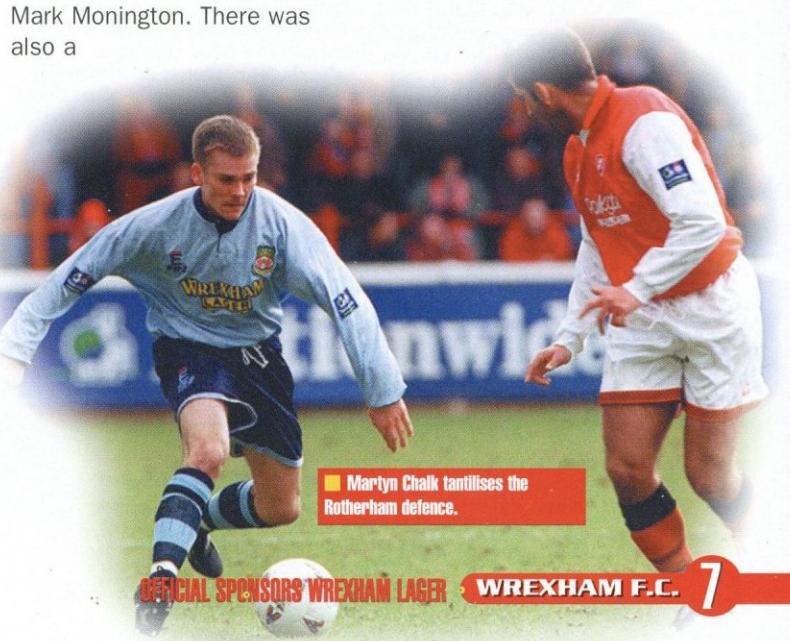
He was called on to deny the enterprising Earl Judejean and Mark Monington. There was also a



timely interception by Brian Carey to deny Andy Hayward.

To round the afternoon off, Watkin got in a good header, only to see Pilkington produce a great save, knocking the ball onto the bar and away.

The final minutes passed with Wrexham forcing the pace, but not managing to find a way through the stubborn Rotherham defence.



Diary

Bennett returns in shock transfer move.

Wednesday, 26th February

Lee Jones turns down a move back to the Racecourse after the Reds had agreed a fee of £100,000 for the Liverpool striker.

However, manager Brian Flynn admits in an interview in the Evening Leader that he is also in the hunt for another Premiership striker.

"It's looking likely Lee is not going to sign for us. He has other options. Where does that leave me? It leaves me still searching for another striker. I don't want to name the player involved but he is with a Premier League club. I am going to speak to his manager and then we'll see what the situation is."

Another possibility open to the Wrexham manager is the return of Gary Bennett from Preston North End with Flynn adding: "Bennett? - I don't want to say something that may build up hopes and then not materialise."

Thursday, 27th February

Wrexham's latest transfer target is confirmed as 23-year-old Aston Villa striker Neil Davis. The talented Midlander has just returned to Villa Park after a successful three month loan spell at Wycombe Wanderers.

Flynn, who has also inquired about the availability of Gary Bennett, is a long term admirer of Davis and believes he would prove a very valuable acquisition to the Racecourse playing staff: "We have tracked him for almost a season and I made a bid for him earlier this week. Its around six figures. I tried this season to bring him here on loan but, on the very same day, he had already agreed to join Wycombe on a similar basis. He has got a lot of good qualities to be a good striker."

"I spoke to him last night and he is coming through this afternoon to discuss many things. This lad will be a real asset to us, both now and in the long term - if he signs."

Friday, 28th February

Flynn's caution over the arrival of Davis proves well founded as the Villa man decides to see out his contract with the Premiership club. The Reds boss then switches back to former target Gary Bennett and agrees a £100,000 fee to bring 'Psycho' back home from Preston North End.

"I was just waiting for a phone call to come back - and I got it," admits a delighted Benno who is also eligible for the

forthcoming F.A. Cup Quarter-Final clash with Chesterfield.

"Money and contracts didn't come into it," he adds in an interview in the Evening Leader. "I should never have left this place...it's part of me. But it's not good looking back. I did leave and to be honest my moves to Tranmere and Preston never worked out for me. Sometimes the grass is not as green on the other side."

"That's life. I hope I can just pick up the tremendous rapport I had with the Wrexham fans. They helped my game here. They helped me score goals - and I can't wait to get back into a Wrexham shirt. Coming back here is a massive boost for me."

Speaking in the Daily Post, Flynn adds: "Benno has always been in our thoughts because of his phenomenal record here. His age does not concern me. He is a very fit 33-year-old."

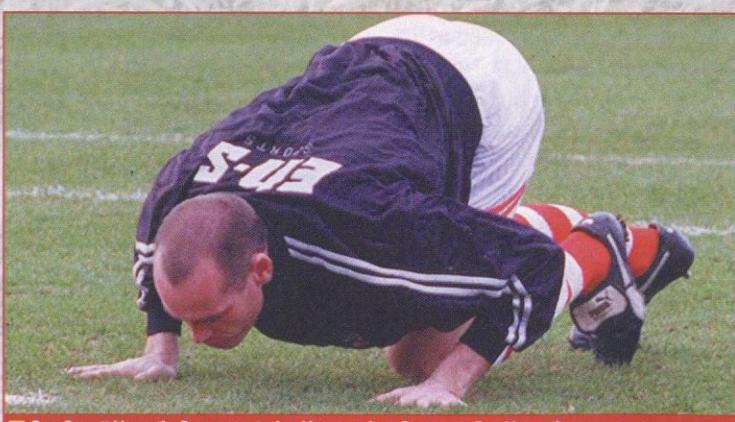
"John Aldridge was about the same age when he joined Tranmere Rovers five years ago and he's been scoring 20 plus goals a season ever since. Benno's the same. He's naturally fit and a natural goalscorer. He gives us experience and proven quality and it won't take him six months to settle in - six minutes should do it. He's thrived here in the past and he can do so again."

Saturday, 1st March

With Karl Connolly still not fully recovered from the thigh injury he sustained at Rotherham, Bennett is thrust straight back into the starting line-up for the home game with Burnley. The Clares, fresh from a 3-1 win at Blackpool in midweek, adopt a defensive approach to the game with five across the back and just Paul Barnes up front.

The swirling wind hardly helps the players and chances are few and far between. Benno near crowns his return with a goal after being set-up by Steve Watkin, but he sees his shot headed off the line by Chris Brass. Andy Marriott has to be on top form to deny the dangerous Barnes whilst substitute Lee Jones rattles the bar in the closing stages, with Burnley keeper Marlon Beresford well beaten. The game ends in a goalless draw, Wrexham's third in just eight days.

"We've got to learn how to unlock defences in tight games like this one," explains Flynn.



Gary Bennett kisses the Racecourse turf on his return from Preston earlier this month.

"and accept the few chances that come along. We are not doing that at the moment. We need to be more ruthless. We are in a reverse position from last August and I said we had to improve our defensive record of last season to have a chance of going up this time. We've certainly done that. Our defensive record is among the best in the second division."

"But I did expect that we would score more goals than we have. It's important we start scoring goals and winning league games soon."

Sunday, 2nd March

Tickets for next Sunday's Cup match at Chesterfield go on sale with several supporters queuing over 17 hours to make sure of their place on the terraces at Saltergate. For those who make an early pilgrimage to the ground and arrive by 6.00 a.m., the reward is only too obvious. For over a thousand others, the only thing left to do is watch the game live on BBC Wales.

Monday, 3rd March

Kevin Russell and Karl Connolly are Wrexham's only injury doubts as the preparations for next Sunday's F.A. Cup shoot-out at Saltergate commence in earnest. Rooster suffered a calf injury minutes from the end of Saturday's goalless draw with Burnley whilst Connolly's thigh strain is taking longer than first expected to heal.

"It's too early to rule either of them out and hopefully they will show some improvement during the week," says assistant-manager Kevin Reeves. "They have been important players to us during this Cup run, so it would be nice to have them available for Sunday." The players and management team also take a first look at Colliers Park, Wrexham's new training complex on the outskirts of Gresford. Work on the dressing rooms and gym is now complete but it will not be until next season that the pitches themselves are ready for the rigors of training.

"This is what I've always wanted for the club," explains manager Brian Flynn. "We had a look at several Premiership sides training grounds and I have to say that I think ours will compare very favourably with them."

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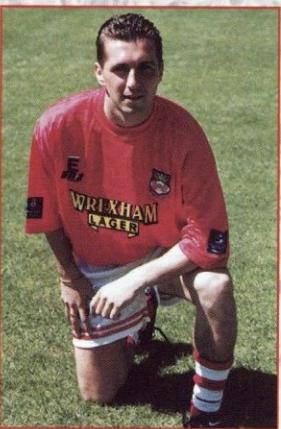


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Club Shop News



WREXHAM F.C. REPLICA TEAM SHIRTS

(with Nationwide Football League arm badge)

18-20, 22-24, 26-28, 30-32	= £30.00
34-36, 38-40, 42-44	= £35.00
46-48, 50-52,	= £39.00

The above shirts are in red kit (home) all white kit and sky blue kit (away).

We now have the service to put players names and numbers on the back of shirts. The price of this is 50p for each letter and £1.50 for the number.

Example: Connolly and 9 would cost £5.50
Wrexham F.C. Replica Shorts

14/16 to 26/28	= £12.00
30/32 to 38/40	= £14.00
42/44	= £16.00

Wrexham F.C. Replica Socks

Boys 12-2	= £5.00
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14/16 to 26/28	= £17.00
30/32 to 38/40	= £18.00

Postage and packaging £2.00 for first item, £1.00 extra for any additional items. Please allow up to 28 days delivery.

Please make cheques payable to Wrexham A.F.C. and address the envelope to the club shop for prompt attention.



Opening Times

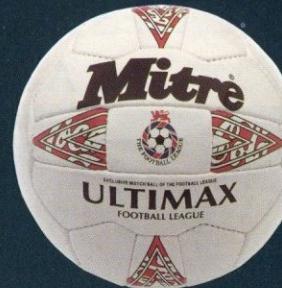
Weekdays: Monday to Friday 9.15am - 5.00pm

Saturdays (Home games) 11.00am - 6.00pm

(Closed 3.00pm - 4.45pm)

Saturdays (Away games) 1 hour

prior to coach leaving



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Wrexham F.C. Ground Regulations

In the interest of Spectator Safety the following conditions apply at the Racecourse Ground and will be enforced by the Club's stewards, with the full support of North Wales Police:

REMEMBER

- (1) The club has the right to refuse entry or eject any person who refuses to be searched by a steward or police officer.
- (2) Any person who fails to comply with instructions from a steward may be ejected from the ground.
- (3) Any person whose behaviour could reasonably be construed as consisting of a source of danger, nuisance or annoyance to other spectators may be ejected.

ALSO

It is a criminal offence, for which you may be arrested, to:-

- (1) Throw anything on to the pitch or at players, officials and other supporters.
- (2) Take part in any indecent or racist chanting.
- (3) Go on to the playing surface at any time.
- (4) To try to enter the ground with intoxicating liquor.
- (5) To try to enter the ground whilst drunk.
- (6) To possess any article, such as knives, bottles, fireworks, smoke canisters, cans and flagpoles which might be used as offensive weapons.
- (7) Use behaviour which is threatening, abusive or insulting towards another.

Persons convicted of criminal offences will become subject of Exclusion Orders banning them from all Football League grounds.

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The Day we went to... Rotherham

Following on that great result at Birmingham City and a free midweek to recover, the trip to bottom of the table Rotherham United was made in good spirits.

The Merry Millers have been struggling all season and this was just the venue for us to gain maximum points and push ourselves back up the table.

The journey across the Pennines was made by car this week, as our usual mini-bus was double booked and following the extra expense of recent weeks, we were struggling for numbers anyway.

Millmoor is another of your traditional football grounds and absolutely nothing wrong with that. The supporters buses park up by the scrap metal yard and you wade down a narrow back lane to appear on the main road which runs behind the home goal.

Built into the ground is a night club called the Tivoli, but on matchdays it opens as a pub and there is never any problem getting served as an away fan.

There is always a good collection of travelling supporters in there and for a couple of hours before the start you get the chance to have a good chat with people you haven't seen for a while, or talk to the locals and hear the tales of woe, on what is looking like a relegation season for them.

Back down the alley to the turnstiles and you have the choice to sit down on the sidelines, or take cover on the big covered terrace, behind the goal.

Over 400 Reds helped "swell" the gate to over 2,000 and those that did turn up to cheer on the local side, had little to shout about.

It's the emptiest I've seen Millmoor and the lack of atmosphere did little to inspire either team.

How we failed to take the three points is a mystery. This has to be the worst United team I have seen and even though we were nowhere near up to full speed, we did more than enough to have won.

Ground: As mentioned above, it's like stepping back in time. The paddock in front of the main stand has been sealed, but apart from that and the fences removed, it could be any year from the 1960's onwards.

The attitude of the police has dramatically improved, remember the days when our Dragons were torn down, as they claimed they were racist!

Programme: Instantly recognisable as coming from Millmoor and with plenty to interest the local fans. Coverage of Wrexham is fine and there is plenty of space devoted to supporters news, which give an interesting insight to what is going on at Rotherham.

Booze, Bangers & Bodily Functions

There is nothing like a good title to capture the imagination of the average programme reader, and believe me that is nothing like a good title! However, to me, it sums up this seasons cup run, please let me explain.

Following some dodgy moments in the first two rounds the Reds battled through to a meeting with a struggling Premiership side at home.

There was much hot air flying around from those connected with West Ham, both past and present, that if they had been on the pitch they would surely have melted the snow. An opportunist goal from Hugo Porfirio cancelled out Hughes early opener, and we hung on despite West Ham missing at least three good chances to win the game in the second-half. Had our chance gone? The pundits certainly thought so.

After an aborted trip to the capital which saw an East London 'pea souper' cause the game to be postponed, we were fortunate enough to take around three thousand fans down to Upton Park for the re-arranged game, on Fourth Round day. With a trip to Peterborough as the reward, Wrexham started brightly and to a neutral it may have been difficult to state which team was from the Premiership. As I looked at my watch, extra time was beckoning, we had a throw-in on the right, Martyn Chalk played a delicious dummy and played the ball in to Watkins feet, the return path to Chalk was cut-off, so it was knocked to substitute Kevin Russell, who hit a first time rocket which flew past a startled Miklosko, we had proved that we could play equally as well on the green grass of Upton Park as the snowbound Racecourse.

I have never seen us beat Peterborough in the many years that I have followed this club so what happened on a damp night at London Road, we not only made history but around two thousand Wrexham fans very happy. A late kick-off, due to the congestion of the travelling away fans, saw the home side start a little brighter and take the lead through Charlery, although a rare headed goal from Wardy saw us level at the break. I won't repeat what I uttered when the Posh took the lead again early in the second-half, but my fears proved to be unfounded as an amazing three goals in seven minutes completely turned the game on its head, the bogey had finally been laid to rest, and a trip to Birmingham was our reward, so cheer up Barry Fry.....as the song that night went.

Injury struck Birmingham, which made me smile, fielded eleven players against us with the calibre of Bruce, Ablett and Limpar as well as Welsh internationals Legg, Bowen and ex-Red Horne. Again we went a goal down, I sense a real 'de ja vu' here, as Steve Bruce volleyed home following a corner. A simple half-time message from the gaffer, stating that we would win, was all the players required as second-half goals from Hughes, Humes and Connolly saw us through. It was just a shame that Trevor Francis could not have been as gracious in defeat as his captain Steve Bruce was, he was honest enough to admit that on the day we were the better side.

So we found ourselves two games from Wembley, Chesterfield standing between ourselves and a place in the semi-finals, unbelievable really.

You are probably wondering why the title subject is yet to be mentioned well here it is, since Round Three, on each of the trips to games some of us have had sausage butties, a quiet drink and I've worn quite the most horrendous pairs of trousers ever seen (and he's not lying), they were tartan at West Ham, and stars and stripes at Peterborough and Birmingham, also the sausages have caused bodily functions which have not endeared oneself to the rest of the passengers on the bus, but that's another story (and one he won't be telling here).

Suffice to say, I had sausage butties on the way to Chesterfield, I wore the same hideous trousers, but these 'lucky' charms didn't see us through to a glorious day at Wembley in May.

Highlights for me have been all the goals obviously, but also the behaviour of the West Ham fans who applauded us after we had defeated them. Listening to my favourite Spice Girls on Radio Five on the way back from London, and above all the 'Never say Dai' performances of the boys, so remember, Wembley, Wembley, we're the famous Wrexham army and we're off to Wembley.....for the Play-Offs!

Sumo



Kevin Russell scores that 25-yard strike at Upton Park in Wrexham's cup win.

The first-half dismissal of defender Julian James proved to be the deciding factor in Luton's 2-0 home defeat against Millwall last Saturday, their first reverse at Kenilworth Road since last September.

Having already been booked for elbowing Paul Hartley, the former Lincoln City and Leicester City full-back was adjudged to have brought down Tony Witter in the 25th minute. Referee Graham Frankland reached for the yellow card for a second time and James was duly despatched down the tunnel.

Despite their numerical handicap, Luton continued to take the game to Millwall, having already seen top scorer Tony Thorpe rattle the Londoners crossbar with a header from six yards out. Ceri Hughes' low drive brought a fine save out of Lions keeper Tim Carter whilst Hartley managed to rattle his own post as he attempted to clear a corner.

Three minutes into the second-half David Oldfield's effort again rebounded to safety off the Millwall woodwork, but the visitors were gradually coming into the match more as an attacking force.

On 57 minutes Scottish Under-21 International Steve Crawford should really have opened the scoring, but he managed to scope his shot over an open goal.

Sadly for the Hatters, that reprieve lasted barely twenty minutes as Millwall midfielder Tony Dolby hit a twice taken free-kick past the despairing dive of keeper Ian Feuer and into the back of the Luton net.

The result was put beyond all doubt three minutes from



LENNIE LAWRENCE

Introducing Luton Town

time when Millwall broke quickly out of defence and Hartley found himself in a three-on-three situation. The former Hamilton player need little invitation to cut in from the right to hammer the ball into the far corner of the net.

Luton's never-say-die spirit was epitomised in those closing stages as three times Millwall defender Lucas Neill had to clear off his own goalline, whilst Graham Alexander, and Steve Davis were also denied by Tim Carter in the visitors goal.

The result was especially disappointing for Luton's experienced campaigner Gary Waddock, himself a former Millwall player, as he explained after the match.

"It was disappointing because I thought we played quite well. Obviously, the result didn't go for us but we've just got to keep our heads up and keep going."

"The scoreline didn't reflect how well we did play. We had a number of chances and hit the woodwork on a few occasions. We just needed a little bit of luck on our side to

have nicked one of those in, and it might have been a whole different ball game."

"We started the match particularly well and created several good opportunities. The problem was that we failed to capitalise on them and ultimately paid the price. Full credit to Millwall, they stuck at their task and got a very good result."

"What we have to do now is to try and take this level of performance into the next game against Wrexham. If we can do that, and show a bit more ruthlessness in front of goal, then we should get something out of the match."

Waddock was also full of praise for the way the Luton side had responded to the sending-off of James so early in the match.

"Ten men always seem to put on a good show and get something out of the game. But today we didn't get any points, were we've put in a good performance. The team showed a lot of character and it's just a shame the final scoreline doesn't reflect the effort we put in to the match but that's football."

"We're now reaching a very important stage of the season and, although it's an old cliche, you have to take it one game at a time."

"Today's game has gone now. There's nothing we can do about it. I keep going back to how good a team performance it was, which it was. We have to take that into the Wrexham match."

"The boss (Lennie Lawrence) was obviously disappointed but he said we'd played well. We probably played better today than we did against Preston and yet we beat them quite convincingly."

"We've just got to keep going, keep our chins up and roll up our sleeves and keep taking one game at a time."

A run of six straight wins in December had taken the Hatters briefly to the top of the table and also into the Third Round of the F.A.Cup. Lennie Lawrence was voted Manager of the Month and all seemed set

for Luton to go on and regain the First Division status they lost last May.

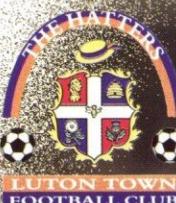
However, the bad weather saw them fall behind their main promotion rivals and a 6-2 cup defeat at First Division Champions elect Bolton Wanderers, affected the team's confidence.

A 5-1 thrashing of Preston some three weeks ago looked to be the turning point for Luton but since then they have picked up just two points from three league matches.

"We've wobbled a bit lately but I don't think it's been too bad," was Lawrence's honest assessment of the situation. "But obviously one win in five before today was not exactly brilliant form. Fortunately for us, nobody else has done any better."

"Both Brentford and Bury lost today as well, so things are getting very tight at the top. We've had a poor run of results but we're still in third place which leaves us ideally placed for the run-in. We now have to make that count."

Luton Striker ANDREW FOTIADIS



LUTON TOWN FOOTBALL CLUB

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Backtracking



Previous Matches

Previous meetings between the two clubs since our first clash in 1965

	P	W	D	L	F	A	P	W	D	L	F	A
Div 2	9	2	1	1	5	3	0	3	2	2	2	5
Div 3	2	1	0	0	2	0	0	1	1	3		
Div 4	6	2	1	0	5	1	0	0	3	2	6	
F.A.Cup	2	0	0	1	0	1	1	0	0	2	0	
Total	19	5	2	2	12	5	1	3	6	7	14	

Best & Worst

Biggest Home Victory:	3-1
15th December, 1979	
Biggest Home Defeat:	0-2
24th October, 1981	
Biggest Away Victory:	2-0
7th October, 1981 (League Cup)	
Biggest Away Defeat:	1-3
11th April, 1964 & 11th February, 1967	
Biggest Home Attendance:	9,321
19th August, 1967	
Biggest Away Attendance:	10,890
12th March, 1982	
Lowest Home Attendance:	3,453
27th October, 1981 (League Cup)	
Lowest Away Attendance:	4,660
16th September, 1965	

Last home game

Football League Cup Second Round, Second Leg

Tuesday, 27th October, 1981

Wrexham 0

Luton Town 1

Att: 3,453

Wrexham: Niedzwiecki, J. Jones (Fox), Bater, Dowman, Cegelski, Hunt, Hill, McNeil, Edwards, Vinter, Carodous.

Luton Town: Findlay, Stephens, Goodyear (Ingram), Horton, Saxby, Donaghay, Hill, Stein, White, Fuccillo, Moss.

Last 5 meetings

Home	Away
1978/79 Div 2 2-0	1-2
1979/80 Div 2 3-1	0-2
1980/81 Div 2 0-0	1-1
1981/82 Div 2 0-2	0-0
1996/97 Div 2	0-0

Played for both

Thomas Parker, Harvey McCreadie and Phil Beersma.

With 23 goals to his credit already this season, there can be no doubt that Luton striker **TONY THORPE** is the man Wrexham's defence will have to watch this evening. Born in Leicester, Thorpe joined his home town club straight from school but was unable to make the grade at Filbert Street. He moved to Luton in August 1992 on a free transfer but it wasn't until the latter half of last season that he established a regular place in the side.

Able to control his aggression to positive effect, he injected pace and urgency into the Hatters midfield and showed himself particularly willing to link up with the attack. His eight goals last term proved a portent of his goalscoring feats this season, when manager Lennie Lawrence has deployed him in an out-and-out attacking role. He also has two hat-tricks in his current season's total, one coming in the 6-0 home win over Crewe Alexandra whilst the other earned Luton a point in a 3-3 draw at Plymouth.

His partner in attack in recent matches has been the vastly experienced **DAVID OLDFIELD**.

Another player to have graduated from midfield, the 28-year-old gained England Under-21 International honours during his first spell with the Hatters back in the late 1980's. A £600,000 move to Manchester City in March 1989 seemed to herald a glittering career but he struggled to establish himself at Maine Road and within nine months had moved on to Leicester City for a quarter of the price. Over the next five years, he became a fixture in the Foxes first-team with his telling passes often changing the course of many a game. A stylish player with two good feet, he returned to Kenilworth Road in the summer of 1995 for a £150,000 fee. His eight goals to date this term also includes a hat-trick in the 5-1 win over Preston last month.

Lawrence has several other options in attack with both **KIM GRANT** and **DWIGHT MARSHALL** on the substitutes bench for last Saturday's match with Millwall. Grant is a Ghanaian International who has missed several games this season due to World Cup call-ups. A former Charlton trainee, he moved to Luton last March for a £250,000 fee and made an immediate impact with three goal in his first ten games. A hard-working striker, his speed off the mark is a threat to any defence. Marshall is a product of non-league football having joined Plymouth from Grays Athletic for just £35,000 in August 1991. A fast and opportunistic striker, he moved to Luton in July 1994 for £150,000 after also having had a brief loan spell at Middlesbrough the previous campaign. Top scorer last term despite suffering a broken leg against Sunderland in February, he has now made a full recovery.

BONCHO GUENTCHEV is a skilful two-footed Bulgarian International who joined the club on a free transfer from Ipswich Town in August 1995. His nine league goals made him top scorer with Marshall last term but he lacked a

targetman to play-off. Now aged 32, he has often been used in a deeper role behind the front two strikers.

ANDREW FOTIADIS is a product of the club's youth policy and the youngster has already been called up to the England Under-18 squad this term. He benefitted from the non-availability of Grant and Marshall early in the campaign, underlining his promise with some fine displays.

He also scored his first goal for the club in a 3-1 win over Walsall last October.

Luton boss Lennie Lawrence has always favoured a 4-4-2 formation with two widemen, and that puts a lot of responsibility on his central midfield pairing of **CERI HUGHES** and **GARY WADDOCK**.

A Welsh International, Pontypridd-born Hughes is a strong, battling midfielder who has proved to a dominant force in Luton's promotion drive this season. Still only 25, he looked to be on his way to Crystal Palace last summer but thankfully for the Hatters the deal fell through. Now in his tenth year at

Kenilworth Road, his strong shooting has already brought him six goals during the current campaign. Waddock is a tenacious, hard-tackling, defensive midfielder who has overcome career-threatening injuries to make over 400 first-team appearances for the likes of Q.P.R., Charlton (Belgium), Millwall, Swindon Town and Bristol Rovers. Released by the Pirates in December 1994, he surprisingly joined Luton where he has been a virtual fixture in the side. An Eire International, the

34-year-old played for Q.P.R. in the 1982 F.A.Cup Final



Bontcho Guentchev



Marvin Johnson

against Tottenham Hotspur.

Providing the all-important width down the flanks are **GRAHAM ALEXANDER** and **PAUL SHOWLER**. Having joined Luton from Third Division Scunthorpe United for £100,000 in the summer of 1995, Alexander proved to be a hard-tackling determined character, operating primarily on the right-flank. A product of the Humber side's youth policy, he can also play in central midfield and defence, with his power-packed shooting often bringing him spectacular goals.

Showler will be a familiar face to Wrexham fans having often proved to be a thorn in the Reds side during his days with Barnet. A former Barnsley policeman, he first came to attention during his time with Altrincham where he took the Robins to the brink of the GM Vauxhall Conference title in 1991. Barnet eventually pipped the Moss Lane side at the death and Showler accepted Barry Fry's offer to move south that same summer. His superb wing play for the Bees saw them gain promotion from the Third Division at the first attempt but the former England Semi-Professional International eventually won a free transfer for himself after the Underhill club failed to pay the players wages in August 1993. That paved the way for a move to Bradford City where he first teamed up with present boss Lennie Lawrence. A groin strain and then a cartilage operation sidelined him during the Bantams promotion run-in last season, and he was released in the summer. Lawrence moved quickly to sign Showler and he has so far scored six goals in his 30 appearances.

With several of his strikers equally at home in midfield, Lawrence's only other options are more inexperienced players such as **PAUL MCLAREN**. A 20-year-old midfielder who came on as a substitute for Waddock on Saturday, McLaren was born in High Wycombe and made his Hatters debut on the final day of the 1993-94 campaign, coming on as a substitute in a 2-2 draw at Stoke City. A former England Youth International, he made his full debut at Tranmere in October 1995. Another relative youngster aiming for a first-team place is **ARON SKELTON**. The 21-year-old signed professional forms for the Hatters back in December 1992 and made his senior debut soon afterwards. A serious thigh injury hampered his progress but he has returned to first-team contention this season.

STEVE DAVIS and **MARVIN JOHNSON** are likely to form the main defensive barrier. Davis was one of several players to join the club back in the summer of 1995, costing £750,000 from Burnley where he had scored 22 goals in over 160 league appearances. Previously with Southampton, he captained the Claret as they rose from Third to the First Division and established himself as a great favourite with the Turf Moor fans. A commanding centre-back, he has more than justified the fee fixed by a Football League Tribunal and has proved to be an inspirational captain for the Hatters.

Johnson is another one-club man having been at Kenilworth Road since signing professional forms back in November 1986. A hard-working, dependable player, he former an effective partnership with Davis last term and the pair have again been in tandem for much of the current campaign. Still only 28, Johnson made his league debut in 1988 against Wimbledon and earlier this



Luton Town FC: Back Row (l-r): Jamie Woodford, Bontcho Guentchev, Kim Grant, Paul McLaren, Darren Patterson, Gary Simpson, John Taylor (now Cambridge United), Ben Chinery, Middle Row (l-r): Clive Goodyer (Physio), David Oldfield, Des Linton, Marvin Johnson, Ian Feuer, Kevin Davis, Mitchell Thomas, Graham Alexander, Aaron Skelton, Trevor Peake (Reserve Team Coach). Front Row (l-r): Julian James, Tony Thorpe, Steve Davis, Lennie Lawrence (Manager), David Kohler (Chairman), Wayne Turner (First Team Coach), Gary Waddock, Dwight Marshall, Richard Harvey.

season made his 250th appearance for the club.

With **MITCHELL THOMAS** still sidelined after suffering a broken nose, **DARREN PATTERSON** has taken over at full-back with **JULIAN JAMES** switching to left-back. Patterson cost £150,000 from Crystal Palace in August 1995 with the Northern Ireland International's early career having blossomed at Wigan Athletic under the astute guidance of Bryan Hamilton. The strong-tackling centre-back missed the first two months of last season with an achilles injury but gained in confidence following the appointment of Lawrence. Equally at home at right-back, he originally began his playing days as a YTS trainee with West Bromwich Albion.

James was sent-off in Saturday's home defeat at the hands of Millwall for two bookable offences but will still be available for selection this evening. A resolute right-back with good all-round abilities, this is his benefit season and the former England Under-21 International has also passed the 250 appearance mark for the Hatters this term.

Providing defensive cover is 25-year-old **DES**

LINTON who joined the club as part of the deal that took Steve Thompson to Leicester City in October 1991. A regular at right-back during the 1993-94 season, injuries have subsequently restricted his first-team appearances. However, his ability to both win and carry the ball make him a valuable squad member.

In goal will be the imposing figure of 6'7" **IAN FEUER**. A £580,000 capture from West Ham United in December 1995, the giant American-born custodian has proved to be an admirable buy and was deservedly voted Player of the Year last May. Spotted by the Hammers whilst playing in Belgium, he actually moved to Upton Park from American side Los Angeles Salsa in March 1994. A 16-game loan spell at Peterborough helped hone his goalkeeping skills the following term.

His understudy is the highly-rated England Under-21 International **KELVIN DAVIES**. Now in the second year of a four year deal, he has managed just one first-team appearance this term in the 2-1 Auto Windscreens Shield win over Leyton Orient shortly before Christmas.

Luton Town Roll Call

(1996-97 appearances for Endsleigh League, Auto Windscreens Shield, Coca Cola Cup & F.A. Cup)

Player	Birthplace	Birthdate	Signed From	Apps	Gls
Graham Alexander	Coventry	10.10.71	Scunthorpe United	43(2)	2
Ben Chinery	Ipswich	28.1.77	Trainee	0	0
Steve Davis	Hexham	30.10.68	Burnley	43(1)	6
Kevin Davis	Bedford	29.9.76	Trainee	1	0
Stuart Douglas	London	9.4.78	Trainee	3(8)	0
Sean Evers	Hitchin	10.10.77	Trainee	1	0
Ian Feuer	Las Vegas (USA)	20.5.71	West Ham United	44	0
Andrew Fotiadis	Hitchin	6.9.77	Trainee	5(10)	1
Kim Grant	Ghana	25.9.72	Charlton Athletic	14(13)	5
Bontcho Guentchev	Bulgaria	7.7.64	Ipswich Town	20(14)	1
Richard Harvey	Letchworth	17.4.69	Trainee	0	0
Ceri Hughes	Rhonda Valley	26.2.71	Trainee	40	6
Julian James	Tring	22.3.70	Trainee	44	2
Marvin Johnson	Wembley	29.10.68	Trainee	41	1
Des Linton	Birmingham	5.9.71	Leicester City	7(4)	0
Dwight Marshall	Jamaica	3.10.65	Plymouth Argyle	14(7)	6
Paul McLaren	High Wycombe	17.11.76	Trainee	5(9)	0
David Oldfield	Perth (Australia)	30.5.68	Leicester City	24(8)	8
Darren Patterson	Belfast	15.10.69	Crystal Palace	8(1)	0
Trevor Peake	Nuneaton	10.2.57	Coventry City	0	0
Paul Showler	Doncaster	10.10.66	Bradford City	26(4)	6
Gary Simpson	Ashford	14.2.76	Trainee	0	0
Aaron Skelton	Welwyn	22.11.74	Trainee	5(1)	0
Mitchell Thomas	Luton	2.10.64	West Ham United	40	3
Tony Thorpe	Leicester	10.4.74	Leicester City	33(1)	23
Matthew Upson	Eye	18.4.79	Trainee	0(1)	0
Gary Waddock	Kingsbury	17.3.62	Bristol Rovers	33(1)	2

All our yesterdays

IT HAPPENED ON THIS DAY

12th March 1955: Wrexham and Rochdale fight out a tame 0-0 draw in a Third Division (North) match played at the Racecourse before a crowd of 6,945.

12th March 1959: Bernard Evans (2) and Arfon Griffiths grab the goals as Wrexham ease to a 3-0 home win over Mansfield Town.

12th March 1964: Both Sammy McMillan and Keith Webber get on the scoresheet but it's not enough to stop Stockport County beating the Reds 3-2 at Edgeley Park.



Graham Whittle

League in 1894, finishing runner-up to Millwall in its first two seasons. The club resigned from the Southern League in 1896 and applied to join the Football League. Their initial application was rejected but twelve months later they were successful and entered a Second Division mainly comprised of northern-based clubs.

The first season was reasonable, but by 1900 with poor results on the field and mounting debts off it due to the high cost of travelling, the club decided not to stand for re-election and instead rejoin the Southern League, which was now much stronger than when the club had left. The club remained at that level until 1920 when they became founder members of the Third Division (South).

THROUGH THE LOOKING GLASS WITH LUTON IN THE 1980's

12th March 1980: Luton start the New Year in second place in the old Second Division table. A position they retain after a thrilling 3-3 draw with Chelsea at Kenilworth Road. Mal Donaghy, Mike Saxby and David Moss get the Hatters goals against a Blues side just one place below them.

14th March 1980: A 2-1 home defeat against Cardiff City leaves Luton with just two points from their last five games, a run which ultimately costs them promotion to the top flight.

2nd May 1981: A 3-0 win at Bolton on the final day of the season leaves Luton in fifth place, after Swans' 3-1 win at Preston clinches promotion for the South Wales side.

17th October 1981: Four goals from striker Steve White sends out a warning to the other Second Division sides as Luton thrash Grimsby 6-0 at Kenilworth Road.

17th May 1982: Two goals from Brian Stein and one from Mal Donaghy see Luton through to a 3-2 win at Cardiff, as the Hatters lift the Second Division Championship eight points ahead of old foes Watford.

28th August 1982: Luton's return to the First Division begins with an encouraging 2-2 draw at Tottenham Hotspur. A John Lacy own goal coupled with Brian Stein's strike earn a point for the visitors.

14th May 1983: After battling against relegation all season, Luton beat the drop courtesy of Raddy Antic's last minute winner at Maine Road. Manager David Pleat rushes across the pitch to congratulate his goalscorer at the final whistle.

29th October 1983: Having beaten Southampton 3-1 the previous week, Luton's great start to the season comes to a halt with a 6-0 drubbing at Liverpool.

29th February 1984: Luton's twin strikeforce of Brian Stein and Paul Walsh make their full England debuts in a 2-0 defeat in Paris. Platini scores twice for the

Wembley Stadium. The first such game to take place at the famous Twin Towers was back in 1924 when England and Scotland fought out a 1-1 draw.

12th March 1977: Wrexham's promotion bandwagon keeps rolling after a 3-1 home win over struggling Northampton. Mickey Thomas, Graham Whittle and Arfon Griffiths (penalty) are the Reds goalscorers.

12th March 1979: In a Welsh Cup Quarter-Final tie, Wrexham have to battle all the way to beat Swansea City 3-2. Les Cartwright, Dixie McNeil and David Giles grab the goals for the Racecourse side.

12th March 1982: Wrexham and Luton fight out a tame goalless draw in this Friday night match at Kenilworth Road.

12th March 1991: Lee Jones scores his third goal in three days but Wrexham still go down to a disappointing 2-1 home defeat at the hands of Halifax Town.

ORIGINS
Luton Town Football Club was formed in 1885 as a fusion of local sides Wanderers and Excelsior. Early games were played on a friendly basis apart from the annual excursion into the F.A. Cup. Gradually better players were attracted to the town because of the growth of industry in the area and in 1891 the club took the brave decision to become the first professional side in the South of England. They paid the whole team plus an additional allowance for working time lost travelling to away games. The Hatters became founder members of the Southern



Luton players celebrate their first major cup triumph after beating Arsenal 3-2 in the 1988 Littlewoods Cup Final.

French.

13th March 1984: Two goals from Trevor Aylott seal a 2-1 win over Ipswich Town. The result leaves Luton comfortably in mid-table but a late season slump sees them drop to 16th, with just one win in their final 12 games.

2nd March 1985: A 2-1 win over Sunderland sees Luton clinch a vital three points in their relegation battle. The result starts a run of 10 wins in 17 games that sees them finish in 13th place.

13th April 1985: Ricky Hill's first-half goal looks to have clinched Luton a 1-0 win over Everton in the Semi-Final of the F.A. Cup. However, Kevin Sheedy equalises in the last minute of normal time, whilst Derek Mountfield scores the winner for the Goodison Park outfit in extra-time.

17th August 1985: Luton become only the second side to play their home games on an artificial surface, as they dig up their old grass pitch.

12th February 1989: West Ham are beaten 3-0 at Upton Park as Luton virtually guarantee their second successive Littlewoods Cup Final appearance.

9th April 1989: The holders finally bow out at the final hurdle as Nottingham Forest win 3-1 in the Littlewoods Cup Final. Mick Harford scores for the Hatters.

30th December 1989: Luton lose 3-0 at home to Chelsea and slip to 19th in the table, as relegation fears mount.

WREXHAM TRIVIA

Wrexham and Luton met three times during the month of October back in 1981. The sides were paired together in the second round of the League Cup and the Reds caused a major surprise by winning 2-0 at Kenilworth Road thanks to goals from Simon Hunt and Mick Vinter. Despite losing the return 1-0, Steve White scoring for the visitors, it was Wrexham who progressed through to the next round where they lost 2-0 to Spurs. At least Luton gained a measure of



Nottingham Forest are the first visitors and they escape with a 1-1 draw.

19th October 1985: Brian Stein scores a hat-trick as Southampton are thrashed 7-0 at Kenilworth Road.

26th April 1986: Mick Harford scores a hat-trick as Luton beat Watford 3-2 at home. The trio brings Harford's goal tally to an impressive 22 for the campaign.

23rd August 1986: With David Pleat having left to take over as manager at Spurs, John Moore takes over the reigns and guides Luton to a 1-1 draw at Leicester City on the opening day of the campaign.

28th March 1987: Pleat makes an emotional return to his former stamping ground but Luton dispose of his Spurs side 3-1 with Mick Harford, Mike Newell and Darren MacDonough all on the scoresheet. Luton finish the season in seventh place, their best ever league performance. However, Moore steps down as manager to be replaced by coach Ray Harford.

28th February 1988: Goals from Brian Stein and Ashley Grimes steer Luton into the Littlewoods Cup Final as they beat Oxford 2-0 at the Manor Ground, after the first-leg ended in a 1-1 draw.

9th April 1988: Hopes of a Wembley double are dashed as Wimbledon beat the Hatters 2-1 in the F.A. Cup Semi-Final at White Hart Lane. The match attracts a crowd of just over 25,000, the lowest recorded for a post-war Semi-Final.

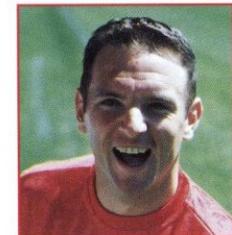
24th April 1988: Luton's Wembley dreams come true as they beat Arsenal 3-2 in a thrilling Littlewoods Cup Final played before a crowd of 95,732 at Wembley. Brian Stein (2) and Danny Wilson are the Luton scorers but the real hero is keeper Andy Dibble who saves a Nigel Winterburn penalty.

2nd January 1989: Southampton are again on the wrong end of a thrashing at Kenilworth Road. This time the final scoreline is 6-1 with Mick Harford and Roy Wegerlee both scoring twice.

12th February 1989: West Ham are beaten 3-0 at Upton Park as Luton virtually guarantee their second successive Littlewoods Cup Final appearance.

9th April 1989: The holders finally bow out at the final hurdle as Nottingham Forest win 3-1 in the Littlewoods Cup Final. Mick Harford scores for the Hatters.

30th December 1989: Luton lose 3-0 at home to Chelsea and slip to 19th in the table, as relegation fears mount.



Mel Pejic (far left) and Gareth Owen were both on target in Wrexham's 4-2 win at Maidstone back in February 1992. It was the Reds first away win in the League for 17 months!

revenge in the League match sandwiched in between, winning 2-0 at the Racecourse with Mal Donaghy and Steve White the scorers.

LUTON TOWN TRIVIA

When Luton were founded in 1885 the colours adopted were navy blue and pink halves for shirts and caps. It was recorded in the club minutes that 'both cap and shirt be worn by each player on the field'. The headgear in fact was in the shape of a smoking cap.

FLASHBACK

5 Years Ago - February/March 1982: Wrexham's topsy-turvy cup form continued when the Reds visited Third Division Bournemouth in the Autoglass Trophy. Wrexham couldn't get going at all in a first-half that saw Jimmy Case run the mid-field for our hosts. However, into the second period and Wrexham took a surprise lead when Lee Jones tucked the ball home after a Brian Flynn shot had hit a post. Case then came to the rescue as he struck an equaliser from all of 25-yards. Extra-time was looming until Lee Jones turned in a Kieron Durkan cross to put the Reds into Round Two.

Next was a trip to Kent and a league fixture against Maidstone. At last! - after 17 months, Wrexham finally gained an away league victory. After United had taken a 17th minute lead, Lee Jones scored his fourth goal in three games before Mel Pejic headed his first goal for the Reds after a Karl Connolly header had struck the bar. Our hosts equalised through Gary Stebbing shortly after the interval and Vince O'Keefe then denied them a lead soon after. John Paskin missed a good chance after 70 minutes but soon atoned as he crossed for Andy Thackeray to net. Our win was secured as Lee Jones set up Gareth Owen to complete a fine 4-2 result.

Wrexham earned a third away victory in just 8 days on their visit to Third Division Fulham in the Quarter Final (South) of the Autoglass Trophy. The home side dominated a first-half that saw O'Keefe make two brilliant saves and Phil Hardy clear another two efforts from off the goal-line. The second period saw the boot on the other foot as a dispirited Fulham let Wrexham into the game. Paskin steered home our opening goal and Wayne Phillips cracked home another in the dying minutes as this 2-0 victory earned Wrexham a semi-final trip to Peterborough. Brian Flynn commented that 3 away victories in a week was 'great!' - an understatement if ever there was one!

10 Years Ago - February/March 1987: As far as Reds fans were concerned, Wrexham's long trip to Exeter proved to be in vain due to some extremely 'iffy' decisions by referee Ian Hemley of Amthill. The Reds weathered City's early pressure to take the lead on 18 minutes when Nicky Hencher scored with a low angled shot. An equaliser arrived courtesy of veteran Tony Kellow who was given space in the 6-yard box before City took the lead on the stroke of half-time as Steve Charles' attempted clearance hit Neil Salathiel and ended up in the back of the net. Three minutes after the turnaround and Charles atoned with a long range shot that crept under the body of City keeper John Shaw. Following a lapse in the Reds defence which gave City's Brendan O'Connell the opening to head their third at the far post, the referee added his ha'porth. Steve Charles scored from close range with the home defence in disarray only for the effort to be ruled out for reasons only known to the man in black. Mike Williams then hit the City crossbar

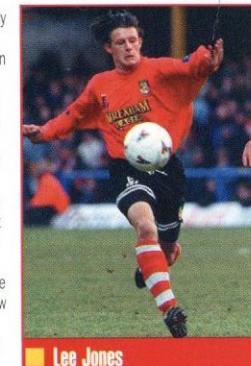
with a header, only to see Exeter break away and be awarded a dubious penalty by the referee who was some 40-yards behind play! The 2-4 defeat was somewhat harsh to say the least.

Brymbo Steelworks' team visited the Racecourse for a Welsh Cup Fifth Round tie which saw the visitors rarely out of their own half. Despite totally dominating play, Wrexham were able to breach the village teams defence only once. The winning goal came after 31 minutes when Nicky Hencher thumped in a long range effort to earn the Reds a semi-final tie against Newport County. Boss Dixie McNeil was a very relieved man after the game: "I'm just satisfied to be in the next round. Brymbo made things very difficult for us tonight".

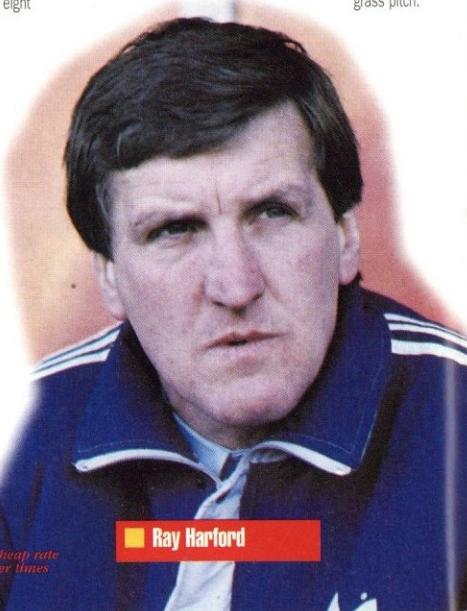
15 Years Ago - February/March 1982: Wrexham's last hope of any success in this dismal season disappeared without trace during a night of total ignominy at Cardiff in a Welsh Cup Fifth Round tie. The Reds were pulled apart again and again by a side with relegation worries as acute as our own. Peter Kitchen was City's chief executioner with this hat-trick after Gary Stevens had opened the Bluebirds account on 13 minutes. The only consolation for the Reds came in the shape of a last minute goal shot home from 25 yards by ex-Cardiff favourite Billy Ronson.

Two consecutive 1-0 defeats sent Wrexham to the bottom of Division Two. The first of these saw Sheffield Wednesday gain revenge for the Reds 3-0 victory at Hillsborough the previous October. The visitors winner came on 62 minutes when Gary Bannister poked the ball home past the exposed Niedzwiecki. Reds boss Mel Sutton commented: "If you are don't win your home games you are going to have problems".

The next game saw Wrexham fall to a one goal defeat at Charlton as Steve Gritt headed the only goal 20 minutes from the end of a dreary match. Wrexham had not lost to the Londoners in any of the previous eight meetings between the sides and Mel Sutton commented "I didn't think we were going to lose this one!". But at the end of the day one harsh fact stood out - Wrexham had not been good enough to deny a mediocre Charlton side maximum points. Wrexham hadn't won at Rotherham for nearly 40 years and this latest visit failed to improve on that poor record. However, they did give the home side plenty to think about as both Dixie McNeil and Frank Carroll went close to opening the scoring. In fact the opening half was nearly over before Reds' keeper Eddie Niedzwiecki was tested. Unfortunately, United got more into the game as it progressed and veteran Rodney Fern shot their opener on 62 minutes. Ronnie Moore completed our 0-2 defeat by heading home after Fern had hit the bar.



Lee Jones



Ray Harford

Captain Tony Humes has been an inspirational leader on the park and his partnership with Brian Carey has paid dividends for team.

Never one to shy away from a challenge, Tony always gives as good as he gets and if a forward is foolish enough to cross him, they won't do it twice.

As skipper, Tony was at the front of the celebrations during our cup run, but it was also noticeable, that he was the one consoling the other players after the final whistle at Saltergate.

He was also one of the last to leave the pitch, having stayed to thank the travelling fans and there might even have been the hint of a tear in his eye, as he headed off down the players tunnel.

Q: Just how bad was the feeling when the referee blew up to finish Sunday's match?

A: With the minutes ticking away, we were desperately trying to produce another great escape act, but this time, it was just once too often. I had such a bad feeling when the ref finally signalled the end.

We had come such a long way, battled back when all seemed lost several times and produced some great displays. We all wanted it to continue and the realisation that it was not going to be us in the semi-final draw, really hurt.

I felt gutted for the rest of the players and for the fans that had travelled around the country to support us. It was a great adventure, which I will look back on with much pride.

We are all a bit low coming off this game though, but we can't feel sorry for ourselves, as there are so many important league matches still to look forward to.

Q: What was the reaction amongst the players to Chesterfield's goal?

A: The media always like to apportion blame, especially when you can call upon several different television angles to review such incidents. But none of us were pointing any fingers in the dressing room afterwards.

There was some indecision between Deryn and Andy, but no one is blaming them. It's just one of those things.

Credit though to Chesterfield for the determination and spirit that showed. It was such an important game for both clubs, the chance of a place in the semi-finals and on the day they probably deserved to win.

Q: While cup games shouldn't affect our league form, players are only human and it will take a little getting over?

A: Of course it will, but we have to be as professional as we can about the situation and we all know that if we perform over the next two months, then we can share in some more success for the club.

The F.A.Cup is such a glamorous competition and by reaching the last eight, we have attracted a great deal of attention from the media. Not only nationally, but internationally as well.

While some players are not very happy with being in the media spotlight, they prefer to let the football do the talking, most

of us have enjoyed it.

Q: What was your best achievement in the F.A.Cup prior to this season?

A: When I made the break through with Ipswich Town, one of my first games was against Manchester United, in a fourth round tie staged at Portman Road.

The game was broadcast live on the television and while we were a second division side, we only lost 2-1. That was a great introduction.

After that, it has to be two years ago, when we beat Ipswich and then went onto play United at Old Trafford.

It should be every players ambition to test themselves against the best players and we certainly did that in 1995.

This time the experience gained by people like Mark McGregor, Bryan Hughes and Deryn, will prove valuable to them.

Q: It is quite astonishing how our success this year was based on games played away from the Racecourse. Any thoughts about a reason for that?

A: Usually in the cup, all you're really concerned with, is getting a home draw in the next round. Yet for us this season, the opposite has proved to be the case.

But it's not only in the cup that we have played well on our travels, remember that second half comeback at Blackpool!

Maybe it's because visiting bigger grounds has been bonus, as well as the support that has been behind us at all these games.

Going to West Ham and Birmingham and playing in front of so many Wrexham fans, all getting behind us and creating a marvellous atmosphere, can only inspire you.

Q: What can we carry over from the cup success to help us during the promotion finale this year?

A: While the cup games have dominated since Christmas, we have also been picking up points quietly and there are still a few outstanding games to catch up on.

The schedule for the remainder of the year, doesn't give us much room for error, but we still have to play a number of the top teams at the Racecourse.

It's up to ourselves to make sure that we take full advantage and push the club back up to at least the play-offs.

The supporters have seen how they can influence things on the field, so if they stay behind us, we must have a good chance.

Q: As the manager has been saying this season,

Tony Humes

much of what we have achieved to date, is based on a solid defence. How do you see your partnership with Brian Carey developing?

A: We do seem to have hit it off this year and that is going to be important for any team.

With Brian, I seem to have built a good understanding and we just seem to have hit it off. He has a great deal of experience at the top flight and that can only be of benefit.

Last season we conceded too many goals, but this time around we have tightened up considerably and on course to achieve our target of only letting in a goal a game.

The credit has to be spread throughout all the lads who are defenders and that includes Barry Jones. It's hard on him that he has been missing out, especially after being a regular for so long. But he has not let it effect him, as has been shown when called upon.

Q: The \$64,000 question, can we do it?

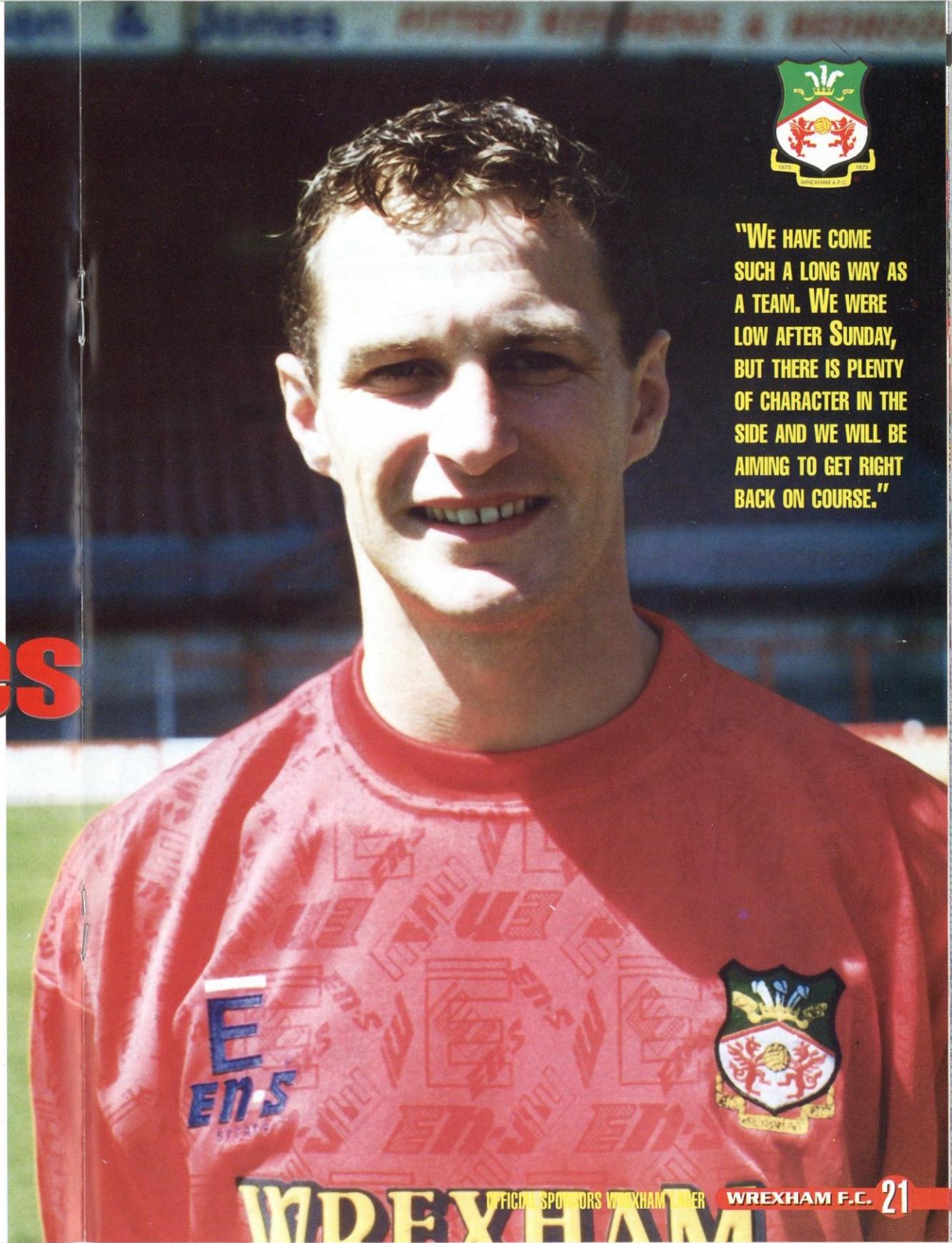
A: We have a strong squad, that has proved it can compete at a high level. The recent addition of Gary Bennett is a lift and if he can return to anything like his form with us last time, then that will only enhance our chances.

There is still a lot of football to be played over the next two months and we aim to put ourselves right back in the thick of things.

The F.A.Cup has given us the taste for success and we are all eager for more.



"WE HAVE COME SUCH A LONG WAY AS A TEAM. WE WERE LOW AFTER SUNDAY, BUT THERE IS PLENTY OF CHARACTER IN THE SIDE AND WE WILL BE AIMING TO GET RIGHT BACK ON COURSE."



Phil Boersma

One of only a handful of players to have represented both Wrexham and Luton, Phil Boersma gained a host of domestic and European honours during his playing days at Liverpool. Now a successful coach, he has teamed-up with Graeme Souness at Southampton in a bid to preserve Premiership football at the Dell.



Phil pictured during the 1974 Charity Shield v. Leeds United.

Born in Liverpool on 24th September 1949, Phil's first love was always football and he showed a natural talent for the game from an early age. He quickly progressed into the Kirkby boys side, from whose ranks numerous players have graduated to both the Liverpool and Everton sides over the years.

"I also played representative football for Lancashire Schoolboys between 1964 and 1966," explained Phil. "It was whilst I was playing for Kirkby Boys that I was spotted by a Liverpool scout, who invited me down for trials."

The youngster impressed sufficiently for the Anfield side to continue

monitoring his progress and, when he left school at the age of sixteen, he was offered an apprenticeship by the then legendary Reds manager Bill Shankly.

A skilful and speedy forward, Boersma physique was ideal for that position. Graduating through the Lancashire League and Central League sides, the free-scoring striker signed professional forms for the club on his nineteenth birthday. However, it was to be a further twelve months before he got his first taste of first-team football in September 1969.

That came in a League Cup tie away to Manchester City when a crowd of over 28,000 saw the raw youngster come on as a second-half substitute for the injured Alan Evans. Sadly for Boersma, there was to be no fairytale ending as the home side ran out 3-2 winners.

Evans had himself only come into the side the previous Saturday at the expense of injured Scottish International forward Ian St. John. That paved the way for Phil to get his first senior start in the next league match at West Bromwich Albion, which ended in a 2-2 draw thanks to Roger Hunt's last minute equaliser.

Shankly confessed himself to be delighted at the form of the 'local lad' and Boersma enjoyed another four first-team outings that Autumn, including his European debut in a 4-0 win over Irish part-timers Dundalk.

However, the astute Liverpool manager realised his young protegee needed some much needed first-team experience. That opportunity arose towards the end of the 1969-70 season when Boersma joined Wrexham on loan in a bid to help the Reds clinch promotion from the then Fourth Division.

Reds boss John Neal and Shankly were close friends and the recent F.A. Cup tie between the two sides, which Liverpool had won 3-1, had confirmed the latter's belief that Wrexham were one of the best footballing sides outside of the top flight.

"I was called into the manager's office at Anfield and he said that Wrexham were interested in signing me on loan. He agreed that it would be a good chance for me to play first-team football, which was what I needed at that time."

Wrexham had played really well against Liverpool a couple of months before in a Third Round F.A. Cup tie, so I knew their style of football would suit me."

Phil was signed by John Neal to help fill in for the injured Ian Moir.



Graeme Souness and Phil on their return to Anfield with Southampton earlier this season.

Wrexham were lying in second place in the table with just twelve games to go and the acquisition of Boersma's youthful talents helped keep the promotion bandwagon rolling.

He made his debut for Wrexham at Lincoln City in a scoreless draw, whilst his home debut came in the following match - a 6-2 home win over Darlington!

"That was a great start and, in total, I made seven appearances during my two month loan spell. We clinched promotion to the Third Division with three games left to play, when we drew 1-1 at home to Oldham Athletic. There were great scenes of celebration after the final whistle and I still have fond memories of my time at the Racecourse."

Both sides knew there was no chance of a permanent move and so Boersma returned to Liverpool in May 1970. Shankly was beginning to dismantle his successful side of the 1960's, with the old guard either moving on or languishing in the reserves.

That paved the way for Boersma to enjoy an extended run in the side towards the turn of the year. He celebrated his new found status with his first goal for the club in a 2-1 win at West Ham United, linking well with new signing John Toshack from Cardiff City.

The arrival of striker Kevin Keegan from Scunthorpe United in the summer of 1971, and the latter's flourishing partnership with targetman Toshack, meant Boersma was confined to Liverpool's second string for much of the 1971-72 campaign.

However, he began the following season determined to stake his claim for regular first-team football. His chance came in the September as Liverpool took on Sheffield United at Anfield. The Reds won 5-0 with Boersma commencing the rout with the game's opening goal after 28 minutes.

He was on target again a week later as Liverpool won 2-1 at Leeds United to confirm their status as genuine Championship contenders. However, it was a brace of goals that secured a 2-1 Easter win at Coventry that underlined his importance to the side, and virtually guaranteed the side its first Championship success since 1966.

With seven goals in 19 games, Phil qualified for a League Championship medal and a further four goals in eight UEFA Cup matches helped Liverpool to a notable 'double'.

The Reds beat German side Borussia Monchengladbach in the

final, with Phil gaining a winners medal courtesy of an appearance in the second leg in Monchengladbach.

"We conceded two goals in the first half, but having won 3-0 in the first leg, we managed to hang on for an overall 3-2 aggregate win."

The following season saw Phil endure the biggest disappointment of his playing career as he missed out on the chance of a Wembley appearance.

"Having been part of the 1974 F.A. Cup final squad, I found out just half-an-hour before kick-off that I wasn't in the side or even on the substitutes bench. We beat Newcastle United 3-0 but it was a day of very contrasting emotions."

Three months later and Boersma got his Wembley chance, albeit in the Charity Shield against reigning League Champions Leeds United. The match, better known for the dismissal of Billy Bremner and Kevin Keegan, ended in a 1-1 draw with Phil having scored Liverpool's goal in the first-half. The match was decided by a penalty shoot-out which the Anfield side won 6-5 to lift the trophy.

Phil remained with Liverpool until December 1975 when, frustrated at being unable to hold down a regular starting place, he joined First Division Middlesbrough for £72,000, having scored 17 goals in 82 League appearances for the Reds.

"Jack Charlton made me an offer that I couldn't refuse! They were a good side with several up-and-coming players and it was the right move at the right time for me."

He made his 'Boro' debut in a scoreless home draw with Manchester United that same month and went on to help the Ayresome Park club secure a final mid-table placing.

Boersma made a total of 47 League appearances for Middlesbrough, scoring three goals, although he was by then playing in more of a midfield role. Alongside him was the emerging talents of Graeme Souness and the pair became firm friends, a factor which was to prove significant for later in his career.

"My most memorable time at Middlesbrough was meeting my Landlady, Phoebe Haigh, who sadly is no longer with us."

The arrival of former Wrexham boss John Neal as manager at the First Division club in the summer of 1977 was to herald the end of Boersma's playing days with the North East side.

In August he moved south to join Second Division Luton Town in a £35,000 deal and made his Hatters debut on the opening day of the campaign against Orient.

"We beat them 1-0 at Kenilworth Road, so it was pleasing to get off to a winning start with my new club. Harry Haslam was the manager at Luton then and he was a very persuasive man when he was trying to sign me."

"I enjoyed myself at Luton as I was allowed to play and express myself as a footballer."

However, his stay at Luton was to prove relatively short lived, scoring eight goals in 36 League games for the Hatters before a surprise move to Third Division Swansea City in September 1978.

The £35,000 fee was then a record for the Swans but their manager John Toshack, a former team-mate during their days together at Liverpool, was convinced Boersma could help the newly-promoted club prosper at their new found level.

Swansea won promotion again the following May but Boersma's appearances were hampered by an injury that eventually signalled the end of his playing career.

"I received a compound fracture and dislocation of the right ankle during a match against Swindon Town back in April 1979. I tried my best to regain my fitness but I was forced to call it a day almost two years later."

"John (Toshack) allowed me to get involved with the coaching side at the club. It was non stop success back in those days as the Swans reached the old First Division in 1981 and then finished in sixth place in our first season in the top flight."

Relegation twelve months later, together with severe financial problems, eventually saw Boersma depart the Vetch in March 1984 when he teamed up with Colin Murphy on the coaching staff at Lincoln City.

He became assistant manager to John Pickering in the close season of 1985 as Murphy controversially left to take over the reigns at Stockport



Phil (pictured third from left on the middle row) with the all-conquering Liverpool side of 1973.

County. However, following Pickering's departure in December of that same year, Phil left to take over as physio with Doncaster Rovers for the rest of the 1985/86 season.

Graeme Souness's appointment as player-manager of Glasgow Rangers in May 1986 shook the football world and changed the face of professional football North of the Border.

"When Graeme became manager, he invited me to join him. I was appointed as physio but later became first team coach with the 'Gers'."

In all, Phil was to spend five years at Ibrox working alongside Souness and Walter Smith, as physio and coach. During that time Rangers won the Scottish Premier League four times in 1987, 1989, 1990 and 1991. They also lifted the Scottish League Cup four times in 1987, 1988, 1989 and 1991, with only the Scottish Cup eluding their clutches, Rangers finishing runners-up in 1989, a result which denied them the treble.

"Every year that I was there was memorable," agreed Boersma. "Rangers are a great club with a proud tradition and the success we achieved was fantastic."

With Rangers on the verge of clinching the title again in 1991, Souness left Ibrox to take over from Kenny Dalglish in the Anfield hot-seat. Souness admitted that the Liverpool job was the only one he would have left Ibrox for, and Boersma followed him to their former stamping-ground.

"Graeme once again invited me to join him on the coaching staff. The most memorable moment of my second spell at Anfield was when we won the F.A. Cup in 1992, beating Sunderland in the final."

Souness set about reshaping the Liverpool side, placing great emphasis on the youthful talent of players like Robbie Fowler and Steve Macmanaman. However, health problems and the growing unrest on the terraces at the side's inability to improve upon their solitary Cup success, saw Souness tender his resignation following an F.A. Cup defeat at the hands of Bristol City in January 1994.

Having been appointed by his former team-mate, Boersma took the decision to step down with Souness. The offer of a coaching post at Oldham Athletic soon landed on his doorstep, which he duly accepted and Phil spent six happy months on the Boundary Park staff.

The summer of 1995 saw Phil team-up for the third time with Graeme Souness, this time at Turkish side Galatasaray. Despite only finishing in fourth position in the league, they did guide the club to a notable 1-0 win over arch-rivals Fenerbache in the Turkish Cup Final.

The pair returned to Britain last summer when they took charge at Premiership side Southampton. A 6-3 thrashing of Manchester United earlier this term confirmed that they are building along the right lines at the Dell although the now 47-year-old acknowledges that: "Our main aim at the moment is to remain in the Premier League."

Outside of football, he added: "I enjoy holidays abroad with my family."

Phil Boersma's Full Wrexham Career Record

	League	F.A. Cup	Welsh Cup	League Cup	Total
1969/70	A G	A G	A G	A G	A G
	4/3	0	-	-	4/3 0
Total	4/3	0	-	-	4/3 0

Wrexham 0
Burnley 0



• **Dateline**

Saturday, 1st March, 1997

• **Competition**

Nationwide League Division Two

• **Venue**

Racecourse Ground, Wrexham

• **Attendance**

6,947 Away Support 1,654

• **Scorers**

None

• **Wrexham**

Marriott, McGregor, Brace, Hughes, Hunes, Carey, Bennett (L. Jones 82), Russell (Brammer 89), Chalk, Watkin, Ward. Sub: B. Jones.

• **Burnley**

Beresford, Parkinson, Vinnicombe, Brass, Hoyland, Winstanley, Matthew, Little (Weller 81), Smith, Barnes, Thompson. Subs: Huxford, Robinson.

• **Cautions**

None

• **Dismissals**

None

• **Referee**

Gurnam Singh (Wolverhampton)

Stalemate!



■ Lee Jones sees his shot hit the crossbar and return to safety.

promotion chasing Clarets.

He received a hero's welcome and proved that he had lost none of his showmanship, but kissing the turf and forgetting to put on his shirt under the tracksuit top he wears in the warm-up.

Lack of match practice with

Preston this season due to injury was soon apparent, but Benno typically got involved in anything that happened around the penalty area. Steve Watkin

Deryn Brace's Viewpoint

A win would have been a good way to get back in the promotion race and would have set ourselves up for next week's big cup clash. We put a lot of effort into this one, but a combination of a few things, most notably the strong wind, conspired against us. Lee Jones was unlucky not to sign off with a goal at the death.



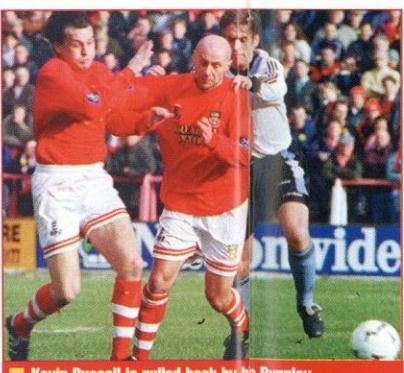
F.A. Cup quarter-final fever, St. David's Day and the return of record breaking goalscorer Gary Bennett, all combined with a healthy away support, to produce our biggest gate of the season so far.

It was just a shame that we also recorded our third 0-0 draw in a week, but there were still plenty of talking points, although the very strong wind did little to help either set of players.

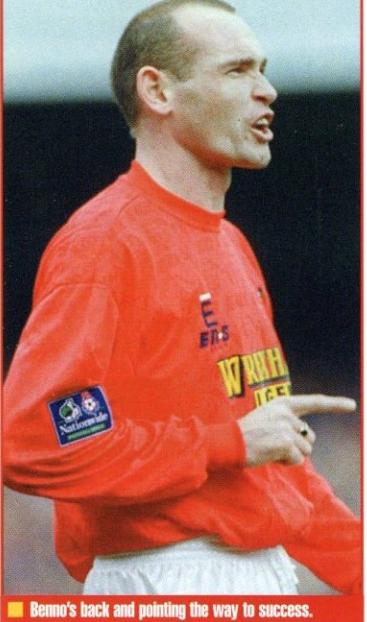
Manager Brian Flynn had been hoping to persuade either Liverpool's Lee Jones or Aston Villa's Neil Davies to sign before the cup transfer deadline. Both decided to keep their options open for a little longer, but an 11th hour bid for old boy Benno, was met with no such problems.

Gary was down at the Racecourse to sign on the Friday morning and went training with the rest of the squad in readiness for this clash with the

certainly seemed happy enough to have his old partner back alongside him and it was a jinking run by the blonde striker that



■ Kevin Russell is pulled back by his Burnley counterpart.



■ Benno's back and pointing the way to success.

should have seen Gary crown his return with a goal.

Cutting in from the Yale Stand side of the pitch, Steve had a clear sight of his target, but the angle was not the best and Marlon Beresford was refusing to commit himself. Looking up, Benno had drifted in unmarked, about 10 yards out and screaming for the ball.

It was duly despatched, but as he swung his leg to make contact, he seemed to stub his toe in the grass and although the ball was on target, it lacked the pace. Defender Chris Brass was then given that split second he needed to get his head in the way and clear off the line.

Much to the delight of the Burnley hordes behind that goal, who were giving Benno some stick for his part in Preston's recent victory over their team.

Burnley's tactics were in

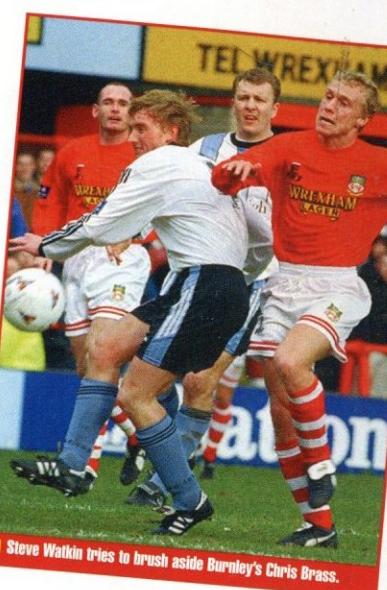
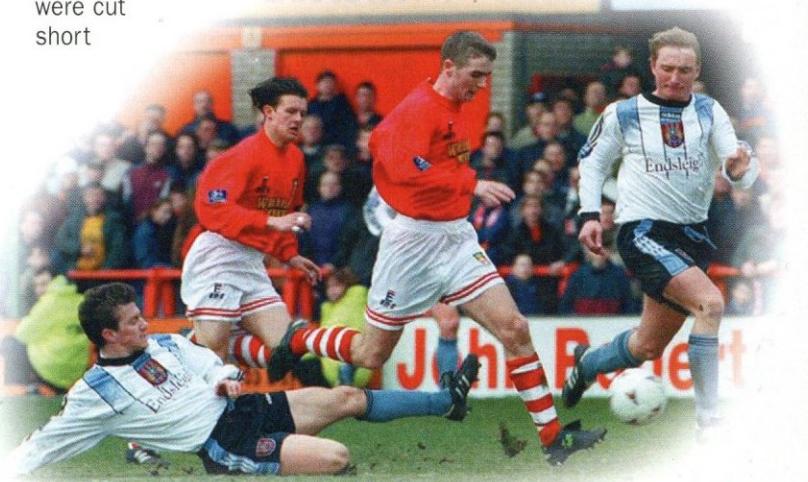
place from the kick-off and this meant a lonely day for top scorer Paul Barnes, as he toiled on his own up front. The Clarets' extra man was pulled back to counteract our midfield, but they did force Andy Marriott into action on a number of occasions.

Twice the Welsh International custodian was left facing the inform striker in one-on-one situations and twice he pulled off superb diving saves at the feet of Barnes, who had scored a hat-trick in the Clarets 3-1 win at Blackpool in midweek.

With Gary Bennett tiring towards the final period of his first game back, Lee Jones was brought on a for a farewell appearance before his return to Liverpool.

The young striker's electric pace was to cause the Burnley defenders a few problems in the closing minutes. The fact he failed to score the winner was just down to plain bad luck, as a turn and shot from 10 yards clash against the underside of the bar, bounced down on the line and was then hooked clear.

Appeals that the ball had crossed, were cut short



■ Steve Watkin tries to brush aside Burnley's Chris Brass.

as Burnley broke themselves.

This attack finished when Barnes given a great chance on the left hand side, but he of all people dragged his effort high and into the stand.

A draw was a fair result but didn't particularly help either sides ambitions of playing First Division football next season.

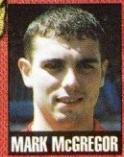
■ Bryan Hughes breaks through the Burnley rearguard.

Sponsorkit



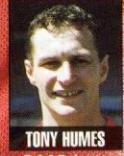
ANDY MARRIOTT

Carl & Neil Thomas (The Team)
Pads: Joe Lillard
Gloves: Howard Ownes



MARK CARTWRIGHT

Kelly & Charlotte Roberts
Pads: Thomas & Mathew Norton
Gloves: Martin Sunn Astley & Joshua



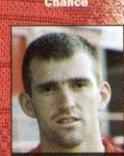
MARK MCGREGOR

London Reds
Pads: Steve Rogers



TONY HUMES

Eryl Roberts
Pads: Patricia Davies



DAVE BRAMMER

Gareth Collins Worcester
Pads: Adam Lloyd
Chance



KARL CONNOLLY

London Reds
Pads: Stuart MacDonald



JONATHAN CROSS

Ron Williams
Pads: Gareth Lloyd Jones
Gloves: Howard Ownes



MARK CARTWRIGHT

Kelly & Charlotte Roberts
Pads: Thomas & Mathew Norton
Gloves: Martin Sunn Astley & Joshua



DERYN BRACE

Potters Wheel,
Buckley



PHIL HARDY

Sian Rogers
Pads: Luke Howells



DAVE RIDLER

Pads: M. Arkle



WAYNE PHILLIPS

The Walnut Tree
Rhosdu, Wrexham
Pads: Martin MacDonald



SCOTT WILLIAMS

Pads: Martin John



KEVIN RUSSELL

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Pads: Thomas MacDonald



PETER WARD

Julia, Lynn &
Jake Jones



GARETH OWEN

The Sharpshooters
Pads: Ryan Thomas



CRAIG SKINNER

"Skinner's
Travelling Army"
Pads: Alex Davies



STEVE WATKIN

Helen Thomas
Pads: Ffion MacDonald



STEVE MORRIS

Gareth Collins Worcester
Pads: Mathew Read



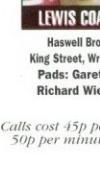
NEIL ROBERTS

The Acton Park
Hotel - Bar
Pads: Scott Evans



LEWIS COADY

Haswell Bros.,
King Street, Wrexham
Pads: Gareth &
Richard Wieck



JONATHAN CROSS

Ron Williams
Pads: Gareth Lloyd Jones
Gloves: Howard Ownes



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50p per minute at all other times

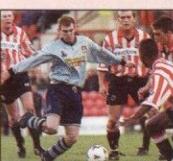
Next at The Racecourse

YORK CITY

Saturday, 15th March, Kick-Off: 3.00 p.m.

York City took a major step towards securing Second Division status for another season as they became the first side to beat Blackpool on their travels this year. The Minstermen's 1-0 win at Bootham Crescent came courtesy of John Sharples's first goal of the season after 20 minutes. The £75,000 capture from Scottish side Ayr United twelve months ago, headed home a cross from new signing Dave Gilbert to crown an impressive performance. Currently on a month's loan from First Division West Bromwich Albion, Gilbert came close to sealing the points for City midway through the second-half only to be denied by a superb save from Blackpool keeper Steve Banks. However, anything Banks could do City keeper Andy Warrington could more than match. The young custodian made two stunning point blank saves from the Seasiders Phil Clarkson to earn his side a welcome three points. The result lifted York three points clear of fourth from bottom Wycombe Wanderers, but the recent loss of top scorer Nigel Pepper to Yorkshire rivals Bradford City for £100,000 has done little to help their cause. Despite this, City boss Alan Little has proved himself a master at managing on limited resources with Coca-Cola Cup wins over both Manchester United and Everton in the last two seasons alone.

Last season: 20th in Second Division, 1st Round in F.A.Cup, 3rd Round in Coca Cola Cup. Played: 46, Won: 13, Drew: 13, Lost: 20, Goals For: 58, Goals Against: 73, Points: 52.



Tuesday, 25th March, Kick-Off: 7.30 p.m.

Top of the table, unbeaten at home and with nine wins on their travels already this season, you would have thought Brentford fans would be amongst the happiest in the League. Not so according to Bees boss David Webb, the former tough-tackling Chelsea defender, who was barracked by a section of the Brentford travelling support during last Saturday's 1-0 defeat at Preston. That defeat, their first since November, left Webb extremely disenchanted with life at Griffin Park, saying: "I will be offering my resignation to the chairman (Martin Lange) when he returns from America on Monday. We are top of the league but with people like that there is no point in carrying on. If that is the fans' attitude after our first defeat in 15 games, I will resign." Brentford director John Hendrey, in the absence of Lange, moved quickly to defuse any thoughts that Webb might depart, saying: "The club would not accept any resignation forwarded by Mr. Webb."

Brentford have certainly missed the goalscoring exploits of striker Nick Forster, sold to First Division Birmingham City last month for £700,000. In his place has come Steve Slade on loan from First Division neighbours Q.P.R. The highly promising England Under-21 International has already impressed greatly with his aerial technique and general toughness, despite his obvious lack of weight. Last season: 15th in Second Division, 4th Round in F.A.Cup, 2nd Round in Coca Cola Cup. Played: 46, Won: 15, Drew: 13, Lost: 18, Goals For: 43, Goals Against: 49, Points: 58.

PRESTON NORTH END

Tuesday, 18th March, Kick-Off: 7.45 p.m.

Ground: Deepdale, Lowthorpe Road, Preston PR1 6RU. Tel: (01772) 902020, Ticket Office and Matchday Information (01772) 902000.

Capacity: 18,907 (9,168 seats) Admission for Wrexham fans to the uncovered Pavilion Paddock terrace (2,677 places) is via Turnstiles off Lowthorpe Road. Prices are £8.50 (Adults) and £5.00 (concessions). There are no seats available for visiting supporters.

Wrexham Away Travel Club Coaches: Depart Yale Car Park at 4.30 p.m. Prices are £6.00 Adults, £5.00 Concessions. By Road: Follow A483, A5, M54, M6 exiting M6 at junction 31. At roundabout take first exit (signposted Preston A59) onto the A59. At roundabout after 1.0 mile take 2nd exit (signposted Ring Road, Blackpool A583) onto the Blackpool Road A5085, passing Hesketh's Arms on left hand side. Straight on for 1.2 miles, then filter left before lights (signposted Town Centre, Football Ground) into Deepdale Road. Ground is on the left hand side. Car Parking: There is a large official car park at the ground, opposite the West Stand off Deepdale Road (Cost £2.00). Alternatively, there is plenty of street parking in the residential streets to the east of the ground. To get there continue along Deepdale Road and take the first left turn after the ground. However do avoid parking in Lowthorpe Road, Hollins Road, Parkside or St.Stephen's Road as a tow away scheme is in operation.

Nearest Railway Station: Preston, which is about 1.6 miles from the ground. Come out of the station and turn left in front of the Fishergate Centre, passing the Railway Pub. Turn right at T-junction. The main road bends to the left and becomes Corporation Street...don't go along it. Continue straight on instead into Fishergate. Keep straight on for 0.75 miles as Fishergate becomes Church Street, to junction with A6. Cross main road into continuation of Church Street. Where road divides keep left into Deepdale Road and the ground is on your right hand side after a further 0.75 miles. A taxi will cost you £2.50-£3.00 from the station.

Train Times: No return travel is possible from Preston after the match.

Bus Services: From Preston Railway Station, all buses run to the Bus Terminal. From there take No's 6 or 19 to the ground.

Programme Price: £1.50, 32 small pages. Available inside the ground and at the Club Shop beneath the Main Stand. Plenty of informative reading material but presentation could be improved.

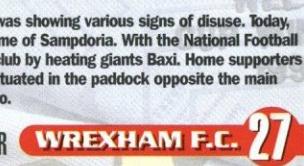
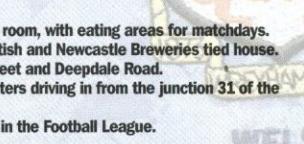
Fanzines: 'The Pie Muncher' c/o 10 Esplanade, Preston PR1 4PJ. Costs £1.00 and is a light hearted read.

Pub Guide: 'Legends' is situated at the ground on Deepdale Road. It's a nightclub that opens up one large room, with eating areas for matchdays. Further afield, there's the 'Hesketh Arms' on the way in from the M6. A large modern style pub, it's a Scottish and Newcastle Breweries tied house. The 'Summers Hotel' serves Boddingtons and has a range of guest beers. It's on the corner of Watling Street and Deepdale Road.

Food Guide: The food at the ground is variable, with the Steak and Kidney pie about your best bet. Supporters driving in from the junction 31 of the M6 pass a fish and chip shop and a fried chicken restaurant on their way to the ground.

Miscellaneous: The Preston programme is now edited by striker Steve Wilkinson, a first to our knowledge in the Football League.

Traveller's View: It's just over ten years since we last visited Preston, and back in those days the ground was showing various signs of disuse. Today, it can boast a superb 8,000 all-seater stand based on the design of the Stadio Luigi Ferraris in Genoa, home of Sampdoria. With the National Football Museum also being built at the ground, Preston fans are benefitting from the money introduced into the club by heating giants Baxi. Home supporters are behind both goals, one of former manager John Beck's more ingenious suggestions, with away fans situated in the paddock opposite the main West Stand. No doubt Gary Bennett will be looking to enjoy his return to Deepdale with the odd goal or two.



Battle Hots up for Europe

With Barry Town's name all but inscribed on the League of Wales championship trophy, they now have a nine point lead and two games in hand. The fight is definitely on for second place and the remaining UEFA Cup spot on offer.

Realistically, one of five clubs could lay claim, with Caernarfon Town, Inter Cable-Tel, Conwy United, Ebbw Vale and Newtown the challengers.

Conwy have already played three games more than some of their opponents and they twice had to come from behind last Saturday, to take a point from the home encounter with Ebbw Vale. Just how costly that last minute equaliser from substitute Mark Smith, will prove to the men from South Wales remains to be seen, but their outside hopes were not helped. Which is a shame for boss John Lewis, recently voted Manager of the Month for February.

Newtown remain in the chase and they had a fine 5-1 victory over form team Flint Town United. The Deesiders have won six and drawn one of their last eight matches, but were no match for the Robins at Latham Park, although the 1-0 score line at the interval, gave little indication of what was to follow. Flint's lone replay came courtesy of an own goal.

The main battle for European glory though, lies between Caernarfon and Inter Cable-Tel. The Carnies travelled to struggling Welshpool Town and returned with the points, thanks to a 3-0 victory, all the goals coming in the first half, but none to prolific scorer Eifion Williams.

Meanwhile, the capital side were up north and enjoying a last visit to Connah's Quay's Halfway House ground. Never in any real danger, they romped to a 3-0 victory and are just three points behind their main rivals, with a game in hand.

The Bulldogs of Ton Pentre followed up the news that they will pull out of the LoW next season, due to financial problems, by travelling to Aberystwyth, taking a 3-0 lead and then hanging for the points at 3-2.

Bangor City's disappointing season continued with a 1-0 home defeat by Cwmbran Town. Matthew Davies was the visitor's hero, scoring in the 82nd minute. He shrugged off the challenge of three defenders and beat a fourth on the line from 10 yards out.

City boss Kevin Langley has brought back Steve Myers to refill his old position of assistant manager. Former Wrexham trainee Terry Brown has been released by the Farrar Road club.

Porthmadog's recent slide came to a halt at Belle Vue, when a brilliant display by ex-Reds goalkeeper Ken Dixon kept his team on level terms and allowed Aled Owen's 39th minute header to settle matter against Rhyl. Steve Pugh is also impressing for the Treath men.

Champions elect Barry had a difficult task at home to Holywell Town, as the visitors played with a blank defence. The half-time introduction of forwards Chris Pike and Dave O'Gorman proved the difference, as former Wrexham player O'Gorman skipped through a challenge to deliver a great cross that Tony Bird headed in from close range.

In the other matches, Briton Ferry made Cemaes Bay's long journey south pointless. The locals were a goal behind, but for the first time this season they rallied to win 2-1. A vital result as they aim to catch second bottom Holywell, now only three points ahead of them. While fellow relegation candidates Caersws did their survival hopes a power of good, winning 3-2 at Carmarthen Town. The crucial period of this match came in the seconds before half-time, as first the home side took a 2-1 lead on 44 minutes and then Caersws hit back with two goals in injury time!

20 to Tackle

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1. What is Luton's nickname?
2. In which year did they win the League Cup?
3. Name the team that knocked them out of this year's F.A. Cup?
4. What major achievement did they record in 1959?
5. Who is Luton's most capped player?
6. Who scored Chelsea's extra-time winner against Leicester City?
7. Which club is nicknamed the Imps?
8. Name the team currently top of the French League?
9. Which League of Wales team play at the Oval?
10. Who scored Wimbledon's Cup goals last Sunday?
11. Which non-league team plays at Kingfield?
12. Name the World Footballer of the Year for 1996?
13. Which former England International is manager of Doncaster Rovers?
14. With who is Ray Wilkins currently playing?
15. Who scored Celtic's first cup goal against Rangers?
16. Which team has won 11 away games so far this season?
17. To which Turkish club did Everton sell Daniel Amokachi?
18. Who is Tranmere Rovers' record signing?
19. In which Spanish city do Real Betis play their home games?
20. Who is Oldham's new manager?

Answers: 1. The Hatters, 2. 1988, 3. The Hatters, 4. Reached the FA Cup Final, 5. Mal Donaghy, 6. Frank Lebouli, 7. Lincos, 8. Monaco, 9. Caernarfon Town, 10. Eddie and Holdsworth, 11. Woking, 12. Ronald, 13. Terry Dixon, 14. Leyton Orient, 15. Marky Mackay, 16. Wolves, 17. Besiktas, 18. Shan Telale, 19. Sevilla, 20. Neil Warnock.

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Cross double sinks Mariners

YOUNG REDS

No. 20 Dave Swanick
Born Bebington, 16.5.79

If the following seems a little familiar, then it's because it is. Dave is one of a number of our second year trainee's who have followed the same path through junior football on the Wirral, before being spotted by our scout in the area and eventually offered term at the Racecourse.

"I was playing football all through my school years and

progressed to Bebington side Young Lions in the Eastham Youth League. "Also in the team were Andy Griffiths and Julian Pepper, and I was at school in Neston with Peps.

"I was playing well enough to get selected by both Wirral and Cheshire Schools teams. Plus I was called up to the Eastham League to play in their representative side. "It was about this time that I played in a friendly for Cheshire against Wrexham Schools. After the game I was approached by Wrexham scout Geoff Fellows and came down for training."

"Nottingham Forest rang a few times, but I was already committed to Wrexham and playing in the club's junior teams.

"In my last year at school, I was offered the opportunity to sign a YTS contract with the club, but at first I declined. It was only later, when I knew that I couldn't miss the chance of giving it a go in football, that I agreed to sign."

"My first year was disappointing for me, as I seemed to be suffering from either illness or injury for most of the season. Happily that is behind me and I'm now getting a regular run out in the Lancashire League team as a centre-half."

"As for the future, I want to make a career in the game and break into the first team. Although I wouldn't pass up the offer of playing for Everton one day!"



Wrexham produced a superb display to beat Pontins League table-toppers Grimsby Town at the Racecourse. Jonathan Cross marked a welcome return to form with two fine goals, whilst several other

players staked their respective claims for a first-team place. The Colts also beat their league leaders Penley in a thrilling match at Lindisfarne, whilst the Lancashire League side recorded a superb 2-0 win over Crewe's second string at Queensway.

LANCASHIRE LEAGUE DIVISION ONE

Saturday, 22nd February, 1997

WREXHAM 'A' 2, MARINE RESERVES 0

A game re-arranged at late notice, saw the lads given the chance to further improve our position in the table, at the expense of bottom placed Marine.

The Crosby based team have been struggling all season and there was little respite for them in this match.

A Julian Pepper goal in the first half, set the young Reds on their way to victory. The striker latched onto a ball that bounced on the edge of the penalty box and with a half volley gave the Marine keeper no chance.

This was one of only numerous opportunities which came our way, but were not taken. What really was a comfortably win, was only made safe in the final five minutes, when Jamie McNeil ran from the half-way line, beat two defenders and slipped the ball under the goalkeeper.

At the other end, Mark Cartwright was given a game due to injuries to others, but had little to do and hardly got to touch the ball during the 90 minutes.

Playing for Marine was former Wrexham YTS Phil Melarangi, but he was part of a team that did little to threaten us. We had more problems coping with a poor pitch and the weather conditions.

The referee didn't have a great game and did little to help the action flow.

Coach Brian Prandle named defender Rob Morris as the star man, calling him the best defender, midfielder and forward on the pitch.

PONTINS LEAGUE DIVISION TWO

Saturday, 1st March, 1997

HULL CITY RESERVES 2, WREXHAM RESERVES 0

Despite fielding a strong side for the clash with lowly Hull City at Boothferry Park, Wrexham turned in their worst display of the season to go down 2-0 to the home side.

Hull took the lead after just 13 minutes of a lack-lustre first period. Centre-forward Andy Brown found himself with acres of room inside the Wrexham penalty-area and he had all the time in the world to fire past the stranded Mark Cartwright from 12 yards out.

Worse was to follow early in the second-half when substitute Rob Williams inadvertently played the ball across his own box and Brown was on hand to fire home the simplest of chances.

Team: Mark Cartwright, Scott Williams, Phil Hardy, Dave Ridler, Barry Jones, Gareth Owen, Wayne Phillips, Dave Gardner (Rob Williams), Jonathan Cross, Neil Roberts, Paul Roberts (Paul Jones). Sub: Gareth Wilson (not used).

LANCASHIRE LEAGUE DIVISION ONE

Saturday, 1st March, 1997

WREXHAM 'A' 2, CREWE ALEXANDRA RESERVES 0

Any win against Crewe has to be looked on in a positive light and this gave us a little revenge for the early season defeat we suffered at their place.

The Alex don't run a reserve team at a higher level, for example in the Pontins League, so there was a fair amount of experience in the side they bought to Queensway last week.

Crewe used this to their advantage in the first 20 minutes, but after we had weathered this pressure, we got on top for the rest of the period.

Our first goal came near the half-time whistle and resulted from Antony Wright seeing a first shot blocked, but being quick witted enough to pounce on the rebound and make sure at the second attempt.

After the break, we continued to keep the visitor's goal under siege, as controlled the second half.

Number two for Wright was scored in the 78th minute, with a move that started right at the back. Leigh Edwards passed out to Rob Morris. He pushed down the wing and set up Julian Pepper, whose shot was saved by the Crewe goalkeeper.

Never one to miss out Wright swooped and fired in the loose ball to make sure of the points.

The whole Crewe team was professional, compared to just four in our ranks. So when we say that we could have doubled our score, then it gives some indication of their value for money performance we produced.

It was a good solid display, with early substitute Dave Swanick earning himself the plaudits for a fine defensive showing.

"This was a cracking result for the lads and we thoroughly deserved to win," enthused coach Brian Prandle. "Crewe had only lost one match away from this season, and that was at Manchester United. They had a number of players with first-team experience in their side but we dominated the game."

Team: Leigh Edwards, Paul Taylor (Dave Swanick), Rob Morris, Gareth Shone, Andy Thomas, Rob Williams, Gareth Wilson, Andy Griffiths, Darren Nall, Julian Pepper, Antony Pearcey. Subs: Barry Ellison, Jamie McNeil.

WELSH NATIONAL LEAGUE PREMIER DIVISION

Saturday, 1st March, 1997

WREXHAM COLTS 3, PENLEY 2

Wrexham bounced back to winning ways in the league with a vital win over table topping Penley at Lindisfarne. One of the stars of the show was 16-year-old debutante keeper Christian Rogers who performed admirably given the difficult, windy conditions.

Wrexham took the lead through Steve Hopkins and when Paul Mazzarella added a second, the Colts looked to be heading for a comfortable victory.

Penley battled hard to get back into the match and an opportunistic goal from Mark Williams gave them a brief lifeline, before the impressive Danny Williams pounced to restore the Reds two goal advantage.

Chris Broadhurst added a second for the visitors but the Wrexham defence held firm in the closing stages to record an important victory.

"It was a pleasing performance," enthused coach Steve Weaver. "Christian has been playing for our Under-16 School of Excellence side this term and did really well in goal, given that it was his debut."

"After having played so few games this year, it was important we won today to try and keep the gap at the top of the table down to reasonable proportions."

Team: Christian Rogers, Craig Jones (Steve Cooper), Keith Hannan, Stephen Roberts, Steve Hopkins, Paul Mazzarella, Robin Gibson, Andrew Davies, Danny Williams, Steve Thomas, David Hennessey.

PONTINS LEAGUE DIVISION TWO

(up to and including 10th March 1997)

LANCASHIRE LEAGUE DIVISION ONE

(up to and including 10th March 1997)

WELSH NATIONAL LEAGUE PREMIER DIVISION

(up to and including 10th March 1997)

P W D L F A Pts

Grimsby Town 17 13 1 3 43 19 40

Manchester City 17 9 4 4 29 19 31

York City 16 9 4 3 28 21 31

Wrexham 16 8 5 3 35 19 29

Rotherham United 17 8 3 6 21 17 27

Barnsley 17 7 4 6 34 31 25

Bradford City 15 7 2 6 25 25 23

Shrewsbury Town 13 5 3 5 22 24 18

Hull City 17 5 3 9 18 28 18

Carlisle United 13 5 1 7 21 22 16

Burnley 14 4 4 6 20 23 16

Stockport County 14 3 4 7 22 27 13

Mansfield Town 18 0 0 18 24 67 0

P W D L F A Pts

Manchester Utd 'A' 23 17 4 2 90 26 55

Stoke City 'A' 23 17 3 3 51 17 54

Crewe Alexandra Res 26 15 4 5 7 54 33 49

Wrexham 'A' 25 12 3 10 43 37 39

Rhyl 22 9 5 8 41 30 32

Liverpool Rovers 'A' 21 10 2 9 34 28 32

British Aerospace 16 7 2 7 45 37 23

Llangollen 16 5 5 6 34 38 20

Ruthin Town Res 19 6 2 11 30 51 20

Lex XI Res 20 5 2 13 29 56 17

Gresford Athletic 12 5 0 7 23 18 15

Rhos Aelwyd Res 18 2 4 12 17 51 10

Brynmbo Broughton Res 18 1 3 14 23 69 6

P W D L F A Pts

Chirk A.A.A. 17 12 3 2 43 16 39

Penley 19 12 3 4 59 41 39

Wrexham Colts 15 12 1 2 61 21 37

Rhyl 19 12 1 6 65 38 37

Llay Welfare 18 10 3 5 33 25 33

Corwen 17 9 2 6 33 29 29

Cefn Druids Res 20 8 1 11 46 48 25

British Aerospace 16 7 2 7 45 37 23

Llangollen 16 5 5 6 34 38 20

Ruthin Town Res 19 6 2 11 30 51 20

Lex XI Res 20 5 2 13 29 56 17

Gresford Athletic 12 5 0 7 23 18 15

Rhos Aelwyd Res 18 2 4 12 17 51 10

Brynmbo Broughton Res 18 1 3 14 23 69 6

Fixtures

Lancashire League Division One

Date	Opponents	Ven	Res
Aug 17	Preston North End 'A'	(A)	0-0
Aug 23	Stoke City 'A'	(A)	0-2
Aug 29	Liverpool 'A'	(A)	1-0
Sep 5	Bolton Wanderers 'A'	(A)	1-0
Sep 12	Blackburn Rovers 'A'	(A)	0-2
Sep 19	Crewe Alexandra Reserves (A)	(A)	1-2
Sep 26	Ruthin Town Res (A)	(H)	2-4
Oct 3	Manchester United 'A'	(H)	4-4
Oct 10	Everton 'A'	(H)	1-5
Oct 17	Burnley 'A'	(A)	1-2
Nov 3	Bury 'A'	(H)	0-2
Nov 10	Marine Reserves (A)	(A)	4-0
Nov 17	Bolton Wanderers 'A'	(H)	0-2
Dec 4	Tranmere Rovers 'A'	(A)	5-1
Dec 11	Liverpool 'A'	(H)	3-1
Jan 18	Blackburn Rovers 'A'	(H)	1-4
Jan 25	Morecambe Reserves (A)	(A)	4-1
Feb 1	Stoke City 'A'	(H)	1-4
Feb 8	Preston North End 'A'	(H)	2-0
Feb 15	Bury 'A'	(H)	4-1
Feb 22	Marine Reserves (H)	(H)	2-0
Mar 1	Crewe Alexandra Reserves (H)	(H)	2-0
Mar 8	Oldham Athletic 'A'	(H)	0-1
Mar 22	Everton 'A'	(A)	0-1
Apr 4	Morecambe Reserves (A)	(A)	0-1
TBA	Oldham Athletic 'A'	(A)	0-1

All home matches played at The Queensway Sports Centre, Wrexham, with an 11.00 a.m. kick-off.

Welsh National League Premier Division

Date	Opponents	Ven	Res
Aug 17	Lay Welfare	(H)	2-2
Aug 24	Chirk A.A.A.	(H)	0-2
Sep 7	Gresford Athletic	(A)	2-1
Sep 14	Penley	(A)	7-3
Sep 21	Rhylton Villa	(H)	7-2
Sep 28	Brynmbo Broughton	(H)	3-2
Oct 12	Ruthin Town Res	(A)	5-2
Oct 19	Corwen (LC1)	(H)	3-1
Oct 26	Llangollen	(H)	3-2
Nov 2	Rhos Aelwyd Res.	(H)	3-1
Nov 4	Shrewsbury Town (EYC1)	(A)	6-5
Nov 9	Glyndwr (NEWCCP)	(A)	5-2
Nov 16	Lex XI Res	(A)	1-0
Nov 23	Cefn Druids Res.	(H)	5-3
Nov 25	Manchester United (EYC2)	(A)	0-1
Dec 28	Llanelli (NWCC1)	(H)	9-0
Dec 28	Brynmbo Broughton	(A)	7-0
Jan 18	Gresford Athletic (LC2)	(H)	7-1
Feb 1	Lex (NEWCC1)	(A)	0-0
Feb 8	Lex (NEWCC2R)	(H)	1-0
Feb 15	Corwen	(A)	1-2
Feb 22	Gresford Ath (NEWCC3)	(A)	6-1
Mar 1	Penley	(H)	3-2
Mar 8	Lex XI Res	(H)	12-0
Mar 15	Llangollen (LCF-1L)	(A)	0-0
Mar 22	Llangollen (LCF-2L)	(H)	0-0
TBA	British Aerospace	(A)	0-0
TBA	British Aerospace	(A)	0-0
TBA	Cefn Druids Res.	(A)	0-0
TBA	Chirk A.A.A.	(A)	0-0
TBA	Corwen	(H)	0-0
TBA	Gresford Athletic	(H)	0-0
TBA	Llangollen	(A)	0-0
TBA	Lay Welfare	(A)	0-0
TBA	Rhos Aelwyd Res.	(A)	0-0
TBA	Rhylton Villa	(A)	0-0
TBA	Ruthin Town Res.	(H)	0-0

All home matches played at Lindisfarne College, near Wrexham. Kick-off times do vary between 2.00 p.m. and 3.00 p.m. so please contact the Club Office for confirmation.

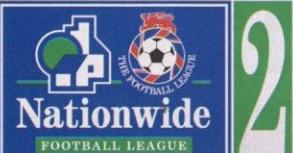


■ Gareth Owen is at full stretch to take the ball off Grimsby's Gary Childs.



■ Gareth Owen, who was in fine form in the middle of the park,

Council Concerned over Groundshare



2

FACTS & FIGURES

(Endsleigh League games only)

Highest Attendance:

18,674 Bristol City v. Bristol Rovers 15.12.96
 16,186 Burnley v. Preston North End 25.1.97
 14,626 Preston N.E. v. Blackpool 13.12.96
 14,109 Watford v. Luton Town 29.10.96

Lowest Attendance:

1,610 Shrewsbury Town v. AFC Bournemouth 3.12.96
 2,042 Shrewsbury Town v. Gillingham 15.10.96
 2,133 Rotherham Utd v. Stockport County 2.12.96
 2,136 York City v. Walsall 11.2.97

Highest Home Score:

6-0 Luton Town v. Crewe Alex. 14.12.96
 5-0 Bristol City v. Luton Town 27.8.96
 5-0 Burnley v. Peterborough Utd. 8.3.97

Highest Away Win:

4-1 Brentford @ Plymouth Argyle 26.12.96
 3-0 Brentford @ Shrewsbury Town 31.8.96
 3-0 Luton Town @ Shrewsbury Town 12.10.96

Most Goals in a Match:

5 Paul Barnes (Burnley)
 3 Carl Asaba (Brentford)
 3 Ify Onuora (Gillingham)
 3 Shaun Goater (Bristol City)
 3 Tony Thorpe (Luton Town) - Twice
 3 Tony Ellis (Blackpool)
 3 David Oldfield (Luton Town)
 3 Paul Barnes (Burnley)

LEADING SCORERS

21 Paul Barnes (Burnley)
 20 Tony Thorpe (Luton Town)
 19 Carl Asaba (Brentford)
 16 Shaun Goater (Bristol City)
 16 Ian Stevens (Shrewsbury Town)
 13 Brett Angell (Stockport County)
 13 Phil Clarkson (Blackpool)
 13 Kyle Lightbourne (Walsall)

All statistics up to and including
 11th March, 1997.

Gillingham's proposed groundsharing arrangement with crisis-club Brighton and Hove Albion has hit a new snag with the local Gillingham Council objecting to the Seagulls sharing Priestfield Stadium from next season.

The council have written to the Football League expressing the concerns of some of the towns residents and enclosing a petition from the locals protesting about possible crowd disorder at the extra matches. The council itself claims to have no powers to refuse to sanction the groundshare but is appealing to the Football League in a bid to prevent it.

In another twist Gills Chairman Paul Scally has asked the Brighton supporters' action groups to ask Seagulls fans if they want to see their team move to Kent next season, after the Goldstone Ground is finally vacated at the end of the current campaign. However some of them have already been critical of Scally claiming that he should scrap the agreement himself and not leave it to the supporters to force the change.

Scally has also called on the Football League to outlaw the idea of lower division clubs being used as feeders to the Premiership and First Division side. He claims, "It could prove a disaster in the long term. Clubs need the incentive to climb through the divisions."

WARNOCK OUT AT ARGYLE - WARNOCK IN AT LATICI

The sacking of popular Plymouth Argyle manager Neil Warnock has caused an outcry amongst the clubs loyal supporters who immediately launched a campaign for his re-instatement. However, it was all to no avail as Warnock was recently appointed manager of struggling First Division side Oldham Athletic.

In only 18 months at the Devon outfit the former Scarborough, Notts County and Huddersfield boss turned the club's fortunes around and lead them to promotion from Division Three via a Wembley play-off victory against Darlington last May.

Despite a less than successful season so far, with the Pilgrims firmly rooted in the bottom half of the division, according to a local opinion poll an astounding 90 percent of the Argyle fans wanted their favourite back in the clubs hot-seat.

To add to Warnock's woe the news of his sacking was brought to him by unpopular chairman Dan McAuley via his mobile phone as he was driving down the motorway towards Home Park early one morning, but the chairman has since been plagued by fans protesting at his decision.

Warnock's former assistant Mick Jones is currently in temporary charge of team affairs but, according to recent press reports, is about to be offered the position on a permanent basis.

BROWNING JUMPS THE PIRATE SHIP

Bristol Rovers' Welsh international midfielder Marcus Browning has left the Pirates to join First Division Huddersfield United in a deal believed to be worth around £500,000.



The 25-year-old Bristolian career has seen him rise from being a trainee at Rovers to making his Wales debut in the 3-0 international friendly defeat against Italy in Terni in November 1995. A confident attack-minded midfielder, Browning once had a spell on loan at Hereford United in September 1992, making 7 league appearances and finding the back of the net 5 times, before returning to the Twerton Park club where he went on to play more than 130 first team games.

At the McAlpine stadium he will link up with former team-mate Marcus Stewart, who moved to the Yorkshire club in the summer for a fee of £1.5 million, and new boss Brian Horton is obviously excited about his latest capture: "He's a strong player that breaks well from midfield."

SHAKERS REJECT BID FOR LUCKETTI

Huddersfield boss Brian Horton's admiration of the stars of the Second Division is obviously not confined to Marcus Browning, as he has had a bid of £500,000 for defender Chris Lucketti rejected by Bury.

The 25-year-old has spent his career to date kicking around the lower divisions with Rochdale, Stockport and Halifax before a £50,000 move to the Shakers suddenly thrust the classy defender into the limelight.

A number of clubs have been reported to be taking an interest in the powerful central-defender over the last couple of seasons and he appeared set for a move to Crystal Palace last term until the deal suddenly fell through.

A very popular figure at Gigg Lane, he has been voted 'Player of the Season' for the past 2 years, the club may soon find it hard to hang on to their star man with Barnsley also reported to be keen to land Lucketti to improve their chances of a Premiership place next season. However manager Stan Ternent is determined not to sell the player at below the current market value: "Huddersfield have offered £500,000 for Lucketti but it is not enough."

Around the grounds

A.F.C. BOURNEMOUTH

The Cherries have been told by the Football Association that they may not form another company and start the club up again, and this has lead to claims in some quarters that this could now spell the end of the South Coast outfit. The F.A. have ruled that the club can carry on playing out its fixtures until the end of the season after receiving assurances that they were financially viable to do so.

BLACKPOOL

The Seasiders have loaned Tranmere Rovers' inexperienced full-back Paul Jones for a month. The Liverpool-born youngster has yet to start a league game for the Birkenhead club, who he joined as a trainee before securing a professional contract. It is the second time this season that Blackpool have turned to Tranmere to borrow one of their players, with striker Billy Woods spending some time at Bloomfield Road during Christmas.

BRENTFORD

The Bees have improved their chances of First Division football next season by borrowing Queens Park Rangers' exciting forward Steve Slade for a month. Rangers snapped up the 21-year-old from Tottenham in the summer but he has found it difficult to break into the first team at Loftus Road.

BRISTOL CITY

City have announced plans to screen the forthcoming Bristol derby with neighbours Rovers at the Memorial Ground back to Ashton Gate due to the limited number of Robins fans at the Pirates ground is able to accommodate.

Manager Joe Jordan has rejected a request from Cardiff City to take defender Mark Shill on loan. It is reported that First Division Oldham had the former Yeovil Town man watched in a recent reserve outing and could be set to move to secure his signature.

BURY

Manager Stan Ternent has extended the loan period for Manchester United starlet John O'Kane for a second month, although United boss Alex Ferguson has insisted

on an instant recall for the youngster should the need arise.

CHESTERFIELD

The Spireites have splashed out some of the money gained from the superb cup-run on Huddersfield striker Iain Dunn. The 26-year-old was previously at Saltergate during the 1991/2 season, scoring once in 13 appearances for the club, and he has returned in exchange for a £25,000 fee. He started his career at York City and has also served non-leaguers Goole Town during an up-and-down career.

CREWE ALEXANDRA

Experienced goalkeeper Mark Gayle has joined Trevor Francis' out-of-form Birmingham City for a month to act as cover for Ian Bennett. The Blues regular reserve goalkeeper Steve Sutton is out injured and Francis moved quickly to secure cover in case anything happened to the former Peterborough stopper.

NOTTS COUNTY

New manager Sam Allardyce has continued his rebuilding plans at Meadow Lane by paying Leyton Orient £100,000 for defender Ian Hendon. The 25-year-old began his career at Tottenham before joining the O's in 1993 following a loan spell at Brisbane Road during the 1991/2 season, he is a former England Youth and Under-21 international.

PRESTON NORTH END

The club have parted company with trialist Darren Beckford after a short spell. The former Port Vale and Norwich forward came to the club from Scottish Premier Division side Hearts but, after just 3 short substitute appearances, is now looking for another opportunity elsewhere.

SHREWSBURY TOWN

The Shrews attempts to sign Barry Town forward Tony Bird were rejected by the former Cardiff City man. The League of Wales clubs manager Gary Barnett explained the reasons why: "Shrewsbury expressed an interest but Tony felt that was not the right time. We are still chasing the League of Wales title and have the prospect of playing in the European Cup next season."

STOCKPORT COUNTY

Striker Alun Armstrong is reported to be attracting interest from his native north-east with both Sunderland and Newcastle reported to be watching his progress. The blonde haired forward left us in no doubt about which club he would prefer to move to: "It's great to hear from Sunderland but I support Newcastle".

WALSALL

The Saddlers have rejected an offer of £400,000 from Premier League strugglers Coventry City for leading scorer Kyle Lightbourne. However the Bermudian international still seems set to leave the Bescot Stadium after rejecting a new deal with the club but maintains that he will still give his all for Walsall while he remains a player there: "The speculation won't affect me and I shall be doing my best to keep our push for promotion going".

WATFORD

The Hornets have given seven trainees full professional contracts including the speedy forward Gifton Noel-Williams who has been earning rave reviews for his performances this season.

WYCOMBE WANDERERS

Former Overton United defender Matt Crossley has joined big-spending GM Vauxhall Conference side Rushden and Diamonds on a months loan.

YORK CITY

The club have again splashed out, this time spending £55,000 to bring forward Rodney Rowe to Bootham Crescent from Yorkshire rivals Huddersfield Town to partner David Rush, a recent purchase from Oxford. The fee for the 21-year-old could rise by another £25,000 depending on the number of appearances he makes. The club suffered a big blow when they lost the services of star midfielder Nigel Pepper to Yorkshire rivals Bradford City for £100,000. He joined the Minstermen from his home-town team Rotherham in 1990 and scored 41 goals in 281 appearances for the club. There was also reported to be interest from Burnley and Notts County for the free-scoring midfielder.

Nationwide and The Football League - A winning team -

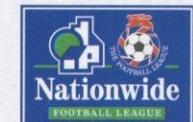
Nationwide Building Society is delighted to be sponsoring The Football League and is proud to be associated with the national game. Millions of people around the country enjoy League games, with an increasing number of families attending matches.

Similarly, Nationwide has a relationship with many households in the UK - around one in four. It looks after the financial needs of over seven million people and is the UK's largest building society intending to remain customer owned, committed to putting customers first.

Nationwide is an organisation with strong roots in the community and we are always looking for new ways to promote awareness of the benefits we can offer and to strengthen relationships with customers even further. With 72 league

clubs and 630 Nationwide branches throughout England and Wales, we are looking forward to working with The League and its member clubs to support community initiatives and forge even closer links with local people. Wherever you find a football team you'll find a Nationwide team.

Nationwide's philosophy is to be "in tune with people", and we believe that the help we can give in investing in football's future will further demonstrate this and underline our general commitment to meeting customers' needs.



We would like to take
 this opportunity to wish your
 club a successful season.

MATCH**DAY**

Referee:
Eddie Lomas
(Manchester)

A 42-year-old Capital Projects Manager with Salford N.H.S. Trust, Mr Lomas commenced refereeing in 1974 in the local Eccles and District League. Four years later he gained his Class One Status and, after nine years on the Linesmen's List, was promoted to the Football League Referees' List at the start of the 1993-94 season. The reserve official at last season's Auto Windscreen Shield Final, he has officiated in several European club matches including running the line in the 1993 European Champions League match between A.C. Milan and F.C. Porto at the San Siro Stadium. Chairman of the Eccles and District Referees' Association, he also enjoys golf, cycling and gardening.

Assistant Referees:

M.Singh (Bilston)
A.R.Wood (Birkenhead)

Reserve official:**M.Lyth (St.Helens)****MATCH SPONSORS****J.R. Boyle (Wrexham) Ltd**

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MATCHBALL SPONSOR**Wyn Owens****NEXT HOME MATCH****v. YORK CITY**

Nationwide League Division Two

Saturday, 15th March, 1997

Kick-Off: 3.00pm

**TEAMS****WREXHAM 2**

1. **Andy Marriott**
 2. **Mark McGregor**
 3. **Deryn Brace**
 4. **Bryan Hughes**
 5. **Tony Humes**
 6. **Brian Carey**
 7. **Martyn Chalk**
 8. **Kevin Russell**
 9. **Karl Connolly**
 10. **Steve Watkin**
 11. **Peter Ward**
- Sub.**
- Sub.**
- Sub.**

**Peter Ward****LUTON TOWN 1**

1. **Ian Feuer**
 2. **Julian James**
 3. **Darren Patterson**
 4. **Gary Waddock**
 5. **Steve Davis**
 6. **Marvin Johnson**
 7. **Ceri Hughes**
 8. **Graham Alexander**
 9. **David Oldfield**
 10. **Tony Thorpe**
 11. **Paul Showler**
- Sub.**
- Sub.**
- Sub.**

**Steve Davis**