

U's Review

THE OFFICIAL MATCHDAY MAGAZINE OF COLCHESTER UNITED FC

Issue No. 12
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Richard Garcia makes goalscoring return



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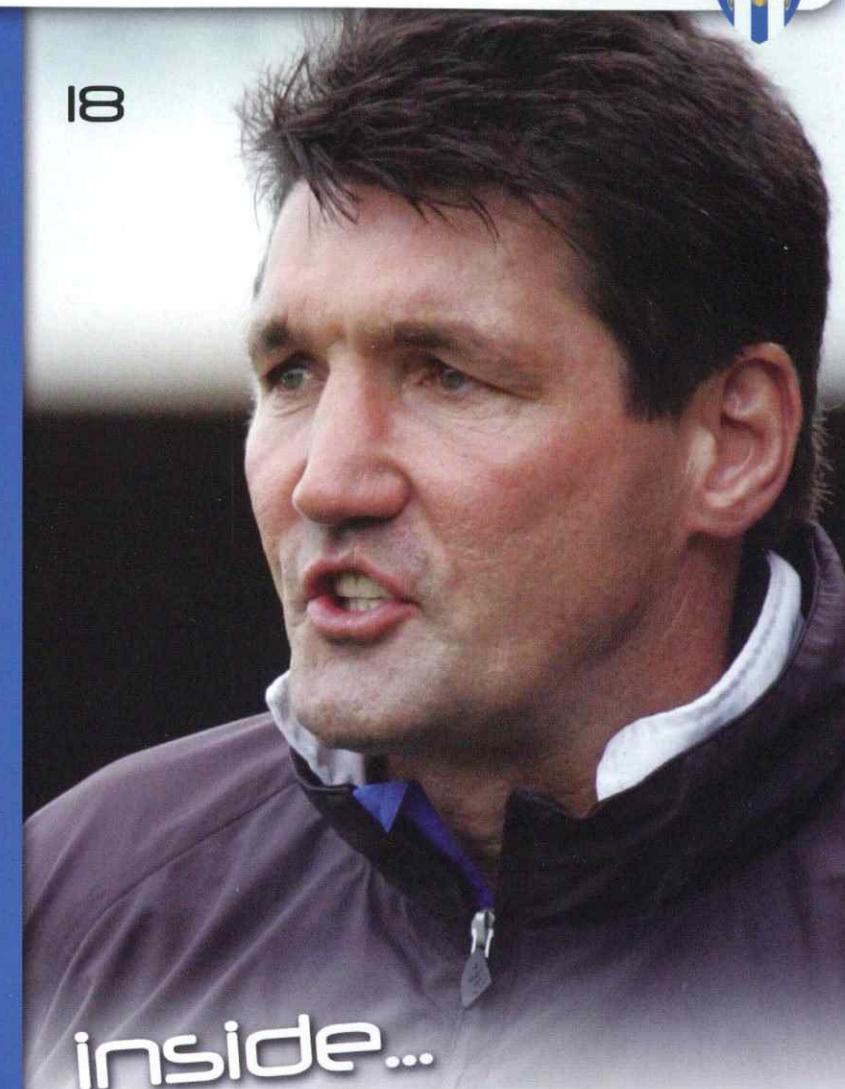
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PROGRAMME:

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Design: Square One (01462 672633)
Print: Yellow (020 8293 9386)*

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geraint williams

Welcome to Layer Road for this afternoon's game and I hope that everyone had a happy and safe Christmas.

Welcome to Mike Newell, the staff, players and supporters of Luton Town.

Due to Christmas printing schedules, I have had to pen these notes ahead of our trip to Preston. Hopefully you're reading this with another three points secured on our travels.

Our last home game saw us get off to a very fast start. We always try to get a positive start and Jamie made sure that happened against Stoke with a good goal within 90 seconds of kick off.

Important

We always tell the players to look for shooting opportunities in the final third and Jamie doesn't need telling twice. We felt that first goal was going to be very important, as their defensive record is the best in the league – to go behind would have meant a long afternoon trying to break them down.

Us scoring meant Stoke having to come out and attack us, which to be fair they did, but that meant them leaving gaps at the back and Jamie scored a real poacher's goal when Richard Garcia helped the ball behind their back four.

Half time saw us going in 2-0 up, but we were a bit disappointed with the amount of shots we let them have. I felt we needed to up the tempo, go for a third goal and control possession of the ball.

I was delighted with the way the players performed in the second half. Richard scored for the second time since his return to the side and everyone raised their game. Over the ninety minutes, Dean only had one save to make from a second half free kick.

Ready

Hogan, Johnnie and Jamie all got on and it's important that the whole squad are ready to play a part during the festive period.

Christmas is a great time for families, for a professional footballer it is their busiest time of the year. Spare a thought for all the lads, who yesterday rushed to open presents with their children before jumping in their cars to make sure they were at Layer Road for a 9am training session.

There are many pluses to life in football, Christmas Day training is not



● Jamie Cureton — quick off the mark

one of them. Players and staff need understanding spouses and patient children!

It's another full house at Layer Road this afternoon, so once again Merry Christmas to all of you. I'm sure you'll make yourselves heard and cheer the boys on towards another victory.

Geraint Williams

"We always tell the players to look for shooting opportunities in the final third and Jamie doesn't need telling twice."

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recently...

comings and goings, news and views, from layer road

05.12.06

The U's fundraising quest is backed by Coventry midfielder Jay Tabb, who has become good friends with the Begg Family.

Jay struck up a friendship with Emily and her good friend Madelaine Burke, as the two girls underwent treatment for leukaemia in London.

And, despite moving up to the Midlands in the summer, he kept in touch to keep up to date with their progress in recent months.

"It all started when Martin Allen received a letter from Maddy's dad, who asked whether we might help with some fundraising for the hospital," he tells CU-FC.com.

"I went along to see the girls at the hospital with Martin and I struck up a friendship with Maddy during my visit.

"We decided to keep in touch and I spoke to her quite regularly on the phone and via text and, on the second or third time I went there, she introduced me to Emily.

"We hung out on the ward and played some pool and basically, over the past year or so, we've stayed in touch. When Colchester came to Coventry, I phoned Emily up and organised some tickets for her, too."

"To be honest, I was touched and humbled

by their bravery," he adds. "They were a real inspiration together and it puts life into perspective.

"It makes you realise there are more important things in life and to make sure that you never let little things get to you."

The U's players re-recording of Up The U's is on sale today and it is just the start of a huge fundraising effort.

Jay admits he is impressed with the efforts of the Layer Road lads: "I really hope people get behind the cause and the Colchester boys deserve for this to be a big success. Fingers crossed that this will raise a lot of money for the Teenage Cancer Trust."

Fans are reminded that they can back the U's by donating at www.justgiving.com/CUFCplayers.

06.12.06

Chris Iwelumo's performances in November see him make the Actim Index Championship team of the month.

His haul of goals, including four in the win over Hull City, see him named in the side alongside Birmingham City's Nicklas Bendtner.

The Actim Team of the Month is compiled



Layer Road Diary

27.12.06

The first priority group for Ipswich Town ticket sales are available. See page 78 for more details.

30.12.06

The U's first team host Wolves in their final game of 2006. Limited tickets are remaining for this match, call 0871 226 2161 for more details.

01.1.07

Next up for the U's is a trip to QPR. Tickets will be on sale on the day, but for more details, see page 81.

by calculating the highest-ranked players in November from each position in the Actim Index - The Official Player Ratings of the Coca-Cola Championship.

The Actim Index ranks players using Actim Stats according to their performance, both by position and overall.

Also in the team are Stephen Bywater (Derby County), Lee Hendrie, Danny Higginbotham and Darel Russell (all Stoke City), Gareth Bale and Chris Baird (both Southampton), Radhi Jaidi (Birmingham City), Jimmy Smith (QPR) and Giles Barnes (Derby County).

09.12.06

U's defender Lawrie Wilson joins Welling on loan late on Friday - but gets off to a bad start with the Conference South side.

The former Charlton loanee heads to Park View Road ahead of their match against Cambridge City, with a view to spending a month on loan with the non-league outfit.

Wilson (pictured left) put straight into the team for their weekend fixture, but sees red against City as he was sent off after just 27 minutes for a professional foul on Cambridge forward Lee Roache.

His team hold out for a 1-0 win, though, and currently sit second in the Conference South table.

He does better in his second match as the Wings draw 0-0 in their FA Trophy tie against Basingstoke, winning the replay 2-0.

07



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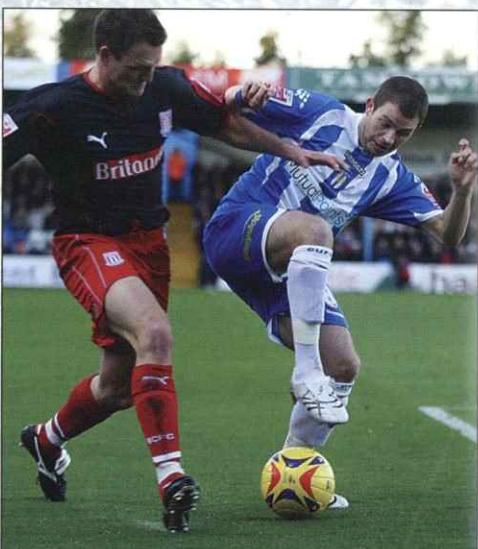
a look back at...
U's 3 stoke city 0



Celebration time as Jamie Cureton notches the opening goal



Richard Garcia strikes for goal



Cureton on defensive duty



Kem Izzet skips past this challenge



Kevin Watson tracks Darel Russell

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U's subs: Ephraim for Garcia 77, Jackson for Watson 85, Guy for Iwelumo 88.

Potters subs: Berger for Brammer 65, Pericard for Sidibe 69, Eustace for Russell 75.

clock watch...

15:02 The U's take a sensational early lead as Jamie Cureton contrives some space on the edge of the box before firing home past Steve Simonsen.

15:10 Stoke have a goal disallowed as Mamady Sidibe's tap in is ruled out for offside, what is later revealed to be an incorrect decision.

15:16 Jamie Cureton grabs his second of the afternoon to double the U's advantage, tucking home from close range after Richard Garcia flicks the ball over the City defence.

15:29 Lee Hendrie is left with his head in his hands as he fires over the bar from a good position from just inside the box.

16:07 Greg Halford ripples the side netting as his free kick from 25 yards curls just wide.

16:17 The U's advantage extends to three goals as Richard Garcia rises highest to head home past Steve Simonsen as Kem Izzet and Michael Duberry follow the ball in.

16:36 Dean Gerken is forced into his first serious save of the day, as he scrambles to his right to claw Patrik Berger's free kick away from danger.

turning point: The opening goal. The visitors arrived with a rock solid defence and would have hoped to establish a foothold in the game, but Jamie Cureton's strike changed the balance of affairs almost immediately.

man of the match: Jamie Cureton





visiting the U's...

luton town

Whilst Colchester United are flying high in the Championship, the visit of Luton Town to Layer Road will be a reminder that life after promotion is not always plain sailing.

Like the U's this season, the Hatters enjoyed a hugely positive time in their first six months in the second tier of English football to ensure that they earned a second season at this level.

However, the second half of the campaign proved to be slightly tougher and, after a bright start this time around, it has been a difficult few weeks for Mike Newell and his side.

Leading up to their match at home to Coventry City on Saturday, the Kenilworth Road side had lost eight of their previous ten games, including all five of their most recent fixtures on the road.

It has been a run of results that Newell admitted were the most difficult of his managerial career to date but, despite a 2-1 defeat at Sunderland a fortnight ago, a win and a draw in their home games leading up to the Coventry game have at least seen the points tally ticking over again.

Issue

The away form will be the next issue to be addressed for the Bedfordshire side, with their last away point a 0-0 draw against Hull in October and their last away win coming a fortnight earlier at Barnsley.

The goal in the defeat at the Stadium of Light in Luton's last away game was only their eighth in eleven matches on their travels.

And whilst the team have struggled to hit the back of the net, one Town player will also be hoping that this afternoon's game marks a positive end to a difficult year.

Hatters striker Warren Feeney is yet to hit the back of the net in 2006 in what has been a stop start twelve months for the former Bournemouth man.

"I don't worry about it to be honest, because if you do it gets in your head. People are going



● Mike Newell - confident fortunes will turn around

to say things but to me it's water off a duck's back. I know eventually it will come," he told Luton's official website.

"I'm big enough and old enough so I don't let it annoy me. I'm here to play football and I'm here to score goals, but if I don't, I don't. I just want to get back into the side and get a run of games and take it from there."

Another player who is now chomping at the bit to get back into the starting eleven is defender Sol Davis (left). The full back suffered a stroke before the

Ipswich Town game earlier this year but is back in the fold after a reserve team game at the start of December.

And, having seen his player make a remarkable comeback, boss Newell admits the former Swindon man could soon be in first team contention.

"We haven't been told by the specialists to put the reins on Sol, so I don't see why he can't be back for the Christmas period, which would be phenomenal," he said.

"If I had been asked six weeks ago, I wouldn't have put any money on Sol coming back this season. It has been a massive shock and a surprise to us all that Sol is back."



The last ten years

1996/97	Division Two	3rd
1997/98	Division Two	17th
1998/99	Division Two	12th
1999/00	Division Two	13th
2000/01	Division Two	22nd (R)
2001/02	Division Three	2nd (P)
2002/03	Division Two	9th
2003/04	Division Two	10th
2004/05	League One	1st (P)
2005/06	Championship	10th

Last time at Layer Road

22.01.05 U's 0 Luton 0

The Hatters arrive at Layer Road looking to step up their promotion quest but, on a relatively quiet afternoon, neither side are able to break the deadlock as the game finishes goalless.

Last time at Kenilworth Road

12.09.06 Luton 1 U's 1

This was the Aidan Davison Show. The Hatters had taken the lead through Sam Parkin, but the U's equalised eight minutes later through Jamie Cureton's strike from the edge of the box. The second half saw Luton repeatedly knock at the visitors door, but Davison repelled everything thrown at him with a string of excellent saves.

the likely line-up

the hatters' last xi

Dean Kiely

Hugely experienced goalkeeper who joined the Hatters on loan at the end of November 2006 to cover an injury to Marlon Beresford. The Irish international made the temporary switch to Kenilworth Road after finding first team opportunities at Portsmouth limited.

The 36-year-old needs just another eleven league games to make it 600 league appearances.

Dean Morgan

Dean became an instant favourite with The Hatters' faithful after his 90th minute winner in the 3-2 victory over Southampton in August 2005.

Morgan moved to Kenilworth Stadium from Reading in July 2005 after seeing his opportunities limited at the Madjeski Stadium. The former U's striker scored three league goals in 13 starting appearances for the Royals.



Kevin Foley

Kevin is a talented full-back who came through the junior ranks at Kenilworth Road. Kevin made his debut for the Hatters in October 2002 and has gone on to make over 100 appearance since then. Foley is a Republic of Ireland U21s international and his performances at that level have prompted Steve Staunton, the Republic of Ireland manager, to call him up to the senior game and Foley was named as a substitute in a friendly international against Chile.

Carlos Edwards

Midfielder Carlos signed for the Hatters at the start of this season from Wrexham on a free transfer. Edwards spent five seasons at Wrexham, helping them win the LDV Vans title and is a pacey midfielder who has given Newell plenty of attacking options.

In the summer of 2006, Edwards became the first Luton player since Mal Donaghy in 1982 to represent his county in the World Cup Finals.

Ahmet Brkovic

Ahmet is a tidy and hardworking member of the squad who had an inspirational season during our championship success in League One, scoring 16 goals from midfield, having arrived from Leyton Orient.

Brkovic is more suited to a right midfield role but is equally comfortable playing on the left, a position he filled on many occasions last season.

Leon Barnett

Local lad Leon Barnett made a great impression in a record-breaking first season of full-time training at the club, making his senior debut as a 16-year-old.

A versatile player, his preferred position is central defence, but he can also fill in at a full-back. Injuries in the centre of Luton's defence last season gave the youngster the opportunity to show what he was capable of and made a name for himself in the Championship.

David Bell

Talented young midfielder David Bell signed a three and a half year contract with the Hatters in mid-January 2006 after joining from Rushden & Diamonds.

He has been capped by Republic of Ireland at U19s and U21s level, and his versatility is key - he can play in the centre, left and right side of midfield and his performances for Rushden led to two trial spells with Middlesbrough.

Star Performer

Rowan Vine

The Basingstoke-born striker initially joined Town on a three-month loan deal from Premiership Portsmouth, but he is now a Luton player having signed a three-year contract following his impressive season during the club's League One success. Another former U's player, he scored ten times in 42 games whilst at Layer Road.



making up the numbers

the hatters' squad

Player	Nationality	Position	Date of Birth	Previous Clubs	LTFC Apps (Goals)
Calvin Andrew	English	Striker	19.12.86	From trainee, Grimsby T, Bristol C	12 (1)
Zac Barrett	English	Goalkeeper	25.05.88	From trainee	0 (0)
Marlon Beresford	English	Goalkeeper	02.09.69	Sheffield W, Bury, Northampton T, Crewe Alex, Burnley, M'brough, Wolves, York C, Bradford C, Barnsley	121 (0)
Adam Boyd	English	Striker	25.05.82	Hartlepool U, Boston U	15 (2)
Dean Brill	English	Goalkeeper	02.12.85	From trainee	15 (0)
Chris Coyne	Australian	Defender	28.12.78	West Ham, Brentford, Southend U, Dundee	211 (15)
Sol Davis	English	Defender	04.09.79	Swindon T	169 (2)
Peter Holmes	English	Midfielder	18.11.80	Sheffield W	125 (12)
Keith Keane	Irish	Midfielder	20.11.86	From trainee	53 (2)
Richard Langley	Jamaican	Midfielder	27.12.79	QPR, Cardiff C	14 (1)
Michael Leary	English	Midfielder	17.04.83	From trainee, Walsall, Torquay U	31 (2)
Stephen O'Leary	English	Midfielder	02.02.85	From trainee	32 (2)
Sam Parkin	English	Striker	14.03.81	Chelsea, Millwall, Wycombe W, Oldham A, Northampton T, Swindon T, Ipswich Town	8 (1)
Danny Stevens	English	Midfielder	26.11.86	From trainee	1 (0)
Paul Underwood	English	Defender	16.08.73	Rushden & Diamonds	72 (5)

away support

a view from the other side

What have you made of Luton's season so far?

We started well and had some great results early on culminating in our 5-1 thrashing of Leeds. Things took a turn for the worse when Sol Davis had his stroke on the way to Ipswich which knocked the stuffing out of us and we went on an awful run. We have picked up in recent weeks though.

Which of the players have impressed the most in the games to date?

Former Col U boy Rowan Vine hadn't been prolific in previous seasons but started banging them in straight away this year and after losing Steve Howard in the close season that was badly needed. Leon Barnett has gained a lot of experience from last year and has come on in leaps and bounds this season.

What needs to change to lift the team back up the table?

No more injuries,

strengthening the small squad in January and improving our away form starting from today.

Having played most sides, who are your tips for promotion?

Difficult to say, it's the tightest league in years but Preston were strong at their place although we beat them at home. Derby have been the best side to come to Kenilworth Road this year.

What do you expect from Colchester United and what do you think this afternoon's score will be?

I think they'll have a similar season to the one we had last year. Excellent start but once injuries and suspensions hit a small squad it's difficult to stay in the hunt and they'll just miss out on the play offs. Of course Luton will win this afternoon though - 2-1.



● Questions answered today by Scott Wootton, a Hatters season ticket holder since 1981, currently residing in the main stand.

His favourite player during that time was Ricky Hill and he says his most memorable moment was: "Winning the Littlewoods Cup in 1988.

"That whole period of being a Hatters fan in the 80s was brilliant, heights that are unlikely to be touched again, although we live in hope!"

talking to... aaron skelton

Despite living down on the South Coast, there will be a familiar name keeping abreast of how today's game pans out as he is an ex player of both teams.

Aaron Skelton started and ended his football career with the Hatters, but spent his most productive years here at Layer Road in Colchester United colours. In fact, he played around five times as many games for the U's in his four years in North Essex than he did for today's visitors in his seven years at Kenilworth Road.

Aaron joined the Luton ranks as a youth team player before signing as a professional in December 1992 while David Pleat was in charge. Unfortunately, injuries hampered the midfielder, with operations restricting him to a handful of games for the first team in that first spell. Speaking to U's Review, Aaron explained about his start in football and the injury problems he had at Luton as a young player hoping to break into the game.

"I went to Luton straight from school and



about eighteen months into my two year youth contract, I was signed as a professional. I felt I was doing well at the time and was playing a few games in the reserves. Then I seemed to be injured more than I was fit and missed big chunks of the seasons, mainly due to operations on my right knee and then associated problems as I recovered each time. It was very frustrating and I started to feel like I needed a fresh start."

The opportunity for that fresh start came in the summer of 1997, when the U's came in for him and he jumped at the chance, saying: "It was the best thing that could have happened at the time. I wanted a chance to resurrect my career and a change of scenery and a change of luck came about with my move to Essex. I had some great times and made some great friends in my time at Colchester before I headed back to Luton for the remainder of my professional career."

In a repeat of his early days at Kenilworth Road, injuries once again stopped Aaron playing as many games as he would have liked, and he called it a day in 2003. Since then, he has kept a close eye on both teams fortunes and sees Colchester United mirroring Luton's first season back in the Championship. He also talked about the way injuries and loss of players and form has affected the Hatters this time round.

"Last season, Luton surprised a lot of people by doing so well straight after getting promoted and that has been exactly like Colchester this season. Not many so called big teams have got any points at Layer Road but they may be better prepared when they visit next year. After exceeding most fans' expectations last season, this season has been a bit of a struggle, with important players being sold in the summer and injuries to others as the season has gone on."

"The incident with Sol Davis having a stroke on the way to the Ipswich match would certainly have affected the other players that weekend but he would have wanted them to forget about it soon after. He seems to have made a good comeback and it is great that he is bouncing back a lot quicker than most people thought he would so hopefully, their form will pick up in the second half of the season."

Finally, we nearly managed to get Aaron to admit which way he thought the game would go, with him tottering on the fence by saying: "Because Luton are struggling for points, it would be nice if they won but I am still great mates with Karl Duguid and had a great time at the U's so it would be good to see them continue their good form. Maybe I should go for a draw."





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all the facts and figures...

a matter of stat

U's Media Manager Matt Hudson takes a look at the statistics for this afternoon's game against Luton Town...

Having recorded a 3-0 win against Stoke City in their last match at Layer Road, the U's matched their tally for consecutive home league wins picked up during their promotion season in 2005/6.

The side from last season went on to win twelve games in a row in all competitions on home territory, before the run was brought to a halt with a 0-0 draw against struggling Walsall in February.

Last season and this, though, goalless draws have been something of a rarity for the U's in front of their own supporters. In fact, the only 0-0s in the club's first ever Championship season came away from home in the creditable points collected at Leicester City and, more recently, high flying Cardiff City.

At home, it has been a continual goalfest and the last five home games have seen the U's score 2, 3, 3, 5 and 3 times! In fact, in the nine successive victories, Geraint Williams' men have scored an average of three goals a game to send packed Layer Road crowds home with big smiles on their faces.

Fortune

Luton have had similar good fortune in front of goal in front of their own fans, scoring at nearly two goals a game in their twelve home matches to date. However, on the road, it has been a tougher story with only eight goals scored on their travels in the first half of the season.

That includes a run of just two goals in their last seven away games as the Hatters recent form has seen them slide into the bottom third of the table. The four points collected at home to Preston and Southend have stemmed the flow, though, as 2007 approaches.

That away day scoring tally is certainly not the worst in the division either. Southend's blank at Kenilworth Road, along with their recent result at Layer Road, have both contributed to the Shrimpers scoring just three goals in their away games to date.

Of course, goals haven't always been free flowing away from home for the U's, but their recent treble up at Selhurst Park have shown that Geraint Williams' men are starting to find their feet on the road as well.

If Luton are to kick on



Stat Pack

MANAGERIAL RECORDS

Geraint Williams

Played 22 Won 10 Drawn 4 Lost 8 For 36 Against 26 Av Pts/game 1.55 Biggest Win(s) Colchester 4 Shelf Wed 0 (18/10/2006). Biggest Loss(es) Leeds 3 Colchester 0 (11/11/2006). 5 Luton 0 (29/10/2006).

MANAGER HEAD TO HEAD RECORD

Played ... | Geraint Williams 0 Mike Newell 0 Draws ... | Goals 1 Goals 1

Player with the most...

shots

shots on target

shots off target

assists

crosses

fouls

free-kicks-won

gaining a point

lossing a point

win by > one

win by < one

loss by > one

loss by < one

win by 1

loss by 1

win by 2

loss by 2

win by 3

loss by 3

win by 4

loss by 4

win by 5

loss by 5

win by 6

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loss by 27

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ask doogie



How good was it to see the U's in sixth place after the win against Stoke City? **Nell Hurst**

It was great to be honest. We turn the TV on in the changing room as soon as we can to get all the results and when the table came up, it made happy reading. I know we have shocked a few people with how well we have done so far but there is a long way to go yet. We have had some great results, especially at home so long may it continue.

Whenever a supposedly big team loses at Layer Road, it always seems to be portrayed as them having a bad day - do we get the credit our performances deserve? **Lee Kingston**

Even though we have this great home record, we still seem to be under-estimated by a lot of people. Harry Redknapp does his tips on a Saturday morning in the papers and still keeps on tipping us to lose. Players that have played at a higher level do seem to find it hard to adapt to Layer Road for some reason but we are playing some great football. I suppose the press see these big name players as more likely to sell newspapers so look at the game from that perspective but we will carry on as we have done and hope the run continues.

What were you saying to the linesman when he went down injured in the match against Stoke? **Graham Franks**

I was worried about him because he looked in a lot of pain when it happened. I went over to see if he was OK and as soon as we knew it wasn't too serious, he pulled his hamstring, the banter started. The referee and a couple of Stoke players joined in as well so he was getting stick from all sides before the stretcher took him off down the tunnel. I hope he gets fit soon and is back in action before too long.

How hard is it to get through the festive period of games? **Bob Jarman**

Physically, it's tough but we've known it's coming up for a long time and we certainly work hard enough on our fitness to be able to cope. It's the same every year though and it's the same for all the clubs so we just have to get on with it and try and pick up as many points as possible.

We have got nearly everyone fit, Marino is the only one out, and should we get injuries, we have ready-made replacements in every position.

How beneficial to the team is it to have two strikers already in double figures? **Paul Oaten**

Obviously it helps massively and Jamie and Chris have had a great first half of the season. The good thing is that they are both hungry to score more because they both feel that they could have scored more than the twenty-two they have scored. They clicked straight away as a partnership when Jamie came on loan last season and that has continued into this campaign. If we continue to create chances, we know that the two of them will put a good percentage of them away.

Got a Question?

You can quiz Doogie for the Wolves game by sending in your questions today! Simply e-mail in to editor@colchesterunited.net with the posers you'd like to see asked!

17

taking the mick

"The most remarkable team in the Football League" acclaimed one newspaper after the U's 3-0 win in their last home game against Stoke City.

Slowly but surely, the football fraternity has woken up to the incredible 2006 enjoyed by Colchester United. But whilst some within the camp are pleasantly surprised at how things have gone in the past twelve months, assistant boss Mick Harford believes that the U's successes are fully merited.

"Am I surprised at how we've done? No, not when I watch the lads and how they perform in training, week in week out," he told U's Review.

"I think we've shown ourselves to be more than good enough and George and myself have trust and belief in the players to continue to do the right things. After a tough start, they've turned it right around."

The halfway point of the season was reached with the U's sitting pretty in sixth spot and as top scorers in the league.

Despite sustained improvement over 23 league games, there remain those from outside the Layer Road circle that expect the lads to begin a slide down the table once 2007 gets underway.

Having completed their opening set of fixtures against the other teams in the division with the weekend trip to Preston, the U's now have a measure of what else is out there in the Championship, but what does Mick believe will be the secret to sustaining the current form?

"I would say that we just need to continue injuries and suspensions first and foremost," he said.

"One of the key factors for us so far has been a lack of injuries, which has allowed us to name a settled and successful side. Donough and Tony have done their bit in making sure the lads stay fit and looking after their overall welfare."

"The players have been excellent with their

discipline as well, with only Chris Barker and Richard Garcia picking up a suspension so far this season.

"I think it's also important to point out the role that George's organisational and management skills. The players are well versed with what he is aiming for and they know the strengths and abilities of the squad."

The successes so far this season have not been the first time that Mick has been associated with a smaller side that has been performing beyond expectations.

Against the odds

During his playing career with Luton and Wimbledon and during his spell with the management team at Kenilworth Road, the giant ex-forward saw his teams battle against the odds to record promotions and cup wins.

And, looking back over his first six months at Layer Road, he admits that he can see many similarities.

"Luton came up on a low budget as did Colchester. In both instances, the majority of the squad has stayed together, although Luton have since lost a few of the bigger players.

"The team spirit and camaraderie is second to none in the dressing room. That has translated into effort and work rate on the training ground.

"That team spirit is a key factor on a matchday as well. If you go a goal down, some teams will buckle but these boys never give up and keep going throughout the ninety minutes.

"Of course, that team spirit will only take you so far and you have to have the ability to go along with it."

Whilst the U's look set to go into 2007 in a healthy league position, it has not been quite so plain sailing for Mike Newell's Hatters.

A run of defeats in recent weeks has left them just looking over their shoulders as the new year arrives and Mick believes it is suitable warning to the U's squad to ensure

they keep giving their all in every match.

He added: "Luton have had a strange second season. They started brightly but have faded away, but when you lose the likes of Steve Howard and Kevin Nicholls, who are big players for them, it's hard to maintain those high standards.

"Also, if you take your foot off the gas and you let your standards drop, you'll face the consequences. You've got to keep on it – any team can beat any team at this level. If you take your eye off the ball and you think you've cracked it, it will come back and bite you."

No doubt, today's game will bring back memories for Mick, having enjoyed great success on and off the pitch with the Hatters. But, amidst the good times, which stands out the most?

"It has to be earning my England debut whilst at Luton," he said.

"They weren't a big club, but myself Mike Newell and Steiney all picked up honours at that time, which is something special for the manager to look beyond the biggest sides.

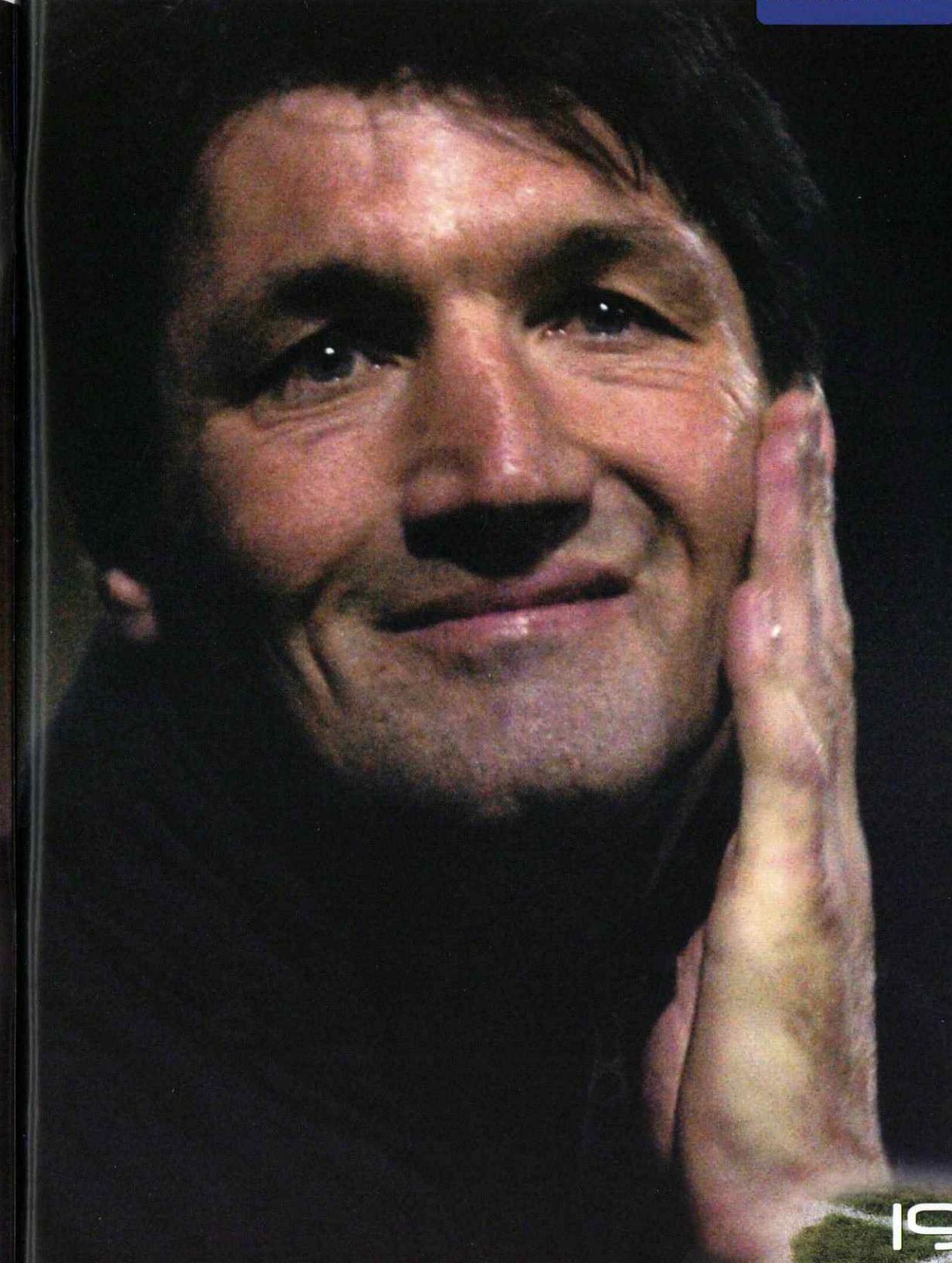
"It was a well run club and the spirit was there. We were led by a really good captain in Steve Foster - he engendered a good spirit in the dressing room."

The match this afternoon is the penultimate match of the year, of course, and following the full time whistle, it will be just 48 hours until the transfer window reopens for January's flurry of activity.

With the U's flying high in the division, the focus of the club's movements in the opening month of 2007 may have altered somewhat, but Mick admits that there will still be some standards that must be kept when considering new faces.

"We are, of course, always on the look out for players and always on the phones and making enquiries. We only want a certain type of lad; we look at ability and character in equal measure.

"When the window opens, we have to be aware that we could collect injuries over Christmas and be ready to react."





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Looking up at the stars

Typical. After half a dozen away games I've seen with little return despite some decent performances (just the two draws against Leicester and Norwich), I can't go to Palace and what happens? For the love of god. To make things worse I am now banned from attending further games by my mates for the foreseeable. Evidently, I am the curse. Thanks fellas.

Still, back home and we send Stoke to the (car) cleaners. It was interesting to see that publicly, boss Tony Pulis is backing Lee Hendrie and having a bit of a dig at our Kem at the same time. Privately, I should imagine he might be treating it rather differently. Whatever Hendrie said, an out of sorts Kem from the first half was replaced by a midfield demon after the break as we took a grip on the game and really squeezed (the) Stoke (sponge) dry.

As the January transfer window approaches, more and more rumours are appearing over the future of Greg Halford. By all accounts, if Peter Taylor is still in charge of the England U21s Greg will be involved in the next get together for the game against Spain in February. Apparently Pompey boss 'Arry Redknapp has denied any interest in our man - which I guess he'll be putting a bid in on the stroke of midnight.

Rumoured

But of course he is not the only Premiership suitor, with Sheffield United and Manchester City also rumoured to be tracking the mighty U's mighty full back. Breaking news...looks like we can add Reading to the list. With every interested club, hopefully the price goes up by a few more pennies. Time will tell if anything happens.

It would appear that choice is up to George Williams. Tactically astute, media savvy and honest to the core, W.I.G (Williams is God) is understandably becoming quite the cult hero amongst U's fans. A bit of a cult hero en masse to be honest. George recently addressed the media on the issue of transfers, claiming no-one need be going anywhere, unless its good for both club and player.

Of greater interest to U's fans will be the possible interest in strengthening the squad. Will our new chairman be flexing his financial muscle at all?

If some reports are to be believed, Stan Collymore has been training with the U's in recent weeks. Not sure we want to be



● Greg Halford - hot property?

dogged by those sorts of rumours, but there you go.

Having said all that, the key has got to be keeping the current squad together. I think everyone would agree that Chris Barker would be a welcome addition to the squad on a permanent basis.

I've heard nothing but good things from U's fans about him. What you see is what you get - consistency, competence and commitment.

There are plenty of players that could do with new contracts being placed in front of them.

But as we all know, the club quite rightly keeps this sort of news out of the press if it possibly can.

Either way, its never dull following the U's. Sixty years ago, six years ago, six months ago who would have thought we would find

ourselves where we are now.

Today's game against Luton will be rather tricky. For one thing, coming from Kenilworth Road they will not be intimidated by the plush surroundings of Layer Road. Either way the game goes, it won't stop us enjoying these golden times.

I do think I should begrudgingly issue a word or two of respect in the direction of Wycombe. Fair play to them, as they reach another cup semi-final. Still, after their FA Cup exploits of a few years back, they missed out on promotion before picking up a nice little relegation. United in the Premiership, Wycombe in the Conference?

Merry Christmas everyone!



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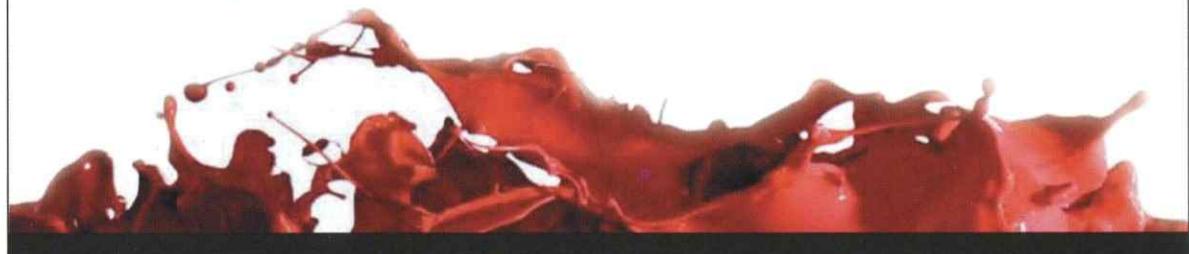
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Today's Mascots...



Name: Adam Simmons
Age: 11
From: Braiswick
Hobbies: Football and computer games
Favourite U's Player: Karl Duguid



Name: Joe Mascot
Age: 11
From: Chelmsford
Hobbies: Basketball, Mini Moto racing, fishing and Essex Dance Theatre
Favourite U's Player: Pat Baldwin



Name: Joshua Mauger
Age: 5
From: Lexden
Hobbies: Football, all sports and music
Favourite U's Player: Chris Iwelumo and Jamie Cureton

U's views

With the U's stepping into the Championship for the first time in their history, we will continue to ask U's supporters to come up with more of their views...

In this week's letters page, we have fans' views on the team's recent form, which has lifted them up to sixth in the Championship.

Over the rest of this season, we will again be looking for regular letter writers to contribute to this page and discuss the hot topics of the moment.

So, if you want to see your name in the award winning matchday magazine in the next few months, you can contact us at editor@colchesterunited.net or by writing to us at the following address:-

U's Views,
Media Department,
Colchester United Football Club,
Layer Road, Colchester,
Essex CO2 7JJ

A lot to learn?

The U's may have been motoring up the Championship table in recent weeks, but thanks to one of the Layer Road side's sponsors, the club's staff members are also getting moving in 2007.



Bensons Intensive Driving School, who have been matchday magazine advertisers since the start of 2006, have been busy educating two members of the club's backroom team to get them ready for life on the road.

Media Manager Matt Hudson and Ticket Office assistant Emma Wythe have both taken advantage of Benson's intensive driving lessons over the past few months - with Emma passing her test just last week, thanks to the work of instructor Steve Hammond.

And, as an early Christmas present - and as an offer that runs for the rest of the 2006/07 season, Steve has created a special deal for U's fans looking to pass their driving test.

You can book up your lessons at the following rates:-
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For more details, call Steve Hammond on 0800 081 1999 or see the advert on page 38 for other ways to contact Benson Intensive.

Where will it end?

It has been a sensational season so far - and long may it continue. I know that myself and my group of friends are relishing every game at the moment and to have so many points on board at such an early stage is a credit to every single one of the players.

The team have proven to be excellent ambassadors on and off the pitch and I hope I speak for all U's fans when I say that they have made us exceptionally proud this year.

It looks like our stay in the Championship will be a prolonged one - unless we get promoted to the Premiership of course!

Simon Walker





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my hero

Undoubtedly, many of the players in the U's squad are heroes to our younger fans, especially those lads who provided so many special memories during last season's promotion push.

But who did our players admire when they were growing up? Which player did they pretend to be during their playground kickabouts? We'll be talking to each of the lads and next up is U's long-serving skipper Karl Duguid...

Who is your hero?
Paul Gascoigne

When did he first come to your attention?

When he signed for Spurs in 1988. I was a Spurs fan so my hero was always going to be a Tottenham player and he was the best one by far. In fact, he was probably the best player in the world by the time the World Cup came around in 1990.

Has he influenced your own game at all?

I really like to enjoy my football and that was something that made me love Gazza. He played with a smile on his face and off the pitch, seemed to always be larking about, something the lads will say I do. He was far more skilful than me and played in a different position so there's not much comparison there.

Have you ever seen him play live?

Yes, a few times and it was always so much better than watching him on TV. His movement off the ball was fantastic and he was always eager to be on the ball, influencing the match.

If you got to meet your hero, what would be the first thing you asked?

I'd ask him if he would come down to training with me and meet the lads. I'm sure he could still teach us a trick or two.

Did you have any heroes outside of football?

Not that I can remember. Football was all I was really interested in so I never knew any other sportsmen or women.

25



Going into a new phase of your life can take time on occasions but now and again, things happen unexpectedly and that new phase is upon you before you envisioned it happening.

That certainly seems to be the case for former U's defender and captain, Scott Fitzgerald. As his playing career was coming to an end, Scott had decided to start the knowledge as he looked to a future away from football and onto the streets of London as a cab driver.

He was still a player at Brentford at that time, with Martin Allen as manager, and it was Martin who persuaded Scott that his 'knowledge' lay in football management and not in driving taxis. Scott was duly installed as the U15s manager at Griffin Park and worked with them on two evenings a week and on a Sunday morning. Not long after starting, the position of Brentford Youth Team Manager came up and once again, Allen showed his faith in the elegant centre half and immediately gave Scott the job.

Fast forward a year or so and after spending the last month as caretaker manager following Leroy Rosenior's dismissal, Scott was last Thursday announced as the new manager of Brentford. Rosenior left the club in the relegation zone and Scott admitted that his priority is to make sure that he does all he can to preserve League One status come the end of the season. He first told U's Review that everything about his managerial career has happened quicker than he could have ever imagined.

"With only eighteen months of coaching kids behind me, this is an offer that has come so much quicker than I thought. Martin Allen literally forced me to take on the U15s, saying that I would enjoy it more than The Knowledge because I should stay in the game. Then the youth team job came up, which I was offered and accepted immediately. I had an idea in my head that I would be in charge of the youth team learning my trade for three or four years before I needed to think about my next step in management. As soon as I started with the U15s, I realised Martin was right and I loved every minute of it. I knew then that I did want to become a league manager but it has happened a lot sooner due to circumstances at the club."

"Obviously, with the position we currently occupy in the league, keeping us up is the remit that I have been instructed to work to. I had a tough first couple of games when I became caretaker manager and they didn't go as

I wanted them to but the last two matches has seen an improvement in the performances. It looks like the players have suddenly realised that they are in a fight and want to do something about it."

When asked about how he found out he had the job, Scott replied: "I was the caretaker boss for a couple of games and was then invited to interview for the job on a permanent basis. I was then invited back for a second interview last Monday night and was told I was down to the last two for the job. Then on Tuesday night, I was told that I would be getting the job so it was a bit of a long drawn out process."

"Having watched a lot of the games this season, I know which players I think have the bottle for a relegation battle and more importantly, which ones haven't. I have now got the Christmas games to look at all the players before the transfer window opens at the beginning of January. As I said, staying up is my priority and then we can reassess things in the summer, hopefully still planning for another season in League One."

After talking about the plans he has for the club in the next six months or so, Scott went on to talk about the managers he has worked under and what he will take from them as he embarks on his own managerial career. He insisted that it isn't just the good ones he worked with that he will use as a learning tool in the coming years.

"I have played under quite a few managers and pretty much all of them had their good points and their bad points. I know there are things I have learnt from the good ones that I want to implement but as well as that, there are things that I know I will never do that I have learnt from the ones I never saw eye to eye with."

"The truth of the matter is that I was lucky in my time with Colchester United, in terms of the people I worked under in my time there. I had three managers, Steve Whitton, Phil Parkinson and Geraint Williams and I can honestly say that all three of them had ideas that I liked and as with everything, I will use them to a degree and put some of my own ideas in the mix as well. I am really looking forward to taking on this challenge and will do everything I can to make a success of it."

Learning Your Trade

It appears that life at Layer Road provides a good grounding for players to go on into management.

In the past fifteen years, a host of former U's have gone on to be managers or coaches following a time at Layer Road – including some who have taken the hotseat at Colchester United itself!

Mark Kinsella

Left Colchester as a player: 1996

Since then: An illustrious spell with Charlton was followed by shorter visits to Aston Villa and Walsall and Mark's fledgling steps into management were taken during his time with the Saddlers. He looked after the reserves at the Bescot Stadium, before returning to Charlton in the past few weeks to take a position in the Addicks' coaching staff.

Steve Whitton

Left Colchester as a player: 1998

Since then: Having hung up his playing boots, Whitts moved into management by becoming Mick Wadsworth's assistant before taking on the hotseat himself. A four year spell in charge of the U's saw him sustain League One football, before being sacked in 2003.

Paul Buckle

Left Colchester as a player: 1999

Since then: A return to Exeter followed his departure from Layer Road and, after a brief spell at Tiverton, he returned to St James' Park to join the managerial team at City. He is still playing – and scoring goals.

Geraint Williams

Left Colchester as a player: 2000

Since then: Following number two spells under Steve Whitton and Phil Parkinson, George was named as manager in his own right earlier this year. His early steps in management have been hugely successful and he leads the U's into 2007 in a very healthy state.

Richard Wilkins

Left Colchester as a player: 2000

Since then: Richard has stayed local and has enjoyed plenty of success in non-league circles whilst in charge of Bury Town in Suffolk. Where he has enjoyed plenty of FA Vase success.

Micky Stockwell

Left Colchester as a player: 2003

Since then: Like Richard Wilkins, Micky ventured into Suffolk for his first taste of management. He took the reins at Woodbridge Town, who have often provided the U's with pre-season opposition.

Bobby Bowry

Left Colchester as a player: 2005

Since then: Whilst playing at non-league Gravesend, Bobby enjoyed some coaching responsibilities both with soccer schools and at Crystal Palace. He is currently enjoying a coaching role with Bromley.

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best guess

This season has seen the return of the U's Prediction League as we seek to find out who in the Colchester United fraternity knows the most about football.

The U's are the form team in the Championship at the moment, and the club's media department are keeping up their end of the bargain as the Prediction League reaches its halfway stage.

In Week Eleven, Matt Hudson and David Gregory top scored for the second week running to extend their lead at the top of the table to eleven points.

The fans' revival continues apace and another decent haul has lifted them off the bottom of the table for the first time in several weeks.

Next in their path, with the local media dumped to last place, are the players. Watch out!

Table to date:-

	Ipt	3pts	Total
U's Media	26	16	74
U's Players	33	10	63
U's Fans	29	9	56
Local Media	34	7	55

Wayne Brown takes on the baton for the squad for the latest batch of predictions, whilst the Evening Gazette's Francis Ponder makes his debut on behalf of the local media.

Roger Bright is up for the fans as they look to continue their upward momentum into the second half of the season.

You will be able to find out how they get on in the programme for our next home game against Wolves on Saturday.

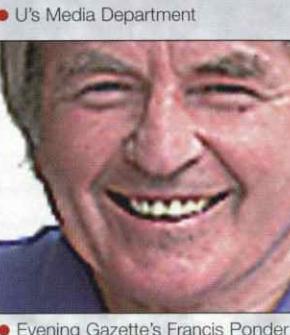
If you wish to be considered as a representative for the U's fans in a future edition of U's Review, then drop us a line at

This Weekend's Selection...

U's Media	U's Players	The Fans	The Media
Bolton Wanderers v Newcastle United	1-1	1-1	2-1
Everton v Middlesbrough	2-0	2-1	2-0
Tottenham v Aston Villa	2-1	1-0	1-1
Cardiff City v Plymouth Argyle	1-1	2-0	1-2
Hull City v Leicester City	2-0	1-1	1-1
Southampton v Crystal Palace	1-0	2-0	3-0
Sunderland v Leeds United	3-0	3-2	2-1
Brentford v Millwall	2-2	1-2	1-2
Bristol City v Bournemouth	3-1	3-1	4-0
Hartlepool v Grimsby	2-0	1-1	2-0



● U's centre-back Wayne Brown





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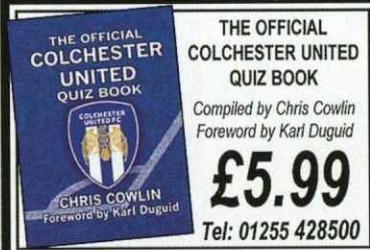
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looking back...

The good people at the East Anglian Daily Times take a look back over the past 20 years of U's action...

5 YEARS AGO

The U's have not been doing themselves justice on their visits to the Potteries this season. Hammered 3-0 at Stoke City last September, they leaked three more goals on their way to a 3-1 defeat at Port Vale on Saturday, December 29, 2001.

It was a repeat score-line from the same fixture last season, so United will at least be relieved that their visits to the Potteries are over for another campaign.

Ian Armstrong, Stephen Rowland and Stephen Brooker all scored to inflict a first defeat of December on the U's, who replied through an injury-time consolation goal from Karl Duguid.

Only relegation-threatened Wrexham and Cambridge have conceded more away goals than Steve Whittom's men, which has hampered their chances of getting near the Division Two play-off zone.

"Port Vale are a very physical side, especially at the back, and we didn't cope with that in the first-half," admitted Whittom.

10 YEARS AGO

Mid-table Colchester United are the draw specialists of the Football League!

That was confirmed by another draw, this time at Brighton in a 1-1 draw on Boxing Day, 1996.

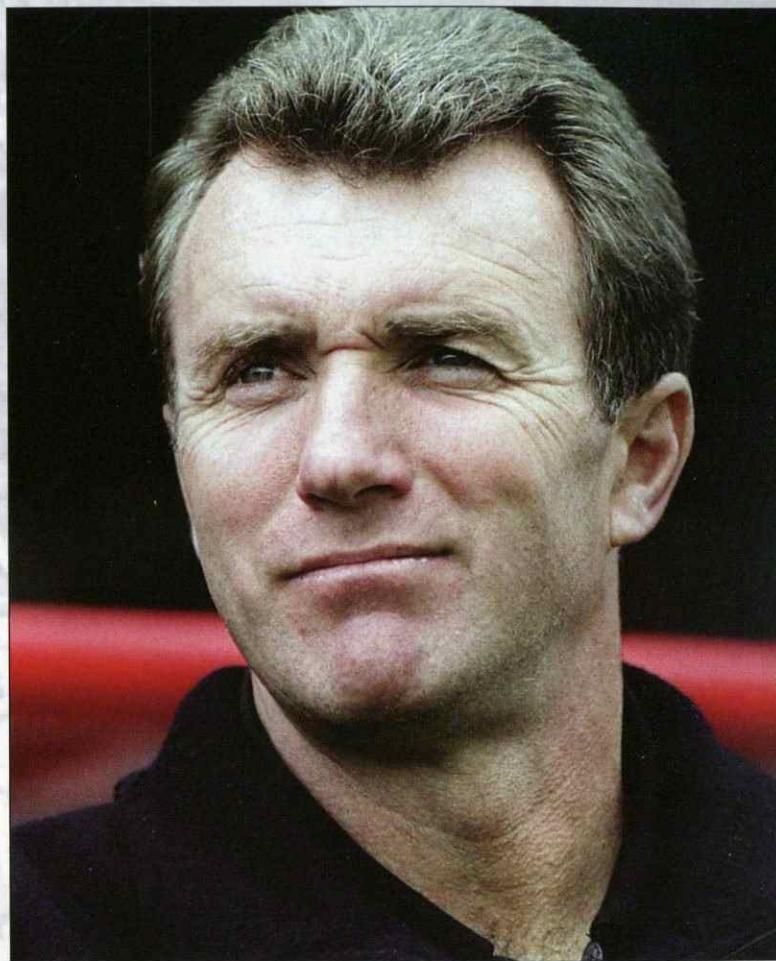
Steve Wignall's men clocked up their 13th stalemate of the season on what was their last ever visit to Brighton's Goldstone Ground. The sorry Seagulls, who were rock bottom of Division Three, were still without a guaranteed home for next season after the sale of their 95-year-old stadium.

On current form, they look good bets for a drop into the Conference. They had managed just 15 points from their first 25 league games, leaving them seven points adrift of second-from-bottom Darlington and eight behind Hereford.

As it was to turn out, Brighton stayed up in dramatic fashion on the final day of the season, at the expense of Hereford.

U's assistant manager Steve Whittom broke the deadlock in the 15th minute when firing home a free-kick, but the Sussex side netted an equaliser through Denny Mundee's 34th minute penalty, after Paul Buckle had bundled over veteran striker Ian Baird.

"I think we must be going for a world record



• Steve Wignall — the draw specialist

for the number of drawn games in a season," admitted manager Wignall.

20 YEARS AGO

The U's lost their East Anglian derby clash at home to Cambridge United, suffering a 2-1 defeat on December 26, 1986.

Simon Lowe was the lone scorer for Mike Walker's men in front of a crowd of 3,376.

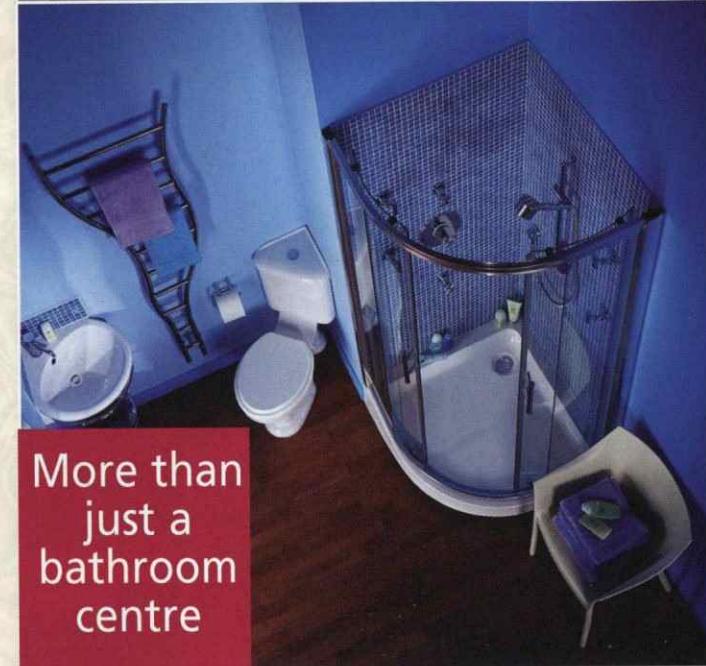
Just a day later and the U's lost again, this time 1-0 at Aldershot.

December was also the time that Richard Wilkins made his first appearances for the club, following his move from Haverhill Rovers. He played against both Cambridge and Aldershot.





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Listen up! These are the good times

With regular scribe *Carbondioxide* away on Christmas hols, *Vital* Football writer Matt Calmus steps up to the plate for his U's Review debut. He reflects on the season so far...

'Against all odds' has become a bit of a mantra during this festive season in Essex. Not least because U's fans wake up to fresh league standings believing that Christmas really is every day.

It is also the title given to the club's 2005/06 Season Review, where Colchester have spent the past year defying bookmakers' - and their own - expectations. More than a marketing tool, the phrase shows that winning has become a habit at Layer Road; so much so, that the 'p word' might even be banned on matchdays.

Dwelling now on a possible Premiership promotion might be too soon for most right-thinking fans and it would, in the event, be too premature for the FA, whose regulations would prevent the current stadium from gracing the top-flight.

A ground share with some fierce rival (Southend or Ipswich) would then be on the agenda instead, which brings on the kind of nausea you can get from seeing United so high up the table.

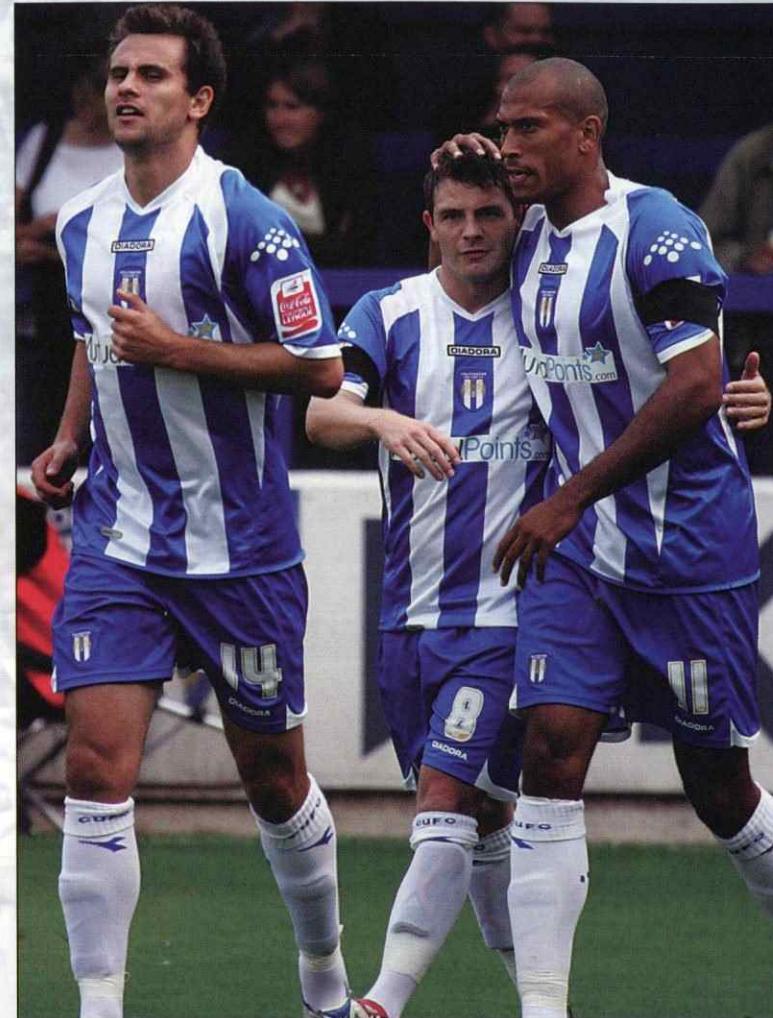
The Championship is like a giant version of snakes and ladders, and Colchester can be thankful that the fate has landed them on more of the latter so far. If the form book in 2007 goes on to mirror the first half of this season, pondering life in the Premiership will soon become more of a legitimate pastime. Having said that, the priority remains to avoid relegation, achievable (on average) once the 48-point barrier is broken.

Drama

This campaign is developing in an aptly pantomimic fashion, as football's unscripted drama again mocks those employed to pen exciting stories for a living. Is it a sign of the times in East Anglia that we fret about how high we will finish in a season, or whether we will leap from Cloud Nine, to Cloud Cuckoo Farm, in time for promotion?

Truthfully, those words shouldn't even be on the page as we prepare to face Luton Town. Today's opposition, have more pressing issues to contend with - such as their patchy form. United, in this era of the turbulent takeover, ought to be proud of their status as a community club, where passion and pride on the terraces clearly translate out onto the field.

Is this fortune more than just fate at work? The saying goes that you make your own luck, and certainly any potential reservations of last summer have materialised as unlikely positives. The ground has evolved into a fortress, and a small squad have grown into a dedicated bunch of revolutionaries.



● Take it all in...

Our novice manager is also a damn sight better than anybody would have guessed. On that note, the best conspiracy theory around is that Geraint Williams was actually the brains behind the Phil Parkinson operation all along.

Whatever the reason, the point - in case you hadn't noticed yet - is that these are the good times. Considering the bigger picture might be fun for a while, but not if it obscures the view of what we already have.

Yes, the perennial nature of the beautiful

game always demands us to look ahead, but for the moment, those words on a very popular DVD cover should resound around the county.

'Against all odds' is neither an epitaph of times past, nor a menacing apparition of things to come. It represents something stronger: - an appreciation of events as they are unfolding in the here and now.



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man test

Football is clearly a game of blood, guts and testosterone. But just how manly are our favourite Colchester United players? Taking our lead from FHM's Bloke Test, we have penned a number of questions ready to find out how rough and ready the U's squad are...



Next up to the plate to prove his male status is U's much-mentioned youngster Greg Halford...

How hot can you handle your curries?
The hotter the better, I normally go for a vindaloo.

How do you rate your ability to grow a beard?
It's taken twenty-two years and I still haven't got one. Struggling would probably describe it best.

Have you ever ridden a horse?
I have only been on a horse once and that was when I was about eight years old. I did manage to stay on though.

Have you ever given the wrong mobile number to a girl on purpose?
Yes of course, it's the easiest way to get rid of them.

If you found a rat in your house, would you catch it or run away?
I'd be up on a stool first but once I'd found a weapon, I would chase it. You can't have rats in the house.

Are farts funny?
It's funny just talking about them, so yes!

Have you ever waxed?
No, I haven't got any hair in places that I might wax.

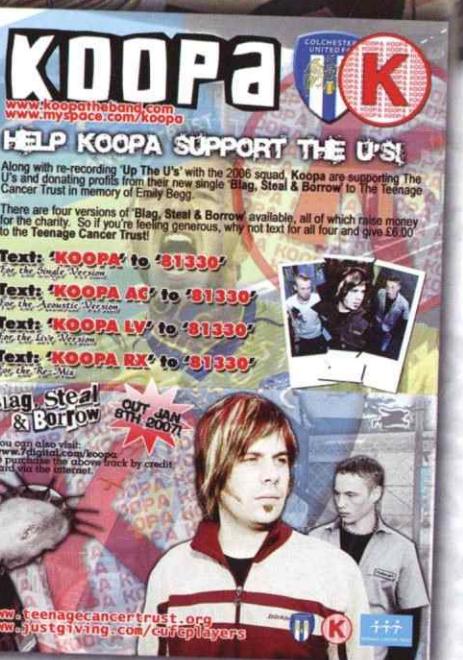
How many items of pink, or pastel coloured, clothing do you own?
I have one pink sweatshirt.

How many tattoos have you got?
I have two, one on my arm and one on my back. The one on my arm run up the inside of my bicep and was very tender while I had it done.

You're hungry and want some toast but the bread has got green spots of mould on it - do you pick them off and toast it or chuck it and go hungry?
Stay hungry, definitely.



KOOPA UP THE U'S



When the U's players all agreed to have their heads shaved to raise money for the Teenage Cancer Trust, few of them could have imagined just how much the fundraising quest would grab the imagination of the footballing public.

It is only now a month since the players' idea to raise funds in memory of 14-year-old U's fan Emily Begg, who sadly passed away after a battle with leukaemia. But already, a whole host of activities have been spawned by Colchester United fans eager to get involved and back their heroes in a very worthwhile cause.

This afternoon's game sees the cornerstone of the fundraising mission, the U's Charity Single, available for sale for the very first time.

We have sellers around the ground with the hugely anticipated CD, which includes two tracks recorded by the players along with local punk bands Special Duties and Koopa.

The CD also includes a special video of the Stand Up For Col U performance by Geraint Williams' squad and every penny raised from each purchase will go to the Teenage Cancer Trust thanks to the generosity of one local business.

Colchester based printing firm Palladian Press stepped in to help with the costs of pressing the CD, meaning that each one sold represents profits for the cancer charity.

Paul Douglas, managing director of the firm who scooped the Growing Business of the Year in the Colchester & District Business Awards in 2006, set up Palladian Press Records to get Up The U's/Stand Up For Col U up and running and admitted he was delighted to be involved.

He told U's Review: "All of us at Palladian Press were deeply touched by Emily's passing and we felt that we would like to contribute in some small way to the very significant and worthwhile fundraising campaign launched in aid of the Teenage Cancer Trust. If in some way, the monies raised can help improve other children's quality of life, then it will undoubtedly have been a huge success."

"It literally has been a team game and we have taken great pride in witnessing the wonderful contribution that everyone from the first team squad, to the bands and technicians have made."

"The people of Colchester should be proud that they have contributed and produced something of such amazing quality and professionalism."

And it appears that the people of Colchester ARE very proud of what their town's football team, as a host of local people have rushed to get behind the quest to raise as much as possible in the memory of a fellow supporter.

As soon as the players' intentions for the rest of the season were made clear, a real community element to the fundraising became clear as people of all ages and backgrounds offered up their help to add to the growing pot of money contributed by

Colchester United to the Teenage Cancer Trust.

Several potential events are currently being discussed on the U's official messageboard and, such is the weight of ideas that are being bandied around, a special section has had to be created for supporters to keep tabs on what is planned.

The Mercury Theatre have very kindly donated eight tickets for this year's pantomime and fans can bid on eBay for the chance to attend Jack and the Beanstalk with one of their favourite players.

Meanwhile, race nights and poker nights are also on the agenda and one fan is even intending to hitch hike across Europe to do his bit for the overall cause.

Ed Aitken and friends will be leaving from London on Saturday, March 24th in an attempt to hitch hike to Budapest on a limited budget. It may seem like a tough task, but he's ready for action.

Whilst Ed's boys will be making a lengthy trip, another group of Colchester United followers will be making a shorter – but still pretty arduous – journey in early April 2007.

The CUSA will also very kindly make a donation to the fund at this afternoon's game, with members of the committee handing over a cheque to be added to the ever growing total.

The online donation page has already smashed through the £1,000 barrier and thousands more look set to be raised in the coming months.

And the Teenage Cancer Trust are understandably delighted with how things are going. Simon Davies, CEO of the Trust, said:

"We cannot thank the boys enough for everything they are doing for TCT in memory of Emily. It is a great honour to be working with the club and their enthusiasm and motivation would make Emily proud. To have both the team and its fans behind the charity is fantastic as is the response Colchester United has already prompted."

"The charity single and other fundraising initiatives will help raise vital funds which will greatly benefit the many young cancer patients that we try to help, and also assist us in our work in establishing teenage cancer units throughout the country. These units are dedicated areas for teenage patients, designed to provide an environment that is conducive to recovery and TCT believes that every teenager with cancer in the UK should have access to one."

"To date TCT has built 7 units; London, Leeds, Manchester, Birmingham, Sheffield, Liverpool and Newcastle but we need 22. Colchester United's fundraising will help TCT achieve this goal - without people like you, teenagers with cancer across the UK would not get the help they need and deserve. Many thanks once again for your support; we couldn't do it without you!"

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the physio

First of all, I hope that all of you in attendance this afternoon had a very good Christmas yesterday and that you enjoy today's game here at Layer Road.

Once again, it has been a quiet time in the treatment room, which is obviously a good thing for the management team, as it gives them opportunities to change things around if need be during what is always a busy time during the fixture calendar.

As I mentioned in my set of notes for the Hull City game three weeks ago, there are many factors that we have to take into account during the Christmas and New Year period, with so many games to contend with.

The days between matches are recovery days more than out and out training days, although there is of course some tactical work involved as we consider the threats of our next opponents and the best ways to get the right results.

We want to make sure we get the players recovery correct and it is also a case of striking the balance between allowing the players proper time with their families and making sure that they rest right and eat right during a busy time.

This time of year, with the changeable weather, the players are also susceptible to illness, so we keep a close eye on them to make sure that they avoid too many colds or other such viruses.

Greg Halford (below) missed a couple of days training last week with illness, but was back in the fold by Thursday to join in with the rest of the lads in preparation for their visit to Preston at the weekend.

Overall though, it has been relatively

trouble free in the treatment room of late, with Aidan Davison coming back into the squad for the recent home win against Stoke City.

Aidan pulled a chest muscle during the 3-0 win over our Essex rivals Southend United and he subsequently missed the next couple of games, with Dean Gerken proving a very able replacement.

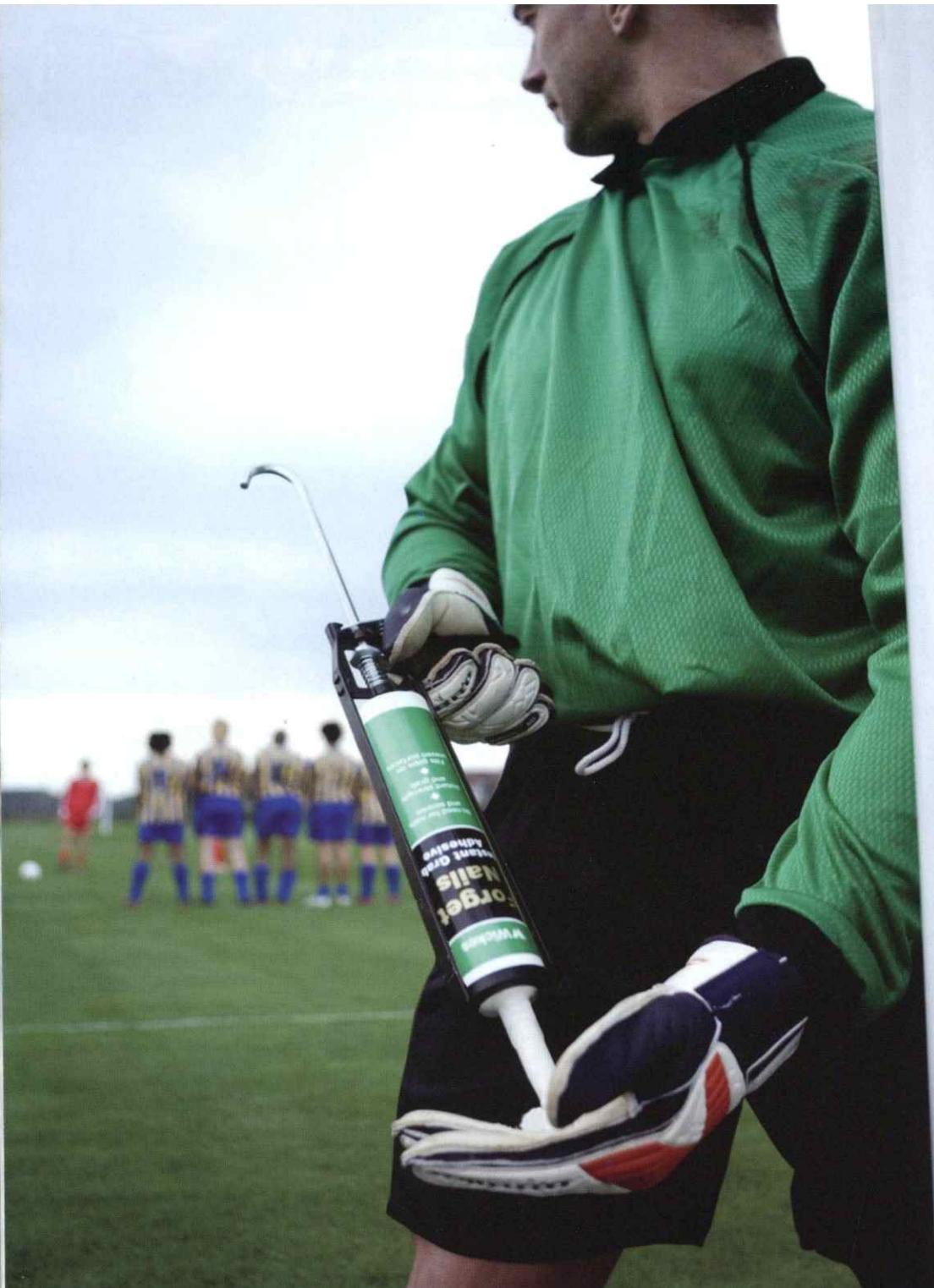
Our more senior keeper was soon back in training though, and returned to the matchday squad for the game against Stoke City and will no doubt be keeping Deano on his toes.

It was a quiet afternoon for me in the Stoke match, and I really only had to come onto the pitch a couple of times – one of which wasn't even for one of our players!

As you will have seen, the linesman was struggling midway through the first half and it looks like he's damaged his hamstring. It will probably keep him out of action for about a month, which is a shorter time than if a player did it. That might seem surprising, but that recovery time is shorter because he will need to use it less intensively than a player would in a match situation.

Tony Flynn





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IN ENEMY TERRITORY

Wearing your shirt is a matter of pride and when you're away from Colchester, it can incur a range of reactions from the locals, many of whom will support the home town team. In this feature, we talk to the many exiled supporters that the club has and find out what reaction they get to supporting Colchester United in another footballing stronghold.

Exile: Mike Jackson, Birmingham

Where are you based and how long have you been living there?

I live in Edgbaston, Birmingham, right next to the cricket ground. I have lived here for ten years, having moved from Essex to start a new job. I have lived here for so long that I am starting, apparently to get a Brummie accent, which is not good.

How did you come to support the U's?

I was born in Colchester, and lived for eighteen years in Shrub End Road, next door to the Leather Bottle public house. Without wishing to name drop, my dad used to be Chairman of Colchester United in the 1970's as well as a director in the late 80s and early 90s in the Conference days.

He took me to the games when I was a child. In my teenage years I had a mate who lived down the road who I went to the games with. I was a regular at every home game, and used to switch end at half time depending on which way the U's were kicking. I went from sitting in the Director's Box to being a "stand behind the goal" fan. Now living here, I get to Layer Road occasionally, but can generally be seen at the away end of our competitors wherever we play.

How often do you get back to Layer Road and are you such a football buff that you also watch your home town team?

I get to Layer Road about five times a season, but only missed four away games last season. All my mates are Birmingham City fans, and I have been dragged along to the occasional game, although to be honest, I don't have any interest in them really. When they were in the Premiership, I went to see them play the high profile teams, and before that, I did go to see them play Ipswich, and for that game, I was a Birmingham fan!

Abuse, Indifference or respect for wearing your shirt?

My car has three Colchester United stickers in the window, and recently I have been getting the odd comment from people at traffic lights. One guy wound down his window and said in a very strong Brummie accent, "I never thought I'd see the day when we played the likes of you in a league match!"

My mates used to tears shreds into me about supporting a team they'd never really heard of, but that all changed by Christmas last season when they started to take notice that both teams might actually be playing in the same league the following season.

What was the local reaction to the U's getting into the Championship last May?

Well the local reaction has been one of respect to be honest. That a club of our size, and ground, (why does everyone go on about our ground?) could beat the likes of Forest and Swans into a promotion place. Most of my mates became Colchester fans on the day of the Yeovil away game, and kept texting me with updates from Radio 5 live, even though I was glued to BBC Essex on the internet.

It was also my birthday that day, and so the U's gave me the best present I have ever had.

Best conversation from a local whilst you've been wearing your colours?

Best conversation came at last season's triumph at Sheffield United in the FA Cup. As I tend to go to the games on my own, I was quietly shuffling away to my car feeling very pleased with the day's result, and one man who was with his mates, saw my shirt under my coat and came up to me to say "I bet that was like winning the Cup Final to you wasn't it?"

To his dismay, I replied: "No mate, our cup final will come when we play Chelsea at Stamford Bridge!"

Obviously I had no idea that we WOULD actually get Chelsea away two rounds later. I bet that man was sitting at home thinking I must have been a fortune teller or something

Want to be involved?

We are still looking for applications for this piece. All you need to do is answer the questions above and e-mail them to editor@colchesterunited.net along with a picture of you in your U's shirt outside a significant local landmark (i.e. the ground of that town's team, a 'Welcome To...' sign or something like a cathedral or notable feature of the town/city).

This needs to be a hi-resolution digital image if possible.
Good luck!

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U18s

Welcome back for today's match and I hope everyone has recovered from their celebrations yesterday!



In my last set of notes, I left you with a promise to bring you up to date with our FA Youth Cup match at Premiership Aston Villa. I wish I hadn't promised you that because the game didn't go how we wanted and it was a quiet bus journey back home after the match.

We felt that on the night, we let ourselves down and the way we lost the game was more frustrating than the fact that we lost. We didn't do ourselves justice on the big stage at a time when things have been going very well for us in the league and we missed an opportunity to show what we can do. I was pleased for Stephen Opoka, whose goal was good enough to grace an amazing arena like Villa Park, and I must also congratulate one of our U16s, Russell Malton, who did very well when I put him on as a substitute.

We left Villa Park with some poor memories of what should have been a memorable night for us and we will remember the night for only bad reasons in the future. Lessons will be learnt by everyone, and I include all the staff that travelled in that statement, and a response was needed as we prepared to take fellow front-runners QPR last weekend. It was in fact a top of the table clash so it wasn't a game that any of our players could be feeling sorry for themselves.

We raced into a two-goal lead in a first half that we played some excellent football in, which was pleasing on what was a very difficult pitch. The first goal was an own goal,

despite Tom Devaux trying his hardest to claim it, from a clever free kick from Tom Webb. Aarun Best then increased the lead with a thirty-yard screamer that the stand-in keeper failed to deal with.

As the second half progressed, the toll of Wednesday night's match was clearly evident and QPR took advantage as we fired. They got back in the game with their first goal and then equalised with a ninetieth minute penalty. It was disappointing to concede an equaliser at the death but on reflection of the whole game, a draw was probably the fairest result.

Football throws up challenges all the time and Monday was another of those occasions where the lads had to dig deep as they were all involved in the reserve match against Stevenage.

The match is covered elsewhere in the Matchday Magazine but I must say I was proud of the way the lads worked to get a result after a busy week. They stood up to be counted against a more experienced side and came away with a lot of credit as they completed their third game in five days.

They certainly needed their Christmas break after that and with no match now until January 6th, they can recharge their batteries ready to do battle in the second half of the season.

Happy Christmas.

Joe Dunne



• Stephen Opoka - great goal at Villa Park

2006/2007 U18s Fixtures

August
Sat 12th Rushden & Dds (A) W4-2
Sat 19th Luton Town (H) D1-1

September
Sat 2nd Southend Utd (A) D2-2
Sat 9th AFC B'mouth (H) W3-1
Sat 16th Swindon Town (A) L0-3
Sat 23rd Brentford (A) D1-1
Sat 30th Wycombe Wdrs (H)* D0-0

October
Sat 7th Brighton & H.A (A)* W4-0
Sat 14th Oxford United (H)* W3-0
Sat 21st Brighton & H.A (A) D1-1
Sat 28th Gillingham (H) W6-5

November
Sat 4th Southend United (A) W4-0
Sat 11th Gillingham (H)* W2-1
Sat 25th Portsmouth (H) W3-1

December
Sat 9th Northampton Tn (A) W2-1
Sat 16th QPR (H) D2-2

January
Sat 6th Leyton Orient (A) 11:00am
Sat 13th Rushden & Dds (H) 11:00am
Sat 20th Luton Town (A) 11:00am

February
Sat 3rd Brentford (H) 11:00am
Sat 10th Wycombe Wdrs (A) 11:00am
Sat 17th Brighton & H.A(H) 12:00pm
Sat 24th Gillingham (A) 11:00am

March
Sat 3rd Southend Utd (H) 11:00am
Sat 17th Portsmouth (A) 12:00pm
Sat 24th Northampton Tn (H) 11:00am
Sat 31st QPR (A) 10:45am
Sat 14th Leyton Orient (H) 11:00am

* Denotes Puma Youth Alliance Cup Fixture.
All home games to be played at the Colchester Garrison 'B' Ground.

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U16s

Since our last set of notes we have played our final game of the year away at Norwich City, a game that was arranged in order for us to give our U16s players some much needed game time.

The first fixture was an away game against So far this season, their match time has been limited because the U16s take preference as we make decisions on who progresses into the youth team full time.

We also used the game to have a look at a number of trialists who have either been training with us or have been recommended to us.

We also played our U14s goalkeeper who has been doing very well to see if he could move up another level although he is still only 12 years old!

Because of the make up of the side, we do not expect the boys to be as fluent as if we were playing all the contracted players so we emphasise that communication and organisation are key aspects of the game to help the boys get as much from the game as possible.

Stronger

Norwich fielded a side made up of U15s contracted players and trialists as well as one or two U16s trialists so had a stronger presence on the field. We made a poor start when a lack of communication led to a 1 v 1 that our keeper did well to block but the rebound looped up into the net to give Norwich the lead.

The remainder of the half saw Norwich have a majority of the possession with us having only counter attack chances. We had a couple of shots to show for our meagre possession but Norwich made the most of their superior possession to come in leading 4-0 at the break.

We sometimes learn more about our players when things are not going well as they have to stand up and be counted and we see those that are prepared to keep going. We want them to try to do the things we ask of them even when they are getting beaten and one or two of our contracted players were showing us that

they were still hungry to play with things not going according to plan.

The second period followed a very similar pattern to the first with Norwich dominating possession and us having to rely on some breakaway attacks. We only managed a few of these breaks after half time and rarely troubled their goalkeeper as Norwich ran out 8-0 winners.

We always look for positives in all matches and we were pleased with the performances of James Eales, Bradley Hamilton and Kyelan Marvell, all of who are current contracted players. The contribution of one of our trialists Michael Smith was more than good enough in the time he was on for us to invite him back in the New Year and the performance of our young goalkeeper was to be commended.

The boys now go into the Christmas break looking forward to starting again in the New Year but also with a word of warning not to over indulge as they are expected to look after themselves to come back ready to play again.

Good luck to the first team today

Danny King



"We sometimes learn more about our players when things are not going well as they have to stand up and be counted and we see those that are prepared to keep going."

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Centre of Excellence

Having been born in Luton and watching Mick Harford, Mike Newell and Brian Stein score so many goals for Luton as a young season ticket holder, today adds more interest to the game for me!

Naturally I want Luton to be successful, however I certainly want Col U to continue their fine home form and bank another three points this afternoon!

In the development of young players, it is natural to want them to all progress as you build up friendships with the players you coach and support, however it's no secret that not all the players can progress.

It is therefore important not to get too emotionally attached and believe that everything they do is great but we have to take a step back and identify the truth. As coaches, we believe in our players to demonstrate a range of aspects, which we support them in so they can carry them out independently.

This however needs to be tested frequently to ensure the player can carry these out, or to be assisted for improvement.

Decisions

At Colchester, we encourage the players to make decisions for themselves and question them in a way for the players to think about their actions and this also happens with our coaches too.

It is natural for our coaches to think that what they have in their squads is good, especially if they have a great rapport with the players.

The test comes, when decisions need to be made. It will not just be the comments from the coach that decides further progression, or possible release.

It will be action of the player, who has been continually monitored over the months both in training and fixtures. Our coaches are provided with information on how to challenge our players through our coaching syllabus.

As the Centre Development Officer, I

question all our coaches regularly on why they state what they state. Why? I need to understand the reasoning behind their comments.

I need to identify what they are trying to achieve and how it fits in with the performances identified by the player.

I believe that coaches can be blinkered when it comes to debating their own team, but will openly discuss other teams. The telling point comes when people ask questions about their own team and how they respond to the comments and how they will enhance aspects highlighted for improvement.

Constructive criticism is welcomed and although there are people that see this as negative, it actually is positive. It makes you think and helps you to make a decision to enhance.

Negative

If problems are being identified and you do not listen and take on board the criticism to assist you, that is negative.

It's true to say no-one likes being told an aspect, which we think is ok, is not ok and needs improving. The reaction of this is important and will go a long way to making other decisions.

We all believe that Colchester United is progressing ever so well, but no-one at the club thinks we've cracked the big-time of the Championship. We will continue to identify areas for improvement, and continue working on our strengths because that's how hungry we are for more success!

Remember the future is bright - the future is with Col U!

Enjoy the game and continue your great vocal support!

Marc Tracy

U18's Tables

South East Conference

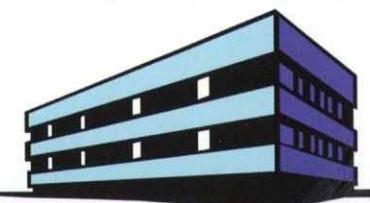
	Pd	W	D	L	F	A	Gd	Pt
Colchester United	10	5	5	0	24	14	10	20
Queens Park Rangers	10	6	2	2	20	12	8	20
Wycombe Wanderers	10	5	3	2	12	5	7	18
Gillingham	10	5	2	3	21	19	2	17
Luton Town	9	5	1	3	16	10	6	16
Brighton & Hove Albion	9	4	3	2	10	9	1	15
Rushden & Diamonds	10	4	2	4	13	20	-7	14
Southend United	10	3	3	4	16	15	1	12
Brentford	10	2	4	4	9	13	-4	10
Northampton Town	10	2	3	5	13	18	-5	9
Leyton Orient	10	2	1	7	7	16	-9	7
Portsmouth	10	1	1	8	7	17	-10	4

FA Youth Alliance Cup Group Three

	Pd	W	D	L	F	A	Gd	Pt
Q Swindon Town	6	4	2	0	12	4	8	14
Q Colchester United	6	4	1	1	14	7	7	13
3 Oxford United	6	2	2	2	8	12	-4	8
4 Gillingham	6	2	1	3	7	10	-3	7
5 Brighton & H.A	6	2	0	4	9	11	-2	6
6 AFC Bournemouth	6	1	2	3	12	12	0	5
7 Southend United	6	1	2	3	5	11	-6	5

Coming Up...

FA Youth Alliance Cup, Southern Semi-Final
 Northampton Town v Colchester United
 Saturday February 24th 2007
 Kick off 11.00am.





the second string

The last reserve match saw the U's second string play host to Conference side Stevenage Borough and it was a somewhat different side to what has played the reserve game previously.

A youthful team took to the Layer Road pitch against Mark Stimson's second string, which included ex-U's striker Tony Thorpe. In an entertaining match, both teams created plenty of chances and the youngsters did well to hold their more experienced visitors to a 2-2 draw.

Manager Geraint Williams watched what could be the next batch to break into the professional ranks and praised them for the way they performed. He told U's Review: "The young lads pleased me with the way they played and the fact that they were all thrown in for the same game made it a tough proposition for them. It was a good chance for them to play on the Layer Road pitch in a competitive game and I hope they all gained something from the match. They need to see where they are at in terms of them progressing at the football club."

"Fabian Quintyn came into the team for what I think is probably his first start at this level and should be very pleased with himself that he got both the goals. It was a tough match, with Stevenage having an experienced front line, but the lads coped well and did themselves no harm at all as they continue learning their trade. Normally, it is just two or three of these lads that would be used at a time as the reserves are usually made up of young professionals and senior lads needing match time for fitness. The Stevenage game saw the youth team players come into the reserves en bloc but they did well both individually and as a group."

Geraint went on to explain why such a young team was selected, saying: "There are a lot of games in a very short space of time over the Christmas period and I may need all the professionals over the next couple of weeks. I decided that it would be prudent to leave the whole squad training together last week in the build up to the busy period. It gave the youth team lads a chance to test themselves against some seasoned opposition and they didn't let me, or themselves for that matter, down."

"They need to be pushed," continued the U's boss, "if they are going to be professional footballers. They have all looked very good as the youth team continue their fantastic start to the season but reserve

football can be a different kettle of fish. Even playing a non-league reserve team like Stevenage meant them playing against players with football league experience. It gives us a good opportunity to look at these lads and see how far they have come and how far they need to come before we can consider them as potential professionals. It also gives them an opportunity to see what is required of them and give them a gauge of how they are progressing."

Ambitious

"Football is a very cut-throat business really," the former Welsh international told us, "because these young lads need to be looking at who is playing in their position in the reserves and do all they can to become a better player than that person to steal his place. The ambitious ones will then straight away look at who is in their position in the first team and want to be better than him. As soon as they step up though, they have to realise that someone else will be looking up at them and be trying to do the same. They might feel that my saying that is putting them under pressure but in football, they will be under pressure to perform in every match, and training session for that matter."

Reserve football serves a purpose for the manager in a number of ways and Geraint continued by telling us that he has not changed his view on what reserve football is about since moving up from reserve manager to first team boss. He also explained why some youngsters are able to adjust to reserve football straight away and look ready to step up to the first team almost immediately.

"I look for very similar things from the reserve games now as I did when I was in charge of them before being made manager here. Every senior player that is not getting a regular game in the first team needs these matches to keep up their match fitness and their sharpness. Training provides a great base for these players but there is nothing like a competitive match to sharpen them up, both physically and mentally. The games give the young professionals valuable experience, especially when we play sides that have big squads and have a lot of senior players involved. And of course, like against Stevenage, an odd occasion crops up when youth team players get involved and add to their football experience."

2006/2007 Reserve Team Fixtures

August

Wed 16th	Southend United (h)	W1-0
Tues 29th	Ipswich Town (a)	L1-3

September

Mon 4th	Norwich City (a)	D2-2
Tues 19th	Leyton Orient (h)	D0-0

October

Tues 9th	MK Dons (a)	W1-0
Weds 25th	Northampton Town (a)	D1-1

November

Weds 8th	Oxford United (h)	P-P
Tues 14th	Luton Town (a)	L0-1

December

Weds 6th	Norwich City (h)	W3-0
Weds 13th	Stevenage Boro (h)	D2-2

January

Tues 9th	Southend United (a)	2pm
Tues 23rd	Leyton Orient (a)	2pm

February

Weds 7th	MK Dons (h)	2pm
Mon 12th	Oxford United (a)	7pm

March

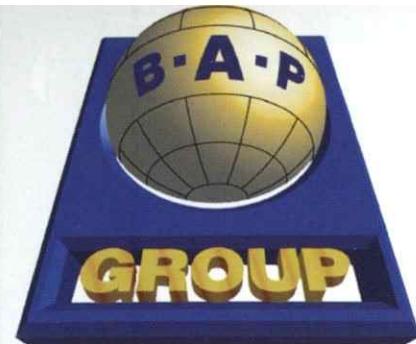
Weds 7th	Northampton Town (h)	2pm
Weds 21st	Ipswich Town (h)	2pm
Weds 28th	Stevenage Boro (a)	7pm

April

Weds 25th	Luton Town (h)	2pm
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"Some young players," Geraint concluded, "are able to make that step up easily because they find it easier to play alongside better players. As long as they are up to the physical side of the game at this level, they seem to be able to raise the level of their football to suit. These do tend to be the lads that push into the first team earlier than other lads but the work they have to do in training and games doesn't lessen. Talent coupled with a good work ethic will succeed over just talent every day and the lads that have both will be the ones to have good careers in the game."





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Ding-Dong Derbies

From the moment the final whistle blew at Huish Park on Saturday, May 6th and promoted the U's to the Championship for the first time in their history, the buzz on the terraces was about the local feel to the next season's fixture list.

Whilst the big guns of Sunderland, West Brom, Leeds et al awaited Geraint Williams and his men, the host of fixtures against sides from the East Anglian region were the ones that were proving to be tantalising fare for the club's supporters.

So far, the U's have come up against four of their most local rivals and the facts are plain to see. Colchester United remain the pride of East Anglia by some considerable margin.

A quick look at the current Championship table (and lets face it, we've all been transfixed by it over the past few weeks!) indeed shows that, across the twenty-three fixtures to date, the U's are the top performers of the local clubs.

Ahead of the weekend trip to Preston, the U's sat eight points ahead of both Ipswich and Norwich.

And, thanks to a fantastic run of results in the first half of the season, the U's sit a whopping 21 points ahead of their Essex neighbours Southend, who remain at the foot of the table.

But what about fixtures amongst the local teams? With the East Anglian mini-leagues at their halfway point, we take a look at how things stand with some help from supporter Andy Crockett.

Without Luton:
After three games apiece, and half-way



● Freddy Eastwood hits the post with this last-gasp chance for Southend at Luton recently.

Table with Luton...	HOME				AWAY				OVERALL															
	P	W	D	L	F	A	Gd	Pt	P	W	D	L	F	A	Gd	Pt								
Ipswich Town	2	2	0	0	8	1	7	6	2	1	0	1	3	2	1	3	4	3	0	1	1	3	8	9
Colchester United	2	2	0	0	4	0	4	6	2	0	2	0	2	2	0	2	4	2	2	0	6	2	4	8
Norwich City	2	1	1	0	4	3	1	4	2	0	1	1	4	6	-2	1	4	1	2	1	8	9	1	5
Southend United	2	0	1	1	4	6	-2	1	2	0	1	1	0	3	-3	1	4	0	2	2	4	9	5	2
Luton Town	2	0	2	0	1	1	0	2	2	0	0	2	2	8	-6	0	4	0	2	2	3	9	6	2

Table without Luton...	HOME				AWAY				OVERALL														
	P	W	D	L	F	A	Gd	Pt	P	W	D	L	F	A	Gd	Pt							
Colchester United	2	2	0	0	4	0	4	6	1	0	1	0	1	3	2	1	0	5	1	4	7		
Ipswich Town	1	1	0	0	3	1	2	3	2	1	0	1	3	2	1	3	3	2	0	1	6	3	6
Norwich City	1	0	1	0	1	1	0	1	2	0	1	1	4	6	-2	1	3	0	2	1	5	7	2
Southend United	2	0	1	1	4	6	-2	1	1	0	0	1	0	3	-3	0	3	0	1	2	4	9	5

Results...

Norwich City 3-2 Luton Town
Luton Town 1-1 Colchester United
Southend United 3-3 Norwich City
Colchester United 1-0 Ipswich Town
Southend United 1-3 Ipswich Town
Ipswich Town 5-0 Luton Town
Norwich City 1-1 Colchester United
Ipswich Town 3-1 Norwich City
Colchester United 3-0 Southend United
Luton Town 0-0 Southend United



through the East Anglian Mini-League, The Mighty U's maintain their position at the head of the table, after a convincing 3-0 victory over the Shrimpers at Layer Road.

Earlier, Ipswich had kicked off their home campaign with a 3-1 win against auld enemy Norwich, after coming back from 1-0 behind. With just a point so far and only one home game remaining against guess who, Southend may struggle to get off the bottom of the table, but Norwich are hardly pulling up trees at the moment, and could easily be caught.

At the top, with two home games still to play, Ipswich may fancy their chances of overtaking the U's, but only if they can prevent an A12 derby double for the U's at Portman Road on 20th January - bring it on!

With Luton:

The Luton v Southend goalless draw eleven days ago brought up the halfway point for the mini-league (including Luton), and maintained both team's unenviable records of failing to win any matches so far against East Anglian rivals - though it was the first point for Southend on their travels.

But for a dreadful open goal miss by Freddy Eastwood in the dying seconds, the Shrimpers could have left Luton with all three points, which would have condemned their hosts to just a solitary point cast adrift at the foot of the table.

As it is, both of the bottom two face tricky away ties on Boxing Day, with struggling Luton next to try their luck at the Layerdome. A win for the U's will see them jump ahead of Ipswich to the top of the table going into 2007, setting things up nicely for Round Two of the A12 Derby on 20th January.

A golden opportunity



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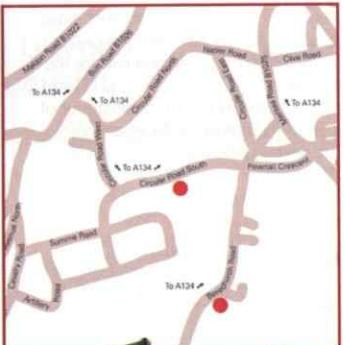
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SEVEN DEADLY SINS

...WITH CHRIS IWELUMO

PRIDE

WHAT ARE YOU MOST PROUD OF AWAY FROM FOOTBALL?
 My wife Bianca and our two girls, Prisais and Novia.

ENVY

WHICH CELEBRITY ARE YOU MOST JEALOUS OF AND WOULD LIKE TO SWAP LIFESTYLES WITH?
 Roger Federer because he is at the top of his sport by a mile and is a pure genius with a tennis racket.

GLUTTONY

IF YOUR PARTNER OFFERED TO TAKE YOU OUT FOR A HUGE SLAP-UP MEAL, WHERE WOULD YOU GO?
 A nice Italian restaurant and I would have crepe de pollo asparagus to start followed by linguine aragosa, washed down with a couple of Peroni lagers. I once chose something different but didn't like it so always have the same now.

LUST

IF MONEY WAS NO OBJECT, WHAT IS NUMBER ONE ON YOUR WISH LIST?
 I'd look after my family and friends by making sure they were financially secure for life. Then I'd travel the world in luxury.

ANGER

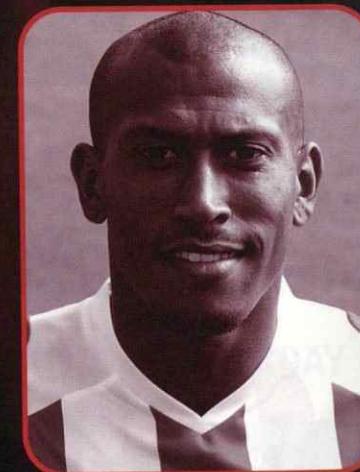
WHAT IS THE ONE THING THAT WINDS YOU UP THE MOST?
 I never used to have a problem with Pat but he has been unbearable for the last couple of weeks, so Pat Baldwin.

GREED

IS THERE SOMETHING IN YOUR LIFE YOU FEEL YOU CAN NEVER HAVE TOO MUCH OR MANY OF?
 You can never have too many true friends; the type that you know you can rely on during the bad times as well as the good times.

SLOTH

IF, AFTER A GAME, YOU'RE TOLD TO PUT YOUR FEET UP FOR A COUPLE OF DAYS, HOW DO YOU LIKE TO RELAX?
 I'd take the girls out swimming to kill two birds with one stone. I could do my warm down in the pool and it also gives Bianca some peace and quiet at home for a while.



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To Irene Kettle, Editor,
Evening Gazette
From Peter Heard,
Chairman, Colchester
United

Dear Irene

We are now on the home straight for the new stadium and we hope to get contractors on site early in the new year so the stadium can open in December 2007.

I think this is the appropriate moment for me to write on behalf of everyone at Colchester United to personally thank you and your team at the Gazette for your terrific initiative to get the stadium campaign going and your ongoing persistence resulting in support from over 30,000 people.

I am sure this helped to concentrate councillors' minds. Not only will the new stadium provide a much-needed new base for the club, but it will bring fresh hope, prestige and civic pride to the town.

Yours sincerely

P.J. Heard

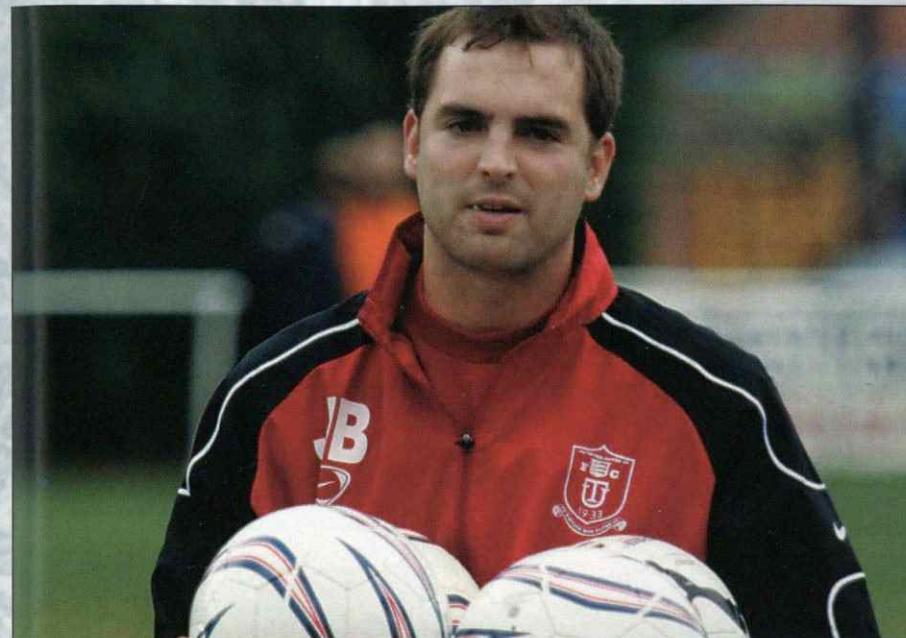
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evening gazette

John Pakey and Jonathan Waldron take a look at the goings on in and around the local non-league scene...



TWO OF the region's non-league clubs have experienced mixed fortunes in the FA Trophy.

While HEYBRIDGE SWIFTS' run in the competition came to an abrupt end at Nationwide Conference club Exeter City, BRAINTREE TOWN booked their passage in the Second Round.

Heybridge, who are currently riding high in the Ryman League Premier Division, always knew that their task would be a tough one at St James' Park.

And it did not help that the majority of their fans did not arrive in Devon until midway through the second half, following a huge traffic jam on the M4. By that time Swifts were already 2-0 down to their hosts, following goals from Matt Gill and Billy Jones.

The presence of the travelling support helped inspire Swifts for a time. However, it was Exeter who scored a third through Bertie Cozic from close range, to wrap up victory.

There was better news of BRAINTREE TOWN, who sealed their place in the Second Round thanks to a win over Ryman League Premier Division outfit, Ashford Town (Middlesex).

It was a relatively routine victory for Iron, who were seemingly boosted by the earlier news that their

planning application for Cressing Road had been granted approval by Braintree District Council.

Eugene Ofori converted Billy Burgess's assist to give Iron the lead and although the underdogs put up a brave effort, Braintree were in control. They made it 2-0 three minutes after half-time through captain Bradley Quinton and secured victory thanks to James Baker's goal.

Braintree will now play away at either Farnborough Town or Bath City in the next round of the competition, on January 13th.

Colchester United youth coach Jody Brown (pictured) is enjoying a good run at TIPTREE UNITED. Brown, who coaches the U13s and U14s teams at Layer Road, has guided his team to seventh spot in the Ridgeons League Division One table.

They kept up their climb towards the top of the table with an important 2-1 win at Gorleston.

James Robinson and Tom English scored the goals in the first half and there was no way back for Gorleston.

The victory means the Jam Makers, who have been in prolific form, have lost only one of their last 11 Division One matches.



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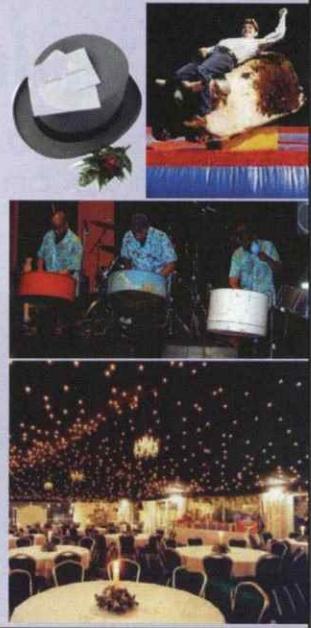
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home and away

part two.....

Former U's press officer Colin Wood has just returned to the UK following a stint at Perth Glory and a spell travelling around South East Asia. Following his first piece in the Stoke matchday mag, he continues his tales today...

Having returned to Australia in May my brain hadn't really absorbed the upcoming prospect of Championship football. After a while, I would be off to Southeast Asia and was unsure how easy it may be to follow the U's (and football in general) as I wandered across some fairly underdeveloped countries.

My first stop was the wealthy city-state of Singapore and I was glad to see young lads playing football in the long grass of the park opposite where I stayed. The World Cup was in evidence all over the city and I soon learned that English football is massively popular across Asia.

In Malaysia I made the mistake of telling a taxi driver I worked in football. This instantly convinced him that I would know the result of every Premiership game before it took place and he demanded my phone number, fully expecting he could make a killing from me in Sports Lotto bets.

Before setting off to a rainforest national park I stayed in Kuala Lumpur an extra couple of days to see England dumped out of the World Cup, assuming there would be no satellite TV in the jungle. On arrival I found Liverpool, Chelsea and England posters in the rustic floating river restaurants though. Some tribal villagers even had satellite dishes beaming the World Cup into their huts.

When you tell local people in countries like Thailand that you are from England their response is either: 'Beckham', 'Rooney', or 'World Cup.' This became quite tedious after the national team's woeful performance but at least I didn't have to say I am Australian because the only response I ever heard to that was: 'kangaroo!'

Even some of the most underdeveloped countries in the region, like Laos and Cambodia, are crazy about English football and, with internet available in some of the most remote places I could easily follow the U's progress climbing the Championship after a tough start.

The passion for English football is so great that I travelled on a 'You'll Never Walk Alone' emblazoned bus from Bangkok, saw a kitten wearing a Liverpool collar in Chiang Mai and watched Watford take on Manchester United in Vientiane, capital of Laos.



● Is that a genuine replica shirt?...

A plethora of fake Premiership shirts are worn including Manchester City shirts with a 'Carlsberg' logo on the front and Man U shirts displaying both Nike and Adidas badges. My favourite was a white football shirt with a big black '10' on the back. It was obviously supposed to be an England shirt, illustrated by the star striker's name above the number: 'OVEN'!

In Bangkok I discovered, courtesy of a U's fan in Stockholm, that the Colchester v Ipswich match was being shown in a bar with a dodgy satellite in the Thai capital. Crushing, time differences and having to catch a flight in the early hours meant I couldn't watch the game but I was delighted to receive a text message from my brother revealing that Doogie had scored the precious winner.

In Vietnam, Borneo and Indonesia you can easily strike up a conversation about English football and it gives you a bit of pride in the old country.

Unfortunately, the words 'Colchester United' are normally met with a blank look but I explained; 'like Manchester United, just a little bit smaller,' which I think is fair enough.

It was great to monitor the U's journey from summer uncertainty to rising stars of the Championship as I travelled across Asia but I couldn't wait to see the team at first hand and see how the club may have changed. Returning in November quite conveniently tied in with the home games against Southend and Hull.

I popped down to training the day before

the derby match and said hello to the new manager.

"Nothing changes around here mate," he told me.

"But you're the gaffer now George," I said.
"That's different isn't it?"

"Yeah, but you know what it's like, nothing really changes that much," he smiled.

"Where has Doogie been playing this year?"

"Everywhere mate," George chuckled as he wandered off to address the players. "See, I told you nothing changes."

But something has changed. The signs around Layer Road are subtle; a few new licks of paint, probably more advertising around the ground and a funny little stand in front of the Portakabin in which I used to work.

The ground is certainly a lot more lively and packed than two years ago, with chanting from all corners of the 'fortress' a delight to see and hear.

I had to pinch myself. Not at the fact we were beating Southend 3-0 or comfortably humiliating Hull 5-1 but for the fact we were doing it in the Championship.

The football is good and, as the boss said after the 3-1 win at Palace, you can see the Colchester players enjoying more time on the ball in this division.

Things have never been so good! Let's make sure we savour what we are witnessing now and long may it continue.

Colin Wood

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championship chat

Who said what around the division this week...

"Danny is the type of player with the right quality and mentality we need and there's no doubt that I'd welcome him back."

"He's made a reference to an affinity for Hull City and I think he's right that anybody who comes here, comes to a good training complex and a good set of lads and hopefully good quality coaching sessions."

"We've not hidden the fact we've been in contact with Danny to see how he is because he left us injured and I think we have a duty to the players who have been here on loan to make sure they are okay."

"If I'm still in charge, I don't know if money will be made available. I know the chairman has invested heavily this season already so to ask for more money now just because of the situation would be remiss of me."

"I'll probably have to conjure up two or three loan signings from now until the end of the season."

"I think the squad definitely needs addressing in January in terms of numbers apart from anything else. If I'm still manager in January I'll be looking at the chairman to improve the squad by two or three."

Temporary Hull boss Phil Brown (below) considers his transfer options in January

"These players have got until that transfer window opens to get back to what they were doing."

"Rather than look for two or three players, I

might have to go to Peter and say I need six or seven because these aren't doing it. I don't think that's the case because these players got us to the top. But I've got the gun and I'm saying don't give me the bullet, because I will fire it."

"There's too many sitting in that dressing room feeling sorry for themselves. We are going through a patch where you are looking for characters to come to the forefront, but they didn't do that today. Those players haven't lost that character, but our decision-making was poor. We've lost our way but we've got to keep pounding away at it."

Cardiff City chief Dave Jones is looking for more from his players over the Christmas period

"The past month was a difficult one for us and although the results weren't as we might have hoped, we deserved more than we actually got."

"But that has gone now and I think the Christmas period will be one of the toughest spells. You always need to pick up as many points as you can because it can be a turning point in the league."

"If you can have a good Christmas, it can put you right in contention and that's where we want to be, up among the big clubs."

Chris McCann hopes that Burnley can reignite their season with a good run of results

"The media spotlight is going to be there all the time now."

I only spoke to Martin O'Neill a couple of weeks ago and he never mentioned Upson to me.

"Where that has come from, I don't know. It could be pie in the sky and typical of the journalist involved. We have got Matthew for 18 months, so there is no real big rush. I have to protect our investment. Unless it is an ridiculous offer, and every player has got his price, nothing is happening."

"If we have to sell Matt in the summer, that might be more advantageous to all of us and more advantageous to Matthew, too."

Steve Bruce rebuffs speculation linking Matthew Upson with Aston Villa

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hall of fame

The arrival of 2007 in a few month's time will mark the 70th anniversary of Colchester United's formation.

Over the years, there have been many iconic players to have pulled on the famous blue and white stripes, with last year's promotion winning heroes no doubt writing their names into the club's history books as we start our first ever season in the Championship.

In this year's matchday magazine, we will be launching the quest for the first entrants into the club's Hall of Fame. It is hoped, by the end of the current season, we will be inaugurating the first five faces of Colchester United into the Hall of Fame, which will take its place at the stadium – and at Cuckoo Farm when we move to the new stadium.

The rules of how to submit your favourite player for the Hall of Fame are elsewhere on this page, and this week the nominator is Julian Ewers...

Who are you nominating?
My nomination would be for striker Bobby Svarc.

Why are they worthy of inclusion?
The records will show that Bobby scored about 60 goals in about 120 odd games between 1972 and 1975. A good enough ratio, and so many of them were spectacular volleys or flying headers.

Sum up their influence on the team at the time, on and off the pitch.
The 1972/73 season started with the Dick Graham still in charge, but the Leeds glory days were miles away.

Grahams granddads had been replaced by Grahams grandchildren, a really young inexperienced squad wearing a gimmicky all white strip with red boots and we were soon rooted to the bottom of the League.

Graham left the post early on to be replaced by Jim Smith and one of Jim's first signings was Bobby Svarc from Jim's old club Boston United.

I think they may have played together previously for Lincoln as well.

We eventually finished third from bottom, securing re-election comfortably. Svarc got about three in 15 games. Nothing spectacular, but he was in an awful side.

The following season Jim Smith added three or four top players. Mike Walker, Barry Dyson, Ray Harford spring to mind.

One of the best (until recent times) U's sides ever stormed through the League to promotion, spearheaded by the magnificent

Svarc who slammed home 25 or 26 from all angles.

Name one defining match/moment for that player.

This included the best individual performance I've ever seen by a U's player. A cold midweek away trip to Chester City and I binned off school.

A 4-0 victory and Svarc scoring all four even though the morning Nationals gave two goals to Leslie and Cook. I knew who'd got the lot and the Gazette pictures the next night proved it.

The following season we actually topped Division Three (now League One) for some time - Svarc was now re-united with his old Boston strike partner John Froggett and again hit 24 or 25 goals at the higher level.

Bobby followed the now departed Jim Smith to Blackburn Rovers early in 75/76 for a rumoured £40,000. That'd be some transfer fee nowadays. A serious injury curtailed his career soon afterwards.

How did the fans relate to this person?

Any goalscorer is always a hit with the fans and Bobby was no exception. There were rumours that off the pitch he wasn't always that approachable and a friend of mine that played for the youth team at that time said he was a very quiet private person.

Bobby was my first real U's hero, I'd had favourite players before, Micky Brown, Danny Light, Ray Crawford, and obviously many since but my memories of all those wonderful Svarc goals have always stayed with me for some reason.

Which game did you first see them play?

I remember his debut vaguely, although not who it was against. It was very foggy, may even have been abandoned but I do recall Bobby running through the opposition defence for a one on one with the keeper. He missed, but there was just something about his style that appealed to this 13 year old.

How would they fit into/ manage this season's side?

Fitting into today's side? It'd be a straight choice between Bobby and Jamie Cureton. They're quite similar in stature and style so not sure they could play together. To be honest I couldn't really split them and believe me, for me to say that is massive compliment to Curo.

Pictures for the Hall of Fame feature are kindly provided by the Evening Gazette from their fantastic photographic archives. We would like to thank them for their support!

Rules for Election to the Colchester United Hall of Fame

1. Authorisation By authorisation of the Board of Directors of Colchester United, the CUFC Hall of Fame Committee is authorised to hold an election every year for the purpose of electing members to the Colchester United Hall of Fame from the ranks of retired players and coaching staff.

2. Eligible Candidates Candidates to be eligible must meet the following requirements:

- A player must have played First Team football for Colchester United.
- A player must have made a minimum of fifty (50) appearances for Colchester United.
- The player must have retired from professional football except in the case of the point below.
- Any player that has played for Colchester United for ten consecutive seasons.
- All managers of Colchester United, or other members of coaching staff with more than three years service.

3. Method of Election Eligible candidates will be nominated by fans of Colchester United who will be asked to support their nomination which will be included in the match day magazine.

In April, fans will be invited to vote for two candidates from the nominations.

The two nominations receiving the most votes will be elected to the Colchester United Hall of Fame

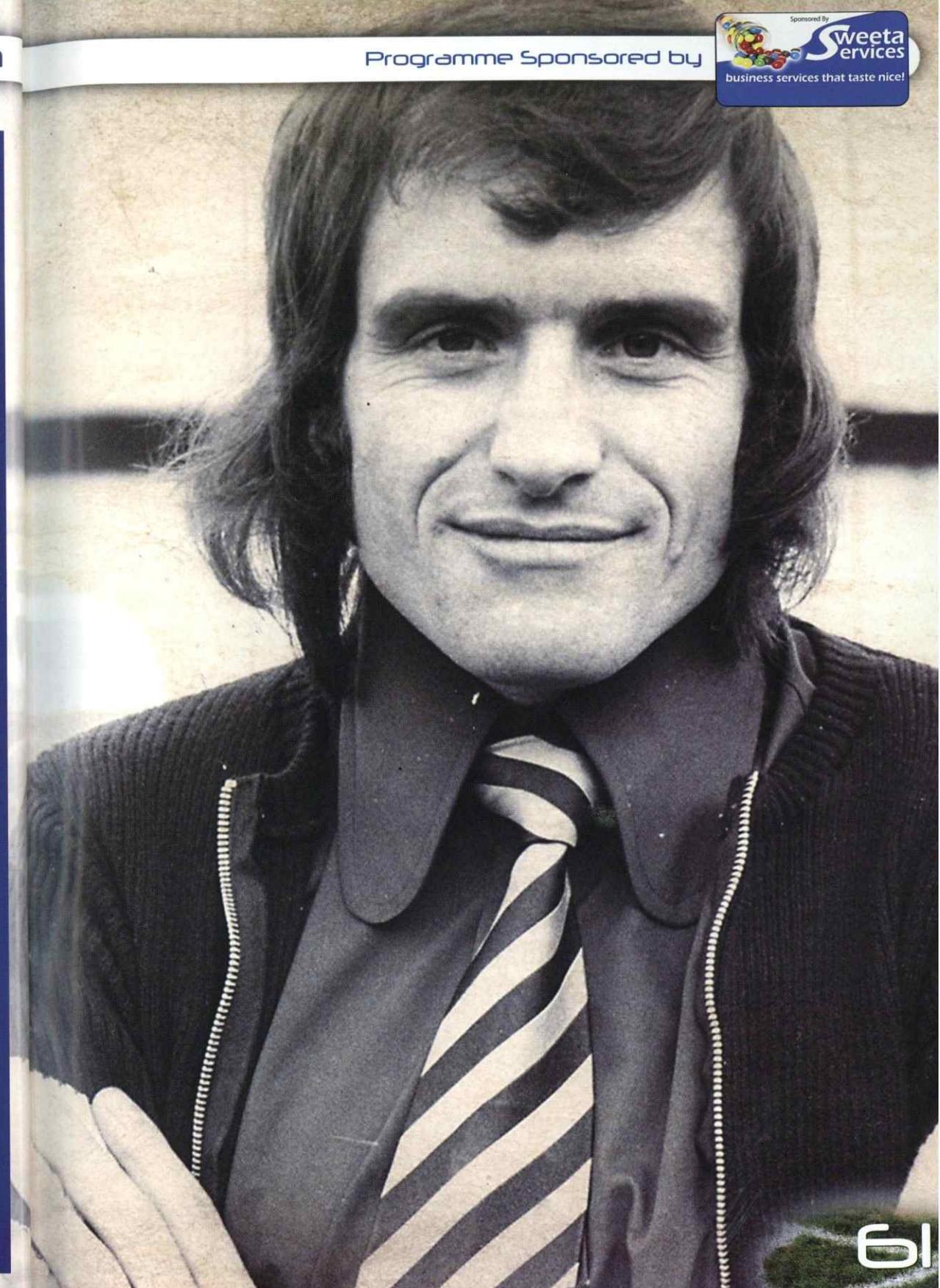
A Hall of Fame committee featuring at least six people (three fans, two staff members and at least one player) will then meet to select the final two nominations to be elected to the Hall of Fame

4. Voting Voting shall be based upon the player's record, playing ability, integrity, sportsmanship, character, and contributions to the team(s) on which the player played.

5. Automatic Elections No automatic elections based on performances such as hat-tricks, clean sheets, or other notable achievements will occur.

6. Amendments The Board of Directors of Colchester United reserves the right to revoke, alter or amend these rules at any time.

At the final home game of the season, those players elected to the Hall of Fame or descendants thereof, will be invited on to the pitch at halftime where they will receive a memento of their election. When the Hall of Fame has reached a suitable number of inductees there will be a celebration dinner to be held.





Chris is pictured here with his guests at the Stoke City game, Meadow Youth FC U9s



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Match Sponsors at our last home game against Stoke City were CJ Firminger Builders. Their group are pictured below on the pitch ahead of kick off.

Matchball Sponsors at our last home game against the Potters were Colchester Institute. Danny Clough and Kati Vardon are seen bottom with John Schultz receiving their ball.

Hospitality is still available for a limited number of games this season.

Having hospitality at Layer Road – in our new look lounge – is an exciting option, whether you're a business or an individual

looking to celebrate a special occasion why not join us for a game.

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- Complimentary match programme and team sheet
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If you are interested, give Julie or Jason a call on 01206 715306 or e-mail commerial@colchesterunited.net

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The 50/50 Draw continues to provide additional revenue for the club and recently three winners have received cheques for over £300. Please look out for sellers around the ground to buy tickets at £1 each.

Check your ticket!

At the time of going to press, the winner for the Hull City match has STILL not been claimed, so if you are holding ticket number 86348 please advise a steward or ring Tony Newsham in the Lottery Department on 01206 715320.

Please also use the same number if you wish to join the Gold Bond Lottery as a member or an agent.

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He has proven himself to be a leader on the pitch in the first half of the Championship season and U's captain Karl Duguid has also led the way with the Layer Road side's Club Savers Account.

The U's have teamed up with the Norwich & Peterborough Building Society to offer up a savings scheme for all fans, and Doogie was first to sign up for an account at the Colchester branch just over a week ago.

The Colchester number seven was a popular visitor to the bank, with fans flocking in to see him on their lunchbreaks.

You can follow Doogie by signing up to an account. It's easy to get up and running - the online application form only takes a few minutes - and you will receive interest on all the money you save.

What's more, the more you save, the more your club benefits as each year Colchester United will earn a bonus based on the average total balance held in all the club savers' accounts in the previous twelve months.

And, for the busy fans amongst you, it's really easy to manage your account online and the more you save, the more interest you will earn.

You can choose to save a lump sum, make regular savings or simply save whenever you can, and remember, for every pound you save, you'll increase the bonus that Colchester United FC will receive!

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For the Ladies...

The U's players have provided some fantastic entertainment for the club's supporters over the past few months and the stats make fantastic reading.

The boys have one of the best home records in the Championship, no team has scored more goals than Geraint Williams' men and the football on show has often been a delight to watch.

But, at the start of 2007, there will be entertainment of a different kind for the female element of the Layer Road crowd.

We will be putting on a very special evening of fun and laughter for the ladies as Colchester United host their first ever 'Hen Night' special.

The event, to be held on Thursday 25th January 2007, will take place at Lexden Wood Golf Club. And, whilst we're sure that a few of the lads in blue and white tickle your fancy, there will be a host of hunks on offer for this evening!

As well as the entertainment provided by David Blaze and friends, there will also be a two course meal on offer and a comedian to provide plenty of laughs!

All of this is available for just £30 a head!

To find out more and to book your place, call 01206 715306 or e-mail commercial@colchesterunited.net!

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C.U.C.S.T

All the latest from the Colchester United Community Sports Trust...

Christmas arrived early for the Colchester United Community Sports Trust as they were recognised for their outstanding work in the community at the recent Colchester & District Business Awards organised by the Evening Gazette earlier this month...

The Awards, now into their eighth year, have been successfully recognising local companies, businesses and charities in Colchester across a wide variety of business sectors and aim to promote the town of Colchester as a prestigious and progressive development area.

Competition

The Sports Trust faced stiff competition in the Community/Charity category sponsored by Spicerhaart, with widely known names such as St Helena Hospice, Essex Air Ambulance and the Essex Wildlife Trust also nominated.

Speaking on behalf of the Sports Trust, Chair of Trustees, Darren Barrenger was understandably delighted to be recognised alongside such high profile names.

He said: "It is an honour to receive an award such as this and a fantastic accolade to all of the staff at the Sports Trust, who work tirelessly in the community delivering a diverse range of sporting, educational and social opportunities, touching the lives of some 8,000 young people every single week!"

It has been an incredible year for the Sports Trust, as the only football in the community scheme to be awarded 'Investors in People' in January, the Trust, in April then went on to open the fantastic £1.3 million Shrub End & Community Sports Centre in partnership with Colchester Borough Council.

Develop

Darren added: "We have worked very hard to continuously develop our organisation, our new trading company Inspiring Communities Limited began operating to create even more opportunities for young people within Colchester and North Essex. Last month, working with our partners in Colchester Borough Council and the football club, we also succeeded in securing the finance to build the new Colchester Community Stadium.

"So this award brings to a close a wonderful year for the Trust which is reflected in the increase

in opportunities we are now delivering."

The Colchester United Community Sports Trust is dedicated to developing positive opportunities to every young person offering them the chance to play and learn, regardless of experience, skill level or athletic ability.

Christmas is coming

And once all the festivities are over it's back to work for some of us so why not give your child some childcare with a difference and spend Christmas with the U's.

The Community Holiday Club will be open before Christmas and also in the run up to the New Year.

The holiday club provides safe learning childcare for the local community offering opportunities for children to participate in sport and play activities during the school holidays.

The range of activities on offer are varied and encompass three distinct zones;

SPORTS ZONE Tennis, football, basketball, cricket, table tennis and uni hockey

CREATIVE ZONE Arts & crafts, cooking, reading and other educational activities

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Want to know more?

Staff at the Community Sports Trust are always out in the community providing a range of activities in North and Central Essex.

Information on all of the Community Sports Trust's Activities can be found at our brilliant website www.cucst.org.uk or contact the Community Soccer Centre on 01206 572378 or email info@cucst.org.uk



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u's ladies

Broken up for Christmas...

The Ladies are now on their Christmas Break but have finished off the first half of the season in great style.

Last weekend they signed off for the year with a great 4-1 win over Gillingham to book themselves a place in the semi final of the league cup.

This adds to the already great run in the Women's F.A. Cup sponsored by Eon, where the girls will travel to national league opponents Aston Villa for their Fourth Round tie and first game of 2007.

Second

In addition to this the Ladies have been comfortably occupying second place in the league for the majority of the season and are one point off of league leaders Northampton.

If their fine form in the league continues this could be the season the ladies finally achieve their goal of reaching the Premier League, a double promotion prospect alongside the men's team would be a fantastic and fitting end to the season.

Involved

From everyone in the Ladies Club have a good Christmas and a Happy New Year and we thank you all for your fantastic support this season so far.

Involved

The ladies club receive no financial backing from any organisation. It costs the Ladies Club £500 per season per player just to train and play. If you want to be involved with the highest placed Ladies Club in Essex visit www.culfc.com and download a sponsor pack.

We are grateful to those of you who have already agreed to sponsor a player and their details are displayed below.

To keep up to date with the ladies progress in the South East Combination League and the Women's F.A. Cup just visit www.culfc.com for all the latest news.

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C.U.F.C. Ladies FIXTURES 2006/2007

August

Sun 20th	Northampton	W2-1
Sun 27th	Gillingham	W6-1

September

Sun 3rd	Langford	W5-0
Sun 10th	Enfield Town	W3-2
Sun 17th	Bedford	L1-3
Sun 24th	Rushden & Diamonds	W1-0

October

Sun 1st	Norwich City	W1-0
Sun 8th	Leyton Orient	W1-0
Sun 15th	Ipswich	D0-0
Sun 22nd	Norwich City Canaries	W2-0
Sun 29th	Oxford City (WFAC1)	W6-1

November

Sun 5th	Whitehawk	W6-0
Sun 12th	Gillingham (WFAC2)	W7-2
Sun 19th	Rushden & Diamonds	L1-5
Sun 26th	League Cup, 1st Round	P-P

December

Sun 3rd	Bedford (WFAC3)	W3-2
Sun 10th	Langford	Away
Sun 17th	Gillingham	W4-1

January

Sun 7th	Aston Villa (WFAC4)	Away
Sun 14th	Norwich City	Away
Sun 21st	Leyton Orient	Home
Sun 28th	Ipswich	Away

February

Sun 4th	League Cup 1/4 Finals	
Sun 11th	Norwich City Canaries	Home
Sun 18th	Whitehawk	Away
Sun 25th	League Cup Semi Finals	

TBA	Northampton	Home
TBA	Bedford	Away
TBA	Enfield Town	Home



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a look back at...

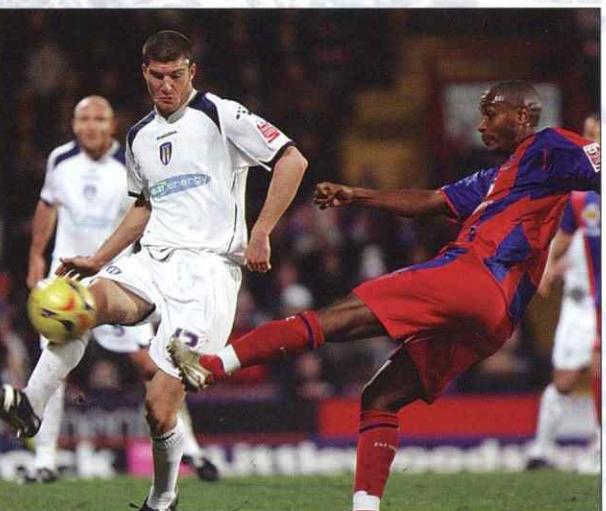
crystal palace U's 3



The U's defence stays strong



Kevin Watson in midfield action



Pat Baldwin battles for the ball

Pictures courtesy of Neil Everett



Karl Duguid blocks this effort



Pat Baldwin closes in on Clinton Morrison



U's subs: Garcia for Jackson 60
Bluebirds subs: Flinders for Turner 24,
Green for Watson 73, Scowcroft for Kuqi 73

clock watch...

15:10 Dean Gerken reacts quickest to turn away a fierce Jobi McAnuff shot to preserve the U's clean sheet

15:19 Jamie Cureton forces a fine save out of Palace stopper Iain Turner, who shows good strength to turn the ball round the post.

15:41 There is a melee in the U's box as a Shefki Kuqi shot is blocked on the line and the visitors struggle to clear the ball before the ref blows for a free kick.

16:18 The U's take the lead just after the hour mark as Karl Duguid reacts quickest to a mistake by substitute goalkeeper Scott Flinders to bundle the ball home.

16:26 Colchester double their lead on 70 minutes as Richard Garcia strides forward and smashes the ball home past the goalkeeper.

16:43 The hosts pull one back as Clinton Morrison is on hand to head home past Dean Gerken from close range.

16:45 Chris Iwelumo seals the points from the penalty spot as he sends Scott Flinders the wrong way.

turning point: The introduction of Richard Garcia not only gave the U's a positive impetus going forward, but also negated the attacking play of Danny Granville down the Palace left. The Aussie's goal also played a big part in the Colchester win.

man of the match: Jamie Cureton





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Another missed chance

by Paul Symes

sport@croydonadvertiser.co.uk

THREE days after the event, it is still difficult to fathom exactly how the Eagles contrived to lose this game.

Saturday was a story of missed opportunities, as chances came and went with increasing regularity in a first half utterly dominated by the home side.

But a second-half capitulation not seen since Loftus Road last month meant the Eagles slumped to their first defeat in five matches.

Speaking afterwards, Palace manager Peter Taylor bemoaned his side's display after the break.

He said: "We lost the game because of the way we played in the second half. We were nowhere near good enough, though in fairness to Colchester they played a lot better."

Yet it had all started so brightly for Palace, who could have been two goals to the good within the first five minutes.

First midfielder Michael Hughes swung his right boot at the ball, forcing Colchester keeper Dan Gerken into a smart save.

Then Clinton Morrison teed up Jobi McAnuff, but the winger betrayed a shortfall of confidence in front of goal with a weak effort.

Five minutes later it was the same story, with McAnuff again shooting tamely at Gerken when well placed.

As the pressure on the visitors continued, first Morrison and then McAnuff again had presentable opportunities to open the scoring, only to spurn them.

At the other end Colchester captain Carl Duguid fired a volley narrowly wide of Iain Turner's goal.

Jamie Cureton did test the Palace keeper moments later, the young Scot leaping to his left to deny Cureton the opener. It was a great strike, and an even better save.

But that was Turner's last act, as the loanee was forced from the field moments later with an apparent groin strain.



Thwarted: Jobi McAnuff tries his luck against Colchester United last Saturday

Picture by Ian Stattor: No.53443E/1

Palace 1	Colchester 3
Morrison 87	Duguid 63, Garcia 70, Iwelumo (pen) 90
8	Shots on target 7
12	Shots off target 6
6	Offside 3
8	Corners 3
10	Fouls 10
Attendance: 16,762	

Taylor said: "I was hoping he would be able to continue, but it was obvious there was a problem."

Scott Flinders replaced Turner but for now it was his counterpart Gerken who was the busier keeper, keeping out Hughes' cross-cum-shot.

Flinders was then forced to make a save of his own, when Cureton blasted the ball goalwards after a mistake from Darren Ward.

Before the break some intricate approach play ended with the ball at Sheki Kuqi's feet, but the muscular Finn blazed high into the Whitehorse Lane End.

Morrison then did likewise from Kuqi's knock down in the 40th minute.

Kuqi himself had an even better chance on the stroke of half-time, but headed straight at Gerken.

The beginning of the second period saw a succession of chances for Palace but, as in the first, there was little in the way of end product.

At the other end Cureton served notice of his side's attacking intent with a shot which flew narrowly wide of the target.

As the end-to-end nature of the contest continued Morrison spun in the box, before curling a shot goalwards which Gerken clawed away to safety.

Then in the 63rd minute, Palace were rocked by a goal against the run of play. Cureton's deflected cross was pushed onto the bar by Flinders, and Duguid followed up from all of a yard to hand the visitors a shock lead.

Morrison then did likewise from Kuqi's knock down in the 40th minute.

Seven minutes later matters took a further turn for the worse when substitute Richard Garcia made two with a sublime left-foot strike from 20 yards.

The double blow took the wind out of Palace's sails, though they did threaten to salvage an unlikely point when Morrison headed home from close range three minutes from time.

But it proved to be no mere consolation, as Cureton's stoppage-time penalty had been felled in the box ensured Colchester's first at Selhurst Park for 43 years.

Colchester: Gerken; Halford, Brown, Baldwin, Barker; Duguid, Izzet, Watson, Jackson (Garcia 60); Cureton, Iwelumo. Subs not used: Cousins, Guy, Elokobi, McLeod. Referee: R Lewis.

He said: "It's always a good experience for the lads to play at Selhurst Park in front of a bigger-than-normal crowd. "You've just got to be careful they can handle it. But many of the lads who played against Stoke had experienced it last year, so I was confident they would perform." And so they did.

International been tripped in the '90s too often. But Moses' shot was too close to Stoke. Steven Ryan. Buoyed by the Stoke then ended their best spell in the game. Issott said: "I've thought maybe started too well with the lads. "But all credit to the lads, because they

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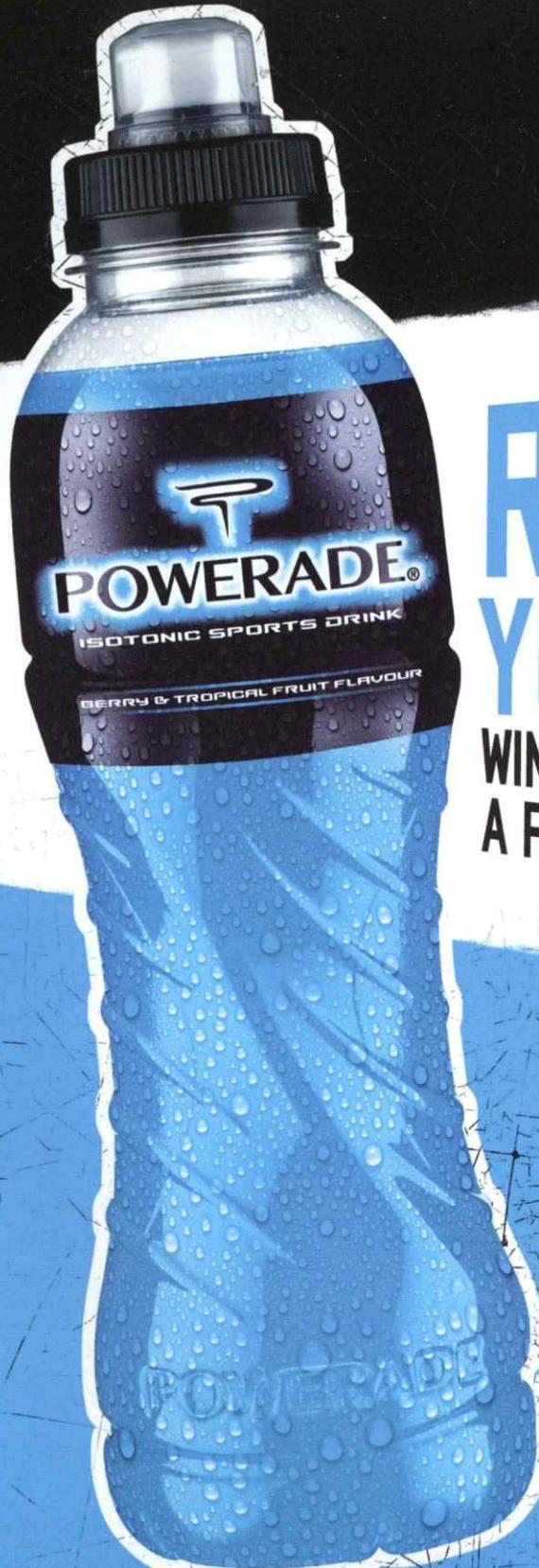
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geoffrey's away days

One of our new features for this season is the thoughts and tales of Geoffrey Squire...

Catching the 8.49 to London was a close run thing.

As always with catching a train, Dan was running late, and we literally only just got on. The doors were in the process of closing, so it's lucky Dan's quite a slim fella! We were on our way to The Hamilton Hall from some

Crosse Keys. The place was deserted and was ideal for ordering some breakfast. It didn't take long for Mr Pete to start with one of his tales. He was telling us that he had found a place to live, and that he was renting a room from a lady who manufactures fetish wear from her shed!



breakfast and a beer before heading over to Palace. On the way, Mr G broke the news to Dan and me that the legendary Mr Pete would be joining us for a jolly up in London.

Once at Hamilton Hall, we didn't stay long. The place was busy with those getting on it, and it was only just gone 10am! I chose to take it easy and went for an orange juice...that just happened to have a couple of splashes of vodka in it.

Once Pete arrived we decided to move on, and went to another Wetherspoons not far from Liverpool Street. We went into The

The Crosse Keys is a cracking pub. It used to be a bank, so it has some grand architecture. You will never see a new pub built to that type of standard again. We enjoyed it enough to stay in there for a few more drinks before walking over to London Bridge for our train-ride to Palace. When the train came in, I was following Dan when a fella asked "Is this train the one to get to Palace?" I just mindlessly said yes. He hopped on it, but we carried on walking past the train to another platform! So my apologies to that chap, I hadn't even had that much to drink!

Comment of the day

"Cor, Big match atmosphere in here". Mr Pete as we walk into an extremely lacklustre Wetherspoons at Thornton Heath. But I'll be honest, it could have been anyone of Mr Pete's stories, so let's hope he comes away again! - 10/10

Rate the pub

The Wetherspoons at Thornton Heath wasn't the best. The Crosse Keys impressed me the most for its grandeur. And lets face, any trip to The White Horse is special – 10/10

Rate the pie

Again, didn't eat in the ground but the chips from the Three Jays chippie were very good – 7/10

Other team's prospects

I'm not sure. Their bad run can't continue, so I'm sure come May they shouldn't be far from a play-off place.

Summing up of the day

Corker. Probably the best away day of the season. Great pubs, great game, great result and some superb stories from Mr Pete!

The journey to Thornton Heath was swift as Mr Pete was telling us of a time when he used to work in a solicitor's office in the city. I was very impressed. It turned out that he didn't really do much work, but chose to have drinking sessions with the security guard throughout the night. But, as Mr Pete wasn't all that keen on his current home, he chose to sleep in a cupboard and then appear when it was time for his shift to start again!

Once arriving at Thornton Heath we entered another Wetherspoons, but chose only to stay for the one and decided to head for the ground. Well what can I say about the game? Quite simply it was a belter! And what an atmosphere! A match and atmosphere like that had been a long time in coming, but wow, it was worth the wait. Just when I was wondering how we could top the day, we decided to head over to Parsons Green to the legendary White Horse. What a place to have a celebratory drink!

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on the road

Ground Details
Ground Name: Loftus Road Stadium
Capacity: 18,500 (all seated)
Address: South Africa Road, London, W12 7PA
Main Telephone No: 020 8743 0262
Ticket Office No: 0870 112 1967
Pitch size: 112 x 72 yards

What is the ground like?
Loftus Road has a compact feel, as the ground is totally enclosed, with supporters being close to the pitch. An unusual aspect is that all four stands are roughly the same height, their roofs meet at all four corners with no gaps. The South Africa Road Stand on one side of the ground, has a larger upper tier, compared to the lower tier, with a row of executive boxes running across the middle. There are a couple of supporting pillars in this stand. The other side, the Ellerslie Road Stand, is single tiered, with a television gantry suspended below its roof. Both ends are similar looking two tiered stands. There is a small electric scoreboard at the away end of the ground, dividing the two tiers. The ground oozes character and there is nothing similar in the league.

Where will the U's fans be sitting?
Away fans are situated in the lower tier of the School End, where 1,279 fans can be accommodated. If demand requires it then the upper tier can also be allocated, increasing the number of places available to around 2,500. If the away club only takes the lower tier allocation, then the upper tier is allocated to home supporters.

Fancy a pre-match pint?
Try the Springbok right by the ground (near the ticket office). Come out of White City Underground Station, go down the road right in front of the station; the Springbok is down on the left. The Green in Shepherds Bush is decent as well. Exiting Shepherds Bush Underground Station, on the Hammersmith & City line, turn left out of the station and The Green is a short way down the road on the left. The pub sits across from Shepherds Bush Green where there are other pubs to be found nearby, such as O'Neills.

How to get there by car...
At the end of the M40, take the A40 towards Central London. At the point where the A40 becomes the A40(M), turn off onto the A40 towards White City/Shepherds Bush and turn right into Wood Lane, turn right into South Africa Road for the ground.

How to get there by train...
There are in fact two Shepherds Bush tube stations, one on the Central Line and the other on the Hammersmith & City line. The latter is nearer to the ground which is about a ten minute walk.

Leaving the tube station turn right and the ground will come into view further down on the right.

Ticket prices
Adults: £24
Senior Citizen (60+): £14
Students (21 or under): £14



R'S FACTFILE
League games in 2006/07: LLLLL
Last five home games: DWLLL
League position: 20th

RECENT NEWS
The transfer window is just around the corner, and a host of top flight sides are reported to have joined the race to sign QPR winger Lee Cook.
The 24-year old wideman is being courted by various Premiership clubs after turning out some sizzling displays on the left.
Aston Villa, Manchester City and even Manchester United have been linked with the highly rated star.
QPR manager John Gregory said: "Will he still be here after January? We will have to wait and see, if he does go, I hope it's for £10million!"

Kids (U16s) With Adult: £5
Kids (U16s) Without Adult: £8
Kids (U8s): Free

● Fans should note that all ticket prices go up by £2 on a matchday and student concessions are NOT available on a matchday, only in advance from the U's Ticket Office.
Furthermore, children under eight have to pay £7 on a matchday and free tickets are only available in advance from Layer Road.

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keep up to date... www.cu-fc.com

C.U.F.C. stats 2006/07

COCA-COLA CHAMPIONSHIP TABLE 22/12/06

	P	W	D	L	F	A	W	D	L	F	A	Gd	Pt
Birmingham City	23	7	3	1	20	9	7	1	4	18	13	16	46
Derby County	23	6	3	2	15	9	7	1	4	18	16	8	43
Preston N.E.	23	8	4	0	22	6	3	4	4	13	16	13	41
Southampton	23	7	3	1	16	8	4	3	5	21	19	10	39
Cardiff City	23	6	4	1	18	7	5	2	5	16	19	8	39
COLCHESTER UTD	23	9	0	2	28	9	2	4	6	11	17	13	37
Stoke City	23	7	3	1	17	4	3	4	5	13	14	12	37
West Brom Albion	23	8	2	1	26	8	2	4	6	13	16	15	36
Burnley	23	6	2	4	20	15	4	4	3	12	10	7	36
Wolverhampton W.	23	6	3	3	15	11	4	2	5	6	14	-4	35
Sunderland	23	6	2	3	16	10	4	2	6	16	20	2	34
Plymouth Argyle	23	4	5	3	16	13	4	3	3	12	15	0	33
Sheffield Wed.	23	5	3	4	16	16	4	3	4	14	15	-1	33
Coventry City	23	6	2	3	13	7	4	1	7	8	16	-2	33
Ipswich Town	23	6	2	4	21	17	2	3	6	13	16	1	29
Norwich City	23	6	2	3	19	13	2	3	7	11	24	-7	29
Leicester City	23	5	3	4	15	14	2	4	5	9	15	-5	28
Crystal Palace	23	5	1	6	14	14	2	4	5	12	16	-4	26
LUTON TOWN	23	5	4	3	21	16	2	1	8	8	22	-9	26
QPR	23	3	3	6	17	19	3	3	5	14	19	-7	24
Barnsley	23	4	4	3	16	14	2	1	9	12	27	-13	23
Hull City	23	3	2	6	14	16	2	3	7	8	19	-13	20
Leeds United	23	4	1	7	12	19	2	1	8	12	24	-19	20
Southend United	23	3	4	5	15	19	0	3	8	3	20	-21	16

FORTHCOMING CHAMPIONSHIP FIXTURES

Today

Barnsley v Burnley
Birmingham City v QPR
Cardiff City v Plymouth Argyle
Colchester United v Luton Town
Coventry City v Ipswich Town
Derby County v Wolverhampton Wanderers
Hull City v Leicester City
Norwich City v Southend United
Southampton v Crystal Palace
Stoke City v Sheffield Wednesday
Sunderland v Leeds United
West Bromwich Albion v Preston North End

Friday 29th December 2006

Birmingham City v Luton Town

Saturday 30th December 2006

Barnsley v Sheffield Wednesday
Cardiff City v Crystal Palace
Colchester United v Wolverhampton Wanderers
Coventry City v Southend United
Derby County v Plymouth Argyle
Hull City v Burnley
Norwich City v QPR
Southampton v Leicester City
Stoke City v Leeds United
Sunderland v Preston North End
West Bromwich Albion v Ipswich Town

DATE OPPONENT COMP RES ATT (AWAY) POS

DATE	OPPONENT	COMP	RES	ATT (AWAY)	POS
August					
Sat 5th	Birmingham City	CCC	L1-2	24,238 (1,287)	16
Tue 8th	Plymouth Argyle	CCC	L0-1	4,627 (572)	21
Sat 12th	Barnsley	CCC	L1-2	4,429 (449)	22
Sat 19th	West Bromwich Albion	CCC	L1-2	17,509 (957)	23
Tue 22nd	Milton Keynes Dons	CC1	L0-1	2,747 (124)	-
Sat 26th	Derby County	CCC	W4-3	4,574 (449)	22
September					
Sat 9th	Burnley	CCC	W2-1	10,039 (219)	20
Tue 12th	Luton Town	CCC	D1-1	7,609 (429)	20
Sat 16th	Queens Park Rangers	CCC	W2-1	5,246 (766)	16
Sat 23rd	Leicester City	CCC	D0-0	22,449 (946)	15
Fri 29th	Ipswich Town	CCC	W1-0	6,065 (963)	13
October					
Sat 14th	Wolverhampton Wanderers	CCC	L0-1	19,318 (761)	13
Wed 18th	Sheffield Wednesday	CCC	W4-0	5,097 (745)	10
Mon 23rd	Coventry City	CCC	L1-2	16,178 (477)	14
Sat 28th	Southampton	CCC	W2-0	5,893 (987)	10
Tue 31st	Norwich City	CCC	D1-1	25,065 (1,532)	10
November					
Sat 4th	Cardiff City	CCC	W3-1	5,393 (tbc)	9
Sat 11th	Leeds United	CCC	L0-3	17,678 (1,031)	11
Sat 18th	Sunderland	CCC	L1-3	25,197 (720)	13
Sat 25th	Southend United	CCC	W3-0	5,954 (964)	11
Tue 28th	Hull City	CCC	W5-1	5,373 (464)	7
December					
Sat 2nd	Cardiff City	CCC	D0-0	13,512 (231)	10
Sat 9th	Crystal Palace	CCC	W3-1	16,762 (1,319)	8
Sat 16th	Stoke City	CCC	W3-0	5,345 (585)	6
Sat 23rd	Preston North End				
Tue 26th	Luton Town				
Sat 30th	Wolverhampton Wanderers				
January					
Mon 1st	Queens Park Rangers				
Sat 6th	Barnet (FAC3)				
Sat 13th	Leicester City				
Sat 20th	Ipswich Town				
Sat 27th	FA Cup 4				
Tue 30th	Preston North End				
February					
Sat 3rd	Birmingham City				
Sat 10th	Barnsley				
Sat 17th	West Bromwich Albion				
Tue 20th	Plymouth Argyle				
Sat 24th	Burnley				
March					
Sat 3rd	Derby County				
Sat 10th	Coventry City				
Tue 13th	Sheffield Wednesday				
Sat 17th	Southampton				
Sat 31st	Norwich City				
April					
Fri 6th	Southend United				
Mon 9th	Leeds United				
Sat 14th	Hull City				
Sat 21st	Sunderland				
Sat 28th	Stoke City				
May					
Sun 6th	Crystal Palace				

Home fixtures in **bold blue**

1 Aidan Davison	2 Greg Halford	3 John White	4 Johnnie Jackson	5 Wayne Brown	6 Kevin Watson	7 Karl Duguid	8 Jamie Cureton	9 Marino Keith	10 Kem Izzet	11 Chris Iwelumo	12 Pat Baldwin	13 Dean Gerken	14 Richard Cawdron	15 Jamie Cuay	16 George Elokobi	17 Lawrie Wilson	18 Chris Barker	19 Gary Richards	20 Kevin McLeod	21 Robbie King	22 Ritchie Jones	23 Mark Cousins	24 Hogan Ephraim
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Programme Sponsored by





C.U.S.A.

Good afternoon and welcome to all you U's supporters. I trust you all had a safe, yet utterly brilliant Christmas and are fully primed full of roast turkey, Xmas pudding and mulled wine for this game against Luton Town.

After setting some of the early pace, the Hatters have fallen away in recent months towards our friends from 'Suffend' but they shouldn't be taken lightly, especially with former U's, Rowan Vine and Dean Morgan in their ranks.

The U's confidence is sky high though and the performances at Layer Road have been tremendous for the fans to watch. Take the Stoke City game for example: every single one of the lads worked their socks off for that result. The meanest defence in the league, no problem for Curo and co. And what about the back four and Deano? Top man for me on the day was Pat 'Rio' Baldwin, who was outstanding, especially against the stroppy Ricardo Fuller.

A weak link? The U's simply don't have one in any position.

What better Christmas present could there be than three points today, it was certainly top of my list to Santa.

Yet again, you guys and gals have made this festive fixture a sell-out. It's tight and cramped but your behaviour and support have made this a special season. Whereas not so long ago, people were saying to me, "what do the U's need a 10,000 seater stadium for?", all I hear now is "surely 10,000 won't be anywhere near big enough!".

This football club and its supporters are fantastic and whatever happens between now and the end of the season, we would all do well to remember that.

On to CUSA stuff now, and for those of you with time on your hands before the leftover turkey tonight, I suggest you sample some of the Mighty Oak Christmas ales that are on sale in the CUSA bar. I think the Bingle Jells has already disappeared faster than a Greg Halford shot, but I can recommend the Christmas Quaffer or even the amusingly named Yellow Snow.

CUSA travel now, and you'll see that the next three away matches are all somewhat special. We presently have five coaches booked for the QPR game on New Years' Day with more available if required. A word of warning though, if you leave it too late to book up, you might be unlucky. Your hangovers should have gone by 11.00am so why not let us take the strain?

We are also filling up fast for the FA Cup trip to

Barnet and we expect similar interest for the Ipswich game on January 20th especially given our superb prices offer.

Therefore, as a reminder, you need to be a CUSA member to travel with us, book up as early as possible and if you do ever need to cancel, please let us know. Also, don't forget that the Corner Bar is able to take coach bookings and fares and if nothing else, paying early will save you time on the day. Your help in this matter is greatly appreciated. You can contact myself on 07752 531600 or Jeanette on 07778 018834 for CUSA travel enquires, after 7.00pm please.

Lastly, and by no means least, the next CUSA Quiz Night has been arranged for Friday 2nd February at Stanway Rovers FC. Teams of up to six are required so start talking to your friends and fellow fans now so that you don't miss out on the best brains.

Don't bother asking me - I'm thick. To enter a team, just phone Robin on 07917 037980 or Paul on 07834 859318.

Here's hoping for a wonderful Boxing Day for the U's! Keep cheering and keep smiling. Up the U's,

Jon Burns - Chairman
www.cusa.co.uk



● Pat Baldwin - exceptional against Stoke City

Monday 1st January

QPR

Coach leaves Layer Road at 11.00am

Adult Members £12

Concession Members £10

Saturday 6th January

Barnet

Coach leaves Layer Road at 11.00am

Adult Members £12

Concession Members £10

Saturday 20th January

Ipswich Town

Coach leaves Layer Road at 12.30pm

Adult Members £8

Concession Members £6

COACH TRAVEL

Programme Sponsored by



going to the game?

All you need to know about following the U's home or away...



Wolverhampton Wanderers

Date of game: Saturday, December 30th. Kick off: 3.00pm

Venue: Layer Road

Opposition Website: www.wolvesfc.co.uk



Queens Park Rangers

Date of game: Monday, January 1st. Kick off: 3.00pm

Venue: Loftus Road

Opposition Website: www.qpr.co.uk



Tickets Sale Details:

Season ticket holders' places for this game are already secured.

Following a period of priority sales, tickets for this game are now on general sale.

- Terraces 3,4 and 7: £19 adults, £12 concessions (no student concessions in Terrace 7)
- Blocks A, C, D, F: £23 adults, £15 concessions
- Block B: £15 adults/concessions
- Block G: £20 adults, £14 concessions
- Blocks H, I, J (Family Seating): £18 adults, £10 concessions
- Family Enclosure: £20 Family Ticket, additional child £5



Barnet

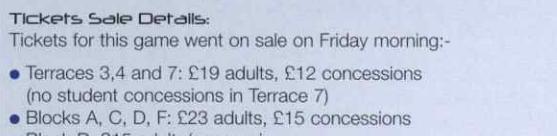
Date of game: Saturday, January 6th. Kick off: 3.00pm

Venue: Layer Road

Opposition Website: www.barnetfc.co.uk



- Terraces 3,4 and 7: £19 adults, £12 concessions (no student concessions in Terrace 7)
- Blocks A, C, D, F: £23 adults, £15 concessions
- Block B: £15 adults/concessions
- Block G: £20 adults, £14 concessions
- Blocks H, I, J (Family Seating): £18 adults, £10 concessions
- Family Enclosure: £20 Family Ticket, additional child £5



Leicester City

Date of game: Saturday, January 13th. Kick off: 3.00pm

Venue: Layer Road

Opposition Website: www.lcfc.co.uk



Tickets Sale Details:

Tickets are already on sale to Season Ticket Holders with four or more Away Match Credits and Match Credit Holders with seven or more Away Match Credits. From December 28th, sales of the 1,800 tickets will go as follows:-

- December 28th and 29th onwards: Season Ticket Holders
- January 2nd onwards: Eight home and away Match Credits
- January 4th onwards: Four home and away Match Credits
- Tickets are priced as follows:-
- £15 Adults Standing
- £11 Concession Standing (U18s, 60+ and students)

At present, there are no seating spaces being allocated to U's fans for this match.

ATTENTION TO ALL SEASON TICKET HOLDERS

Season Tickets must be brought to every match. To ensure its validity we would prefer turnstile operators to remove the appropriate voucher from your season ticket booklet before entering the ground.



keep up to date... www.cu-fc.com

next here...

The U's will look to bring the curtain down on a hugely memorable 2006 when they host Wolverhampton Wanderers in their final game of the calendar year.

A successful twelve months began with a 3-1 win against Nottingham Forest in dramatic fashion and it will be another former European great that ends the year in front of another packed Layer Road.

Wolves have spent much of the season in the same parts of the league table as the U's have occupied and there was little to divide the teams when they met up at Molineux in the season.

And, going into the Christmas period, the two teams were separated by just two points at the halfway mark in the campaign.

Given the difference in resources of the two clubs, it is perhaps fair to say that the U's will be slightly happier with their lot as 2007 arrives, but Wolves manager Mick McCarthy is hopeful that his team will push on into the top six in the second half of the campaign.

He told the Birmingham Mail: "I would say it's so far so good but I'm also a bit disappointed because I certainly feel we should have had four more points from the home games with Sunderland and Crystal Palace. There's no point harping on about it but I'm still sore.

Consistency

"I just think there's nothing to fear in this league, certainly on a one-off basis, it's just about trying to find that consistency. The teams that do well are the ones that find that consistency because it is such an evenly-matched league."

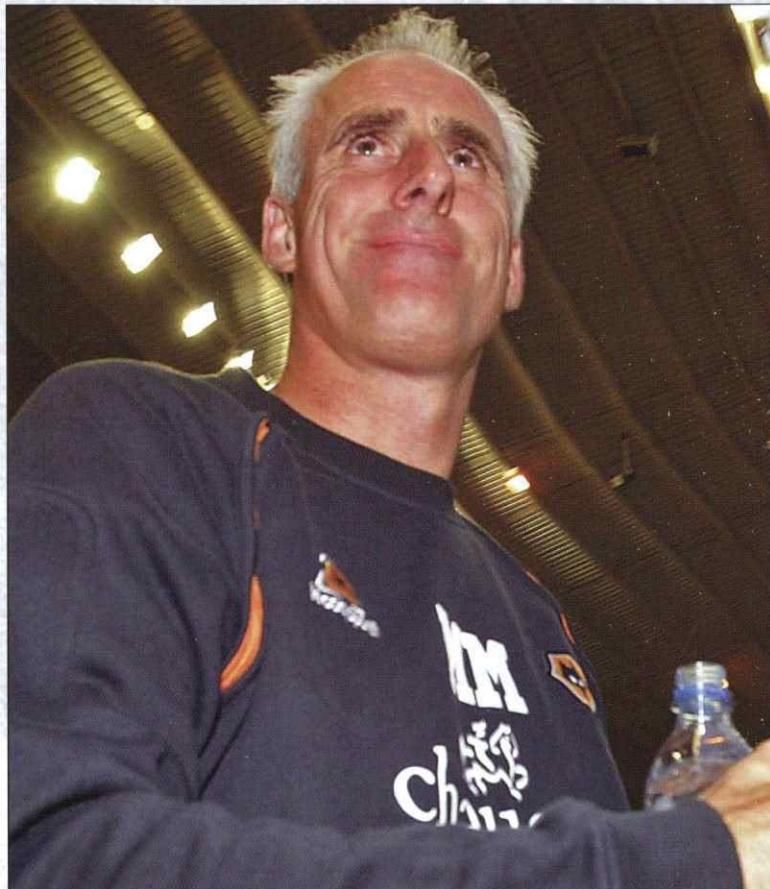
Whilst the U's have borne the fruits of a settled side – and squad – in the first half of the campaign, there have been plenty of new faces to accommodate after McCarthy's summer arrival.

As those new boys get used to life at Wolves, the boss is hoping that individuals will begin to shine.

He added: "But we'll certainly be demanding more from individuals as well and hopefully we may yet get a striker going on a run."

Christmas will pose an interesting test for Wolves play-off credentials as they have what appear to be three tough away trips – including their visit to Layer Road – as well as seemingly easier home games over the next fortnight.

They started with a match against Norwich on



Saturday but will have to take on journeys to north Essex, Derby and Stoke as they face three teams currently above them in the league table.

And McCarthy (pictured) admits that a host of games gives him the opportunity to exercise all members of his squad.

"People ask me about having selection dilemmas at the moment - well we'll need all of them over the next couple of weeks," he said. "It's just something for me to think about over the next few days and it might be I have to take into consideration the games that are coming."

"I've no real pre-conceived ideas on who it might affect, but it's a testing schedule and

there'll be a few thoughts going round my head!"

STOP PRESS!

Tickets for this game are on sale now. Check www.cu-fc.com for more details and book your tickets by calling 0871 226 2161!

CAN'T MAKE THE GAME?

If you're unable to make the game, then why not sign up for our official SMS service? Text CLUB COLC to 88442 now and we'll keep you bang up to date with all the news from the match!



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the teams...

colchester united

Manager: Geraint Williams

Colours: Blue & White



	Pld	Goal	■	■
1	Aidan DAVISON	0	0	0
2	Greg HALFORD	0	0	0
3	John WHITE	0	0	0
4	Johnnie JACKSON	0	0	0
5	Wayne BROWN	0	0	0
6	Kevin WATSON	0	0	0
7	Karl DUGUID	0	0	0
8	Jamie CURETON	0	0	0
9	Marino KEITH	0	0	0
10	Kemal KIZET	0	0	0
11	Chris IWELUMO	0	0	0
12	Pat BALDWIN	0	0	0
13	Dean GERKEN	0	0	0
14	Richard GARCIA	0	0	0
15	Jamie GUY	0	0	0
16	George ELOKOBBI	0	0	0
17	Lawrie WILSON	0	0	0
18	Chris BARKER	0	0	0
19	Garry RICHARDS	0	0	0
20	Kevin MCLEOD	0	0	0
21	Robbie KING	0	0	0
23	Mark COUSINS	0	0	0
24	Hogan EPHRAIM	0	0	0
	Craig HUGHES	0	0	0
	Matt PAIN	0	0	0
	David WAREHAM	0	0	0

luton town

Manager: Mike Newell

Colours: Red & White



	Pld	Goal	■	■
1	Marlon BERESFORD	0	0	0
2	Kevin FOLEY	0	0	0
3	Sol DAVIS	0	0	0
4	Chris COYNE	0	0	0
5	Russell PERRETT	0	0	0
6	Paul UNDERWOOD	0	0	0
7	Carlos EDWARDS	0	0	0
8	Steve ROBINSON	0	0	0
9	Rowan VINE	0	0	0
10	Warren FEENEY	0	0	0
11	Dean MORGAN	0	0	0
15	Stephen O'LEARY	0	0	0
16	Lewis EMANUEL	0	0	0
17	Richard LANGLEY	0	0	0
18	Ahmet BRKOVIC	0	0	0
19	Sam PARKIN	0	0	0
20	Adam BOYD	0	0	0
21	Keith KEANE	0	0	0
22	Danny STEVENS	0	0	0
23	Dean KIELY	0	0	0
24	Shaun ROSS	0	0	0
25	Leon BARNETT	0	0	0
26	Markus HEIKKINEN	0	0	0
27	Peter HOLMES	0	0	0
28	David BELL	0	0	0
29	Calvin ANDREW	0	0	0
34	Zac BARRETT	0	0	0
35	Chris PENDLETON	0	0	0

the officials...

Referee:

Mr P. Crossley (Kent)

Assistant Referee:

Mr D. Buck (Kent)

Assistant Referee:

Mr G. Evetts (Herts)

Fourth Official:

Mr D. Margetts (Essex)



next here...

v Wolverhampton Wanderers

Saturday December 30th 2006

Kick-Off 3.00pm

Coca-Cola Championship

Coverage on BBC Essex



next away...

v Queens Park Rangers

Monday January 1st 2007

Kick-Off 3.00pm

Coca-Cola Championship

Coverage on BBC Essex



Evening Gazette