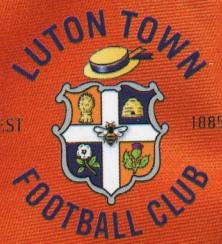
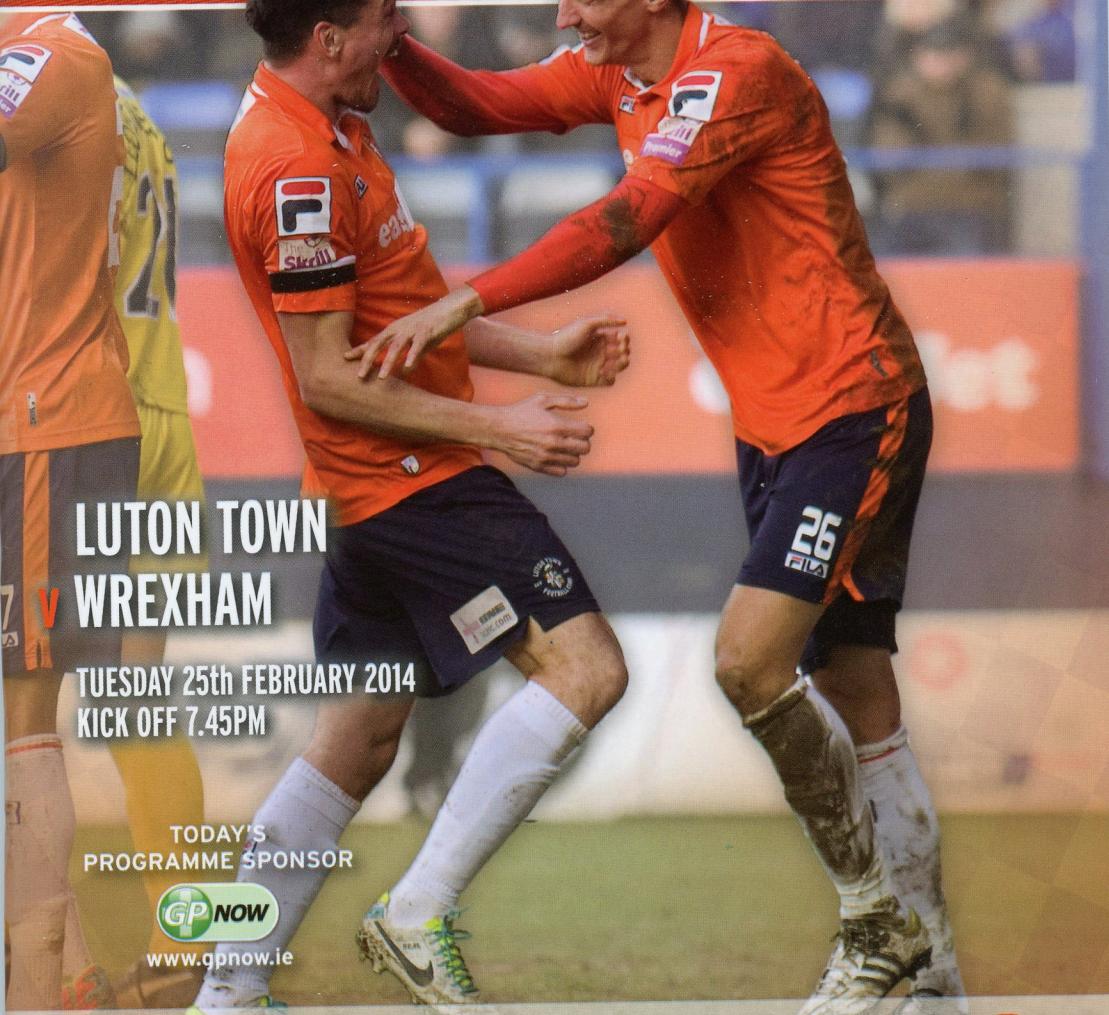


TALK OF THE TOWN



OFFICIAL AWARD-WINNING MATCHDAY
PROGRAMME OF LUTON TOWN
FOOTBALL CLUB

ISSUE 22 • £3.00



LUTON TOWN
v
WREXHAM

TUESDAY 25th FEBRUARY 2014
KICK OFF 7.45PM

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welcome

TO KENILWORTH ROAD

" Welcome back to you all to Kenilworth Road and the 22nd edition of Talk of the Town.

It's hard to believe we're already up to that number of issues with this, of course, the third programme of the campaign which features Wrexham.

Tonight's game is the second attempt to play our home league fixture against the Red Dragons, who we welcome and wish a pleasant stay and a safe trip home.

Inside this issue we have plenty to keep your brain engaged, including reports, reaction and photographs from our last two matches. So just the 12 goals to re-live following the 7-0 win over Hereford and the 5-0 victory at Nuneaton just three days ago.

Yes, it's fair to say it's been a terrific week for everyone involved with the football club and what's more we are happy to report the excellent progress Jonathan Smith is making in his recovery from injury. An exclusive Q&A with Smudger can be found on pages 50 and 51. Enjoy! #COYH **"**

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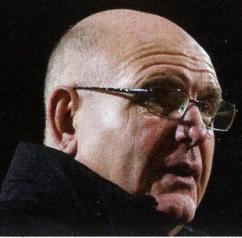
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Welcome **3**



the manager

JOHN STILL



Good evening and welcome back to Kenilworth Road as we entertain a Wrexham side who were the last to beat us in Skrill Premier action way back in September.

I'd like to wish a warm welcome to Wrexham who have made the trip down from North Wales including their loyal supporters.

Tough

Tonight's game is sure to be another tough game for us. As I always say in my notes, all the games are tough, there are no easy matches.

We, however, will be fully prepared for a game against tough opponents who have, over the years, been a real force in this division. They have already beaten us once this season so therefore we will be well aware of the threats that they will pose.

Our last home match saw us beat Hereford 7-0 in what was a first class performance all over the pitch. We moved the ball well and had ambition and drive all over the pitch.

We shared the goals around too and it was a display that we can look back over in the coming weeks that was a first-class home performance by the men on the pitch and a first class performance from the crowd who got behind the team. That's the ingredient which is making us what we are at the moment.

Victory

We followed that victory up with another comprehensive display at Nuneaton on Saturday. It was another fine display from the players. Performances like that are paramount and emphasises how hard everyone must work for us to be a success.

Everyone is in this together; the players, the staff, officials and the supporters. That is what makes our team strong and it's what we need for every game between now and the end of the season.

“It was a first-class home performance by the men on the pitch and a first class performance from the crowd. ”

John Still is sponsored by:

Elsewhere it is nice to see some of our players doing very well out on loan. Jim Stevenson and Alex Wall have been on fire for Dartford as both get much-needed game time. Alex in particular has found injuries an obstacle this season yet he has been finding the net regularly in the last few weeks. Jim, meanwhile, has been a consistent performer as the Darts move closer to safety. Shaun Whalley has put in some excellent performances for AFC Telford, too, and I know their manager Liam Watson has been very impressed. We hope he can come back and reproduce that kind of form, which I know he is capable of. JJ O'Donnell has put in some good displays for Gateshead, whilst some of the younger players have done well in their loan spells which are going to be vital for their development.

Important

On Saturday we are at home again when we face Alfreton. They are another side who are going well in the league and which will be another tough one. In fact, every game between now and the end of the season will be difficult. Teams will have points to play for as the business end approaches, with clubs needing the points for different reasons.

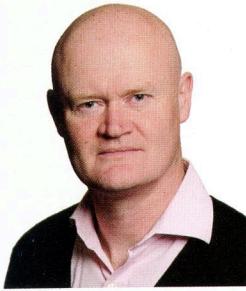
Therefore, it's going to be important that we have an extra effort from the team on the pitch and the team off the pitch – that's you the supporters. That's what we need, to support each other. On Saturday the support was nothing short of remarkable. Having close to 2,000 at Nuneaton is just phenomenal and I know it really pushed the players on. On and off the pitch the harmony has been just superb so let's keep it going because it is so important.

Everyone has played their part and that must be the case again this evening so get behind us once more in our bid to secure another three points tonight.

Enjoy the game.

boardroom

WITH DIRECTOR DAVID BLAKEMAN



Welcome to tonight's match against Wrexham and a good evening, also, to our visiting players, supporters and board.

This is yet another important game, against a side much fancied for promotion at the start of the season. It has come as a significant surprise to many of us, I suspect, that Wrexham have not put in a stronger challenge than they have, to date. That is not to say, however, that in this somewhat topsy-turvy division Wrexham cannot still put in a late run for a Play-Off place, though, given the distance they are now behind the top clubs, this looks increasingly unlikely.

Knowing what a good side Wrexham can be (and it is worth remembering that they are one of only two sides to have beaten us in the league this season), some of their results this season (including some recent results) have really been very surprising. For instance, in the last home game they lost to Barnet and, before that, to Dartford. Without knowing the detailed reasons for their decline in form this season, I would have expected them to have won both of those games. What we cannot do, of course, (although one does seem to say this every match) is treat the game lightly, or as a foregone

conclusion. I know that John Still and his team will be absolutely focused on ensuring that our performance is the best achievable – so that all that remains is for that to translate into, hopefully, another victory.

Performance

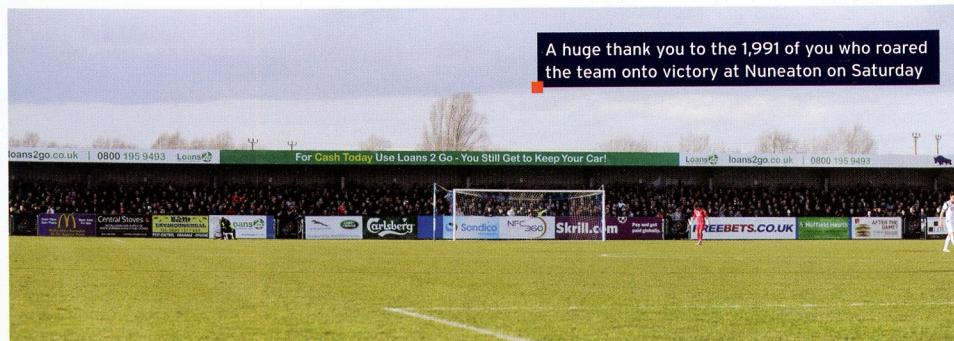
Our own recent results have been absolutely mind-boggling. To beat Hereford 7-0 and then to win 5-0 at Nuneaton is pretty much the stuff of dreams, even to the most optimistic, I would suspect. In my view, we did not hit top form in either of those games. For my money, our best performance of the season was the first half display at Alfreton, when we utterly devastated a side that is still very much in the running for at least a Play-Off place. Nevertheless, to score 12 goals, without conceding, and at the same time not to be playing at the top of our game is little short of extraordinary. Long may it continue!

Tonight's game is, of course, incredibly important if we are to continue to place more and more pressure on the other contenders – especially Cambridge who are starting to look like our only realistic challengers. If we can win tonight, the points per game requirements facing Cambridge becomes more and more difficult. It is entirely irrelevant, of course, for me to ask supporters to get behind the side – recent support has been fantastic and the demand for tickets is becoming overwhelming.

Talking about demand for tickets, it is probably worth explaining how our ticket policy works, to those who are not already fully aware of the policy basis.

We undertake a tiered ticket sales system when we are playing in a big game.

A huge thank you to the 1,991 of you who roared the team onto victory at Nuneaton on Saturday



Ultimately, the intention is to reward our most loyal supporters. That means that season ticket holders get first bite of the cherry. Diamond season ticket holders have first entitlement to the ticket allocation. They are followed by season ticket holders. Thereafter, anyone else who turns up at the ticket office and queues will get any tickets remaining. I know that many supporters queued for several hours to get tickets for the Cambridge game. Obviously we are delighted that there is such demand for tickets, but wish to create minimum inconvenience for our supporters. A simple way, of course, to enhance the chances of getting tickets for games such as Cambridge is to purchase a season ticket – adding, thereby, to the already impressive number who have purchased season tickets this season. Obviously, however, I also apologise for those people who have not been able to get tickets – many of whom are extremely loyal supporters.

Rain

I have already referred to our spectacular result against Hereford. You may not all know that that game was only able to proceed because we had purchased special pitch covers (at significant cost) which kept enough rain off the pitch on the day before the game, such that the pitch did not become waterlogged. Whilst the amount of rain that has fallen this winter has broken all records, there does seem to be an increasing pattern of unusual weather conditions affecting this country. We had the snow last year and the rain this year. Pitch covers will, hopefully, enable us to put games on, when others cannot. To do so places less fixture congestion on the players, thereby reducing the chances of injury, or tiredness, impacting on our results. Furthermore, the Club loses significant money every time a game is postponed. As you are probably aware, the Club runs at a loss every year, so that the reduction of cost, in this manner, is of great importance.

Here's hoping for another great result!
COYH!



HONOURS

Littlewoods Challenge Cup:

Winners 1988, Runners-up 1989

FA Cup:

Runners-up 1959
Semi-finalists 1959, 1985, 1988, 1994

Johnstone's Paint Trophy:

Winners 2009

Simod Cup:

Runners-up 1988

Football League Division Two:

Champions 1981/82
Runners-up 1954/55, 1973/74

Football League Division Three (South):

Winners 1936/37
Runners-up 1935/36

Football League Division Three:

Runners-up 1969/70

League One:

Champions 2004/05

Football League Division Four:

Champions 1967/68

Football League Division Three:

Runners-up 2001/02

Blue Square Premier:

Runners-up 2009/10

Southern League Division One:

Runners-up 1894/95, 1895/96

Southern League Division Two:

Runners-up 1913/14

United League:

Champions 1897/98
Runners-up 1896/97, 1900/01

Southern Alliance:

Runners-up 1913/14



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the captain

RONNIE HENRY

Since my last set of notes we have scored 12 and not conceded at all. How great does that sound?

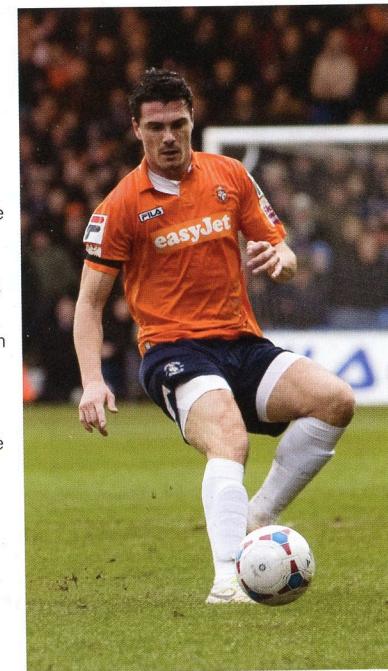
Like we have done all season, our performances are the result of hard work and the 7-0 win over Hereford and 5-0 victory at Nuneaton on Saturday were prime examples of how our work ethic pays off.

Both games were very similar in that we turned on the style and scored the majority of our goals in the second half. We are finding at the moment that teams are working their socks off against us in the first half. Our opponents are giving it their all for 40, 50, sometimes 60 minutes but, as we are finding, our superior fitness is really paying dividends as we are putting teams comprehensively to the sword.

Nobody is mentioning promotion at the minute and that's the way it should be. There is a very long way to go until the season is complete and as a group we have our feet firmly on the ground. No titles are won in February.

However, this group of players and management know what they want to achieve and we will be doing everything in powers to make sure that is realised. We are on a fine run of form at the minute and long may it continue. We have the right recipe: we are scoring lots of goals and keeping it tight at the back. Teams are making things difficult for us in the first half of matches but we are grinding them down before hitting them, literally, for six.

Tonight we entertain Wrexham and it is hard to believe that they were the last team to beat us in the league back in September. It was a night where we never turned up. The dressing room was a low place to be and, at that time, a 23-match unbeaten run couldn't have been any further from our thoughts at the time.



The performances and the results since have been nothing short of remarkable and, as I've said, it is a testament to the hard work and dedication of all the players and staff. It is a real team effort and that was shown in our last match against Wrexham, in the FA Trophy in December. A number of the lads who hadn't been playing, including some of the youth team players, were given their chance and took it with both hands to beat an experienced Wrexham side. It was another performance which optimised the will to win we have in our ranks.

So, 11 points clear, 23 matches unbeaten...is there more to come? Of course there is, there is always more to come. We won't be resting on our laurels, or counting any chickens: you name the cliché! We have a settled side playing with confidence but we know that anybody can come in to the team and slot in straight away.

On Saturday the atmosphere at Nuneaton was amazing, with almost 2,000 of you in attendance of 3,400. That was pretty special. We played their twice last season but on Saturday it was like a completely different place. It was like a home game and there's no doubt that it

helped us play the way we did, especially in the second half.

As I've said countless times before you can be the difference. We need you behind us even when things aren't going right. If it's 0-0 at half-time or we're behind we need you to stay with us. This season has been truly magnificent and it's been great to be a part of so let's keep it going.

Thank you for your tremendous backing and here's to three more points tonight.

McGeehan here for the season

The Hatters extended the loan deal of Cameron McGeehan until the end of the season last week.

The 18-year-old, who captained the Canaries to FA Youth Cup glory last term, has made himself an influential figure in the Hatters starting XI since joining on loan in January.

McGeehan has started the last four league games for the Town and created two goals in our last home match with Hereford.

Manager John Still is delighted to have captured his man until the end of the season.

The boss told Talk of the Town: "Cameron initially came in for the month and impressed us all with his attitude and performances, he's brought a real freshness with

him and similar to Pelly Ruddock he has a great work ethic. Overall we are delighted to extend his stay until the end of the season."

McGeehan has also been included in the Northern Ireland Under-21 squad to face Italy in Belfast on Wednesday 5th March.

The Town also extended Alex Wall's loan at Dartford last week for a further month.

The striker scored for the Darts in their 2-0 win over Hereford at the weekend, just four days after scoring twice in a 5-1 win over Woking.

Shaun Whalley, on-loan at AFC Telford, also scored at the weekend, as did Jake Woolley for St Neots in their 3-1 win over Arlesey.

PRO DEAL FOR REES

A day before our 7-0 win over Hereford, the Town confirmed that Ian Rees signed his first professional contract with the club.

Rees, who turned 18 on Saturday, impressed manager John Still in training and in four appearances in the FA Trophy this season, and pens a deal until the end of the 2014/15 campaign.

The central midfielder joined the Hatters in 2007 having previously been on the books of both Cambridge United and Rushden & Diamonds.

Having been a virtual ever-present in Paul Driver's Under-18 squad this season, Rees was handed his first team debut as a substitute in the FA Trophy first round replay against Staines.

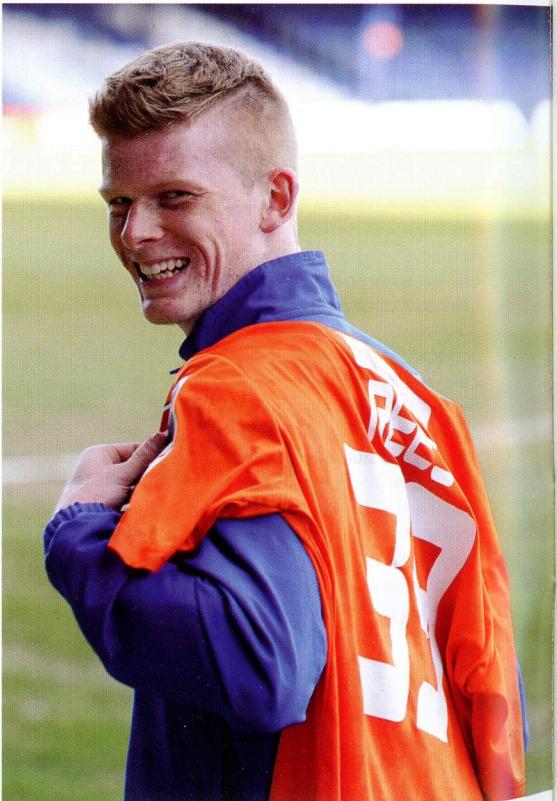
The 18-year-old was then given his full debut in the 2-0 win over an experienced Wrexham side in the FA Trophy, in which he hit the post with a shot in the first half.

A substitute appearance in the third round tie at Cambridge followed before Rees made his second start for the first team in the replay against the U's three days later, putting in another mature display in central midfield.

Manager John Still said: "Ian has shown a tremendous appetite for football and his enthusiasm and ability has really shone through and impressed myself and the staff.

"Ian's performances in the FA Trophy, where he came up against very seasoned professionals, showed a great level of maturity. He wasn't fazed by the situation and took the opportunity with both hands.

"He uses the ball very well and we are all looking forward to witnessing Ian flourish as a professional."



CAMBRIDGE TICKETS UPDATE

We will be receiving an additional 450 terrace tickets for this fixture later this week.

The ticket office have a busy week ahead with supporters wishing to purchase tickets for this week's two home games plus the Salisbury away fixture which is all-ticket for Luton supporters.

Whilst we realise the demand for Cambridge tickets is still high, we need to allow supporters the opportunity to purchase tickets for the games preceding it. Therefore the additional Cambridge tickets will be released for sale on Monday 3rd March.

Before Monday 3rd March the ticket office will be carrying out a reconciliation of Cambridge tickets and also contacting the supporters that were advised they were on a waiting list for tickets. (These would have been supporters who called the ticket office between 4pm and 5pm on Friday and whose contact details were taken and confirmation given that a call back would be received.)

During this period the ticket office will also be happy to swap any seat tickets for terrace tickets for those supporters that tried to obtain terrace places and were advised it had sold out. This will release seat tickets for supporters who would have otherwise have been unable to obtain them.

On Monday 3rd March the remaining tickets will be released for sale at 6PM UNTIL 10PM. Tickets will be sold via PHONE ON 01582 416976 ONLY.

THE CLUB AND THE TICKET OFFICE WILL NOT BE OPEN TO PERSONAL CALLERS AND A CALL BACK PROCESS VIA EMAIL WILL NOT BE AVAILABLE AT THIS TIME.

Season Ticket holders will be able to purchase one ticket per Season Ticket holder.

If any tickets remain on Tuesday 4th March these will be available to from the ticket office to personal callers or via phone as normal.

If any tickets remain tickets will be available on general sale on Wednesday 5th March.

The initial allocation of 1,863 tickets were sold-out by Friday with 1,500 tickets snapped up last Friday alone.

The club would like to place on record our thanks to all supporters for their patience and understanding regarding the sale of Cambridge tickets; as well as applauding the astonishing response to purchasing tickets for this match.

ENGLAND C CALL FOR DUO

Town pair Andre Gray and Fraser Franks have been called up to the England C squad to face Jordan next week.

The friendly against the Jordan Under-23s takes place in the capital Amman on Tuesday 4th March.

Both Gray and Franks are no strangers to the England C set-up. Franks scored on his last appearance for the Three Lions in a 2-2 draw against the Czech Republic earlier this season.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

We'd like to wish happy birthday to two Town supporters who are celebrating today.

Firstly, a happy second birthday to Joshua Taylor whose birthday it was on Sunday. Lots of love from all family and friends.

And a happy 50th birthday to life-long Hatters fan and season ticket Keith Fountain. Love from family and friends.

GOLDEN GAMBLE

A prize of £835 is awaiting the holder of Golden Gamble ticket number 23832 from our draw against Hereford.

The unclaimed readies can be claimed by phoning the club on 01582 411622 or by emailing commercial@lutontown.co.uk.

MATCHDAY TRAVEL

Town commercial sponsors Arriva are offering all Hatters season ticket holders cheaper bus travel on match days, making it easier to access Kenilworth Road by public transport.

Arriva operate buses along Dunstable Road with stops near Kenilworth Road and Oak Road.

They also operate service A along the Busway which has a convenient stop for the ground at the Clifton Road side of the stadium.

All Town season ticket holders have to do is show their season ticket on any matchday and they will travel for the child fare on a single, return or day ticket. Accompanying children can travel for just 50p. If you live in Dunstable or Houghton Regis, the Busway is the quickest and easiest way to access the ground. The discount only valid on Arriva services and on the A service on Busway only.

up next



THERE'S NO LET UP IN THE TOWN'S SCHEDULE AT KENILWORTH ROAD AS THE HATTERS WELCOME ALFRETON TOWN TO BEDFORDSHIRE ON SATURDAY

ALFRETON TOWN



WHO? Alfreton Town, aka the Reds. The club were formed in 1959 – the year the Town got all the way to the FA Cup final. Alfreton play their home games at the Impact Arena, aka North Street and were promoted to the top level of non-league football in 2011.

RAPID RISE. The Reds were playing in the Midland Counties League as recently as 1982 and the Northern Counties East in 2002. The club won the NCE division in 2002 before rising up through the Northern Premier League to the Conference North, which they won the title of in 2010/11, finishing 10 points clear of nearest challengers AFC Telford, scoring 97 goals in the process.

TROPHY CABINET. Alfreton's trophy cabinet is also bursting at the seams with further league and cup titles, including eight Derbyshire Senior Cup titles. They have been runners-up in that particular competition a further eight times.

IN CHARGE. Greenwich-born Nicky Law is the man at the helm at the Impact Arena. As a player he spent lengthy spells with Barnsley, Rotherham and Chesterfield. His first job as a manager was with Chesterfield, who he helped guide to promotion from Division 3 (now League 2) in 2000/01. After short spells at Bradford and Grimsby he took over at Buxton, where he earned back-to-back championships in the Northern Counties Leagues. He joined Alfreton in 2007, and won the Conference North title in his third season in the hotseat.

HOW THEY DOING? Very, very, very, very well. It was well documented in the summer about Alfreton's decision to go part-time but the performances from the Reds have been nothing short of fantastic. As the table stands tonight, Saturday's visitors sit in third place and have a strong chance of extending their season in the Play-Offs.

come April. Law's side have taken 57 points from their 33 matches so far and lie a point below second-placed Cambridge. They also have a four-point buffer between themselves and the sides outside the top five.

ON THE ROAD. The Reds have an excellent record on their travels – as you would expect from a team challenging for promotion. Law's side have won seven, drawn one but lost 10. Their goal difference away from the Impact Arena stands at minus 11 but their overall record on the road is the ninth best in the Skrill Premier. Their home record, on the other hand, is the fourth best in the division.

LAST TIME HERE. It was December 2012 when Alfreton last visited Kenilworth Road, a day when comedienne Miranda Hart was at Kenilworth Road to film a feature on a documentary about her comedy hero Eric Morecambe. Miranda witnessed a three-goal burst inside five second half minutes as JJ O'Donnell, Jonathan Smith and Andre Gray found the net.

HEAD-TO-HEAD. Alfreton will be looking to avenge the 5-0 defeat the Hatters inflicted on them back in December. The Town stormed into a four-goal lead inside 18 minutes to help record their third win over the Reds. Alfreton have won just once against the Town and that came last season in a dominant 3-0 win at the Impact Arena. Alfreton will also be looking to record their first point on Bedfordshire soil on Saturday. The Town won the first competitive meeting between the two clubs in January 2012 when a George Pilkington penalty gave the Hatters a 1-0 victory.

EX FACTOR. Alfreton took Lathaniel Rowe-Turner on-loan this season but the defender has since returned to Kenilworth Road but the Reds will have a former Hatters in their ranks on Saturday in the shape of Godfrey Poku. The midfielder, who played 29 times for the Town, is currently on-loan from Mansfield.

tickets

HOME & AWAY WITH THE HATTERS

SEASON TICKETS AVAILABLE AT PRO-RATA PRICES

Adults (22-64) £111, Young Adults (17-21) and Seniors (65-75) £84, Golden Seniors (over 75s) £51, Unaccompanied Youths (10-16) and Juniors (under 10s) £16. Accompanied Under-17s FREE



LUTON TOWN v ALFRETON TOWN

The Skrill Premier

SATURDAY 1st MARCH 2014, KICK-OFF 3PM

Tickets are now on sale at normal matchday prices.



SALISBURY CITY v LUTON TOWN

The Skrill Premier

SATURDAY 8th MARCH 2014, KICK-OFF 3PM

This match is all-ticket for Luton Town supporters. We have an allocation of 2,000 tickets, including a small number of seats that will be available to transfer into on a first-come, first-served basis.

We request that these be kept for disabled and elderly supporters. Tickets will be on sale to diamond and regular season ticket holders from Tuesday 25th February. Diamond supporters will be able to purchase two tickets per person and regular season ticket holders one each.

They will stay on sale until close of business on Saturday 1st March. Any remaining tickets will then be available on General Sale from Monday 3rd March until 3pm on Friday 7th March.

Prices: £14 adults, £12 over-65s, £10 students (17-18), £5 six-16-year-olds, free under-6s.

A transfer into the seats costs £2. Ambulant Disabled tickets are normal price with a carer free of charge. Wheelchair disabled tickets can be purchased directly from Salisbury by calling 01722 776655.



CAMBRIDGE UNITED v LUTON TOWN

The Skrill Premier

TUESDAY 11th MARCH 2014, KICK-OFF 7.45PM

Our original allocation has now sold out but a further allocation of 450 tickets have been made available.

Please turn to page 11 for further details.



LUTON TOWN v WOKING

The Skrill Premier

MONDAY 17th MARCH 2014, KICK-OFF 7.45PM

Please note the change in date and kick-off time for this match.

This game will be screened live by BT Sport. Tickets are now on sale at normal matchday prices.



commercial

WITH COMMERCIAL MANAGER DAVID HOSKINS

A big welcome back to Kenilworth Road to all of our corporate guests and sponsors this evening.

We have the pleasure of welcoming a match, ball and programme sponsor for tonight's match against Wrexham.

It's been a very exciting and busy time for us with our executive boxes and match and matchball sponsorships all but sold out for the remainder of the season. However, we still have hospitality packages available in the John Moore, Millennium and Eric Morecambe lounges. Please get in touch on the contact details below if you are interested.

Soon we will also be revealing details of our end-of-season dinner and these will be publicised in due course in forthcoming programmes and on the official website.

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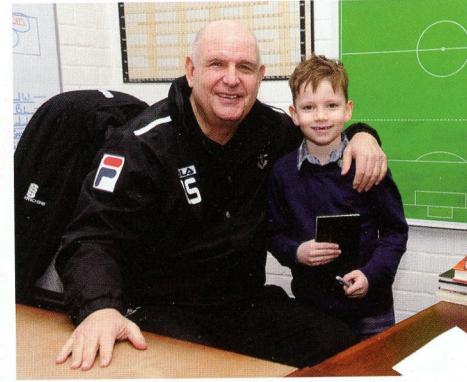
We recently completed the delivery of the equipment into the kitchens in the hospitality suite here at Luton Town.

TODAY'S MASCOTS

We'd also like to welcome two mascots this evening.

Jack Fensome, who is 10, and Tom Fensome, who is eight, will get to meet all their favourite players in the dressing room before leading the team out onto the pitch prior to kick-off.

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13	MARK CULLEN	HOME: Peter & Linda Little AWAY: Mad Hatter
14	ANDY PARRY	HOME: The Walsh Family from Marbella AWAY: Available
15	ELLIOT JUSTHAM	HOME: Available AWAY: Tommy Lennon GLOVES: Zak Harford Tilley
16	JJ O'DONNELL	HOME: Kelly Knight AWAY: Available
17	LUKE GUTTRIDGE	HOME: Luton Outlaws AWAY: Luton Town Supporters club of Scandinavia
18	DAVE MARTIN	HOME: Ronnie Coles AWAY: Nigel, Ben & Sam Martin
19	CAMERON McGEEHAN	HOME: Available AWAY: Available
20	DAVID VIANA	HOME: Available AWAY: Available
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24	JERNADE MEADE	HOME: Sweep MK Chimney Sweeps AWAY: Richard Tilley
25	PAUL BENSON	HOME: Ashby World Domination AWAY: The Mad Hatter
26	ANDRE GRAY	HOME: Tom AWAY: Jack Keenan
27	JIM STEVENSON	HOME: Luton Outlaws AWAY: Available
28	ALEX LACEY	HOME: Peter & Linda Little AWAY: In memory of Bill Lacey
29	JAKE WOOLLEY	HOME: Total Motion Vehicle Management AWAY: Available
30	ZANE BANTON	HOME: Loyal Luton AWAY: COYH
31	BRETT LONGDEN	HOME: Available AWAY: Available
32	ZELLA JIBODU	HOME: Available AWAY: Available
33	JOHN STILL	HOME: Thompsons Accountants AWAY: Country Properties
34	TERRY HARRIS	HOME: Doug Knight AWAY: Available
35	PELLY RUDDOCK MPAZU	HOME: David Alexander AWAY: Ben & Richard Banks

welcome

WREXHAM



It is with great pleasure that we welcome Wrexham to Kenilworth Road for the second time this season.

The Dragons arrive at Kenilworth Road two months after the Town knocked Wrexham of the FA Trophy, a competition which today's visitors won with victory at Wembley over Grimsby last season.

The last campaign was a mixed one for Wrexham, the FA Trophy triumph was the high point but the Dragons' defeat in the Play-Off final was an obvious low. It was the Welsh club's third successive failure in the Play-Offs and this season the Dragons have found it tough to mount a similar kind of challenge.

The Dragons lie in 13th place in the Skrill Premier having taken 43 points from 32 games after an inconsistent first half of the campaign. However, tonight's visitors will take heart from the fact they are just 10 points off the top five.

For this evening's game, the Dragons can also take confidence from the last meeting between the two clubs which saw tonight's visitors register a 2-0 victory on a Friday night at the Racecourse in front of the BT Sport cameras.

That was the Town's last defeat in the Skrill Premier – some 23 matches ago – but since then the Dragons have failed to build on that victory. It's been at the Racecourse that Wrexham have been their strongest, with eight wins, three draws and five defeats on their own patch.

However, it has been away from home where today's visitors have struggled, with eight defeats from their 16 matches on the road. Just four have been won: at Southport, Hyde, Dartford and Gateshead. Those wins Hyde and Dartford saw the Dragons score five times in both matches. Those 10 goals make Wrexham the second highest goalscorers away from home with 25 – five behind the Hatters' tally of 30.

The Dragons have lost six of their last 13 matches in all competitions, including that 2-0 defeat against the Hatters in the FA Trophy. The Red Dragons have lost two of their last three matches in the Skrill Premier, scoring just once. A 2-1 defeat at home to Dartford was followed by a goalless draw away at Cambridge. However, Wrexham failed to build on that decent point when losing at home to Barnet on Saturday.

When it comes to scoring, however, the goals are evenly spread among the Wrexham squad with Andy Bishop, Joe Clarke and Johnny Hunt have six, whilst Brett Ormerod and Robert Ogleby have five league goals to their name.

The Dragons will be aiming to continue their decent record at Kenilworth Road in recent seasons which has seen the Welsh club undefeated in their last three regular-season (Play-Offs aside) meetings in Bedfordshire. Their last victory came in a 1-0 win on a Tuesday night in October 2011, and overall the Dragons have a much better head-to-head record with 18 victories to the Town's 12 in league competition.



in opposition

MEET THE WREXHAM SQUAD

GOALKEEPERS

JOSLAIN MAYEBI. Cameroon-born stopper who joined Wrexham in December 2010 after a successful trial. Previously on the books at FC Metz, AEK Larnaca, Hakoah Ramat Gan and Maccabi Ahi Nazareth.

ANDY COUGHLIN. Former Tranmere apprentice who twice played for Rovers before signing for Wrexham this summer having impressed Andy Morrell on trial.

DEFENDERS

NEIL ASHTON. Left-back who had totted up over 200 senior appearances with Tranmere, Shrewsbury, Macclesfield and Chester before signing for the Red Dragons in the summer of 2010. Been a mainstay ever since and was player of the year in 2011/12.

DAVID ARTELL. Experienced centre-half who has enjoyed spells with Rotherham, Mansfield, Morecambe, Chester and Northampton before signing for Wrexham.

MARK CARRINGTON. Summer arrival following his release from Bury. Originally a product of Crewe's academy he has also been on the books of Hamilton in Scotland and at MK Dons.

STEVE TOMASSEN. Ex-Youth player who starred on loan with Airbus in 2012/13, captaining the WPL side and helping them earn a place on the Europa League.

DANNY LIVESEY. Experienced centre-half on-loan from League 1 Carlisle United. Started his career as a youngster at Bolton but moved to Carlisle and has played over 300 times for the Cumbrians.

MIDFIELDERS

ELLIOTT DURRELL. Highly-rated goal-scoring midfielder who signed in January this year from Hednesford Town. Notched 58 goals in 95 games for the Pitmen prior to his arrival the Racecourse.

THEO BAILEY-JONES. Young winger who joined in the summer of 2013 after a successful trial period. Only 19, but played with semi-pro teams in the Manchester area.

JAY COLBECK. Progressed through the ranks from the youth team and burst onto the scene with a double strike against Kettering Town in January 2012.

DEAN KEATES. Vastly experienced central midfielder who has won promotion six times with three different clubs. Shot to fame with Walsall before spells at Hull, Kidderminster, Lincoln, Walsall again, Peterborough and Wycombe.

JAY HARRIS. Midfielder who joined the Dragons in the summer of 2010. Started out as an apprentice at Everton before joining Accrington Stanley and then Chester.

JOHNNY HUNT. Young Scouser who has risen through the ranks at the Racecourse. Captained the reserves to the Central League title and signed a new contract this summer.

KEVIN THORNTON. Irish mid-fielder who penned a new deal with the Dragons this summer. Began his career with Coventry before spells with Nuneaton and Northampton Town.

STRIKERS

JOE ANYINSAH. Summer arrival following a successful trial. Was released by hometown club Bristol Rovers but began his career with rivals Bristol City. Has also enjoyed spells with Preston, Carlisle and Charlton.

ANDY BISHOP. Experienced striker who scored twice against the Town earlier this season. Originally joined the Dragons on loan before he signed on a permanent basis. Started his career with Walsall before loan spells at Kidderminster, Yeovil and Rochdale. Then signed for York and then Bury, where he was prolific in front of goal having played over 250 times for the Shakers.

BRETT ORMEROD. Well-travelled striker who has played and scored in all four divisions of the Football League following spells with Accrington, Southampton, Preston and, most notably, Blackpool.

ROB OGLEBY. Former Coventry youngster who moved to Scotland to play for Hearts in 2010. Left Tynecastle in January 2011 and signed for Wrexham.



Joe Clarke

FOOTBALL

scout report

WITH MATT AQUINO

You could say failure to gain promotion back to the Football League in each of the last three Conference Premier campaigns looks to have taken its toll on Wrexham this season.

Former player/manager Andy Morrell, who departed the Racecourse yesterday, had been at the helm for two of those unsuccessful attempts but, seeing the side amassed 98 points in his first season and went all the way to the Play-Off final at Wembley last year, it would be unfair to label his tenure at the Racecourse Ground a failure.

Despite their patchy form this season, we can be sure Wrexham will arrive tonight with every intention of picking up three points as they look to mount a miraculous final third of the season push for the Play-Offs once again.

How have they performed this season?

Wrexham are languishing in 13th place with 43 points after 32 games. They find themselves 10 points off the Play-Off spots, but it could be more if Grimsby win their games in hand to displace Salisbury City in fifth place.

Wrexham's home form has been a worry this season. The Reds have won only half of their 16 games at the Racecourse Ground and have lost three of their last six.

You would expect the Welsh side to have a poorer away record than at home, but their four wins in 16 away games and eight losses means they have earned 14 points less than Luton, who they would have been considering as their main rivals for promotion at the start of the season. Of their away wins, three have come in their last six games which shows how poorly they started the season.

Despite not picking up as many points as they would like this term, the manner of collecting those points has given Wrexham fans some reason to be enthusiastic, as their side have gained 16 of their points from losing positions in matches.

It would be wise, then, not to rule Wrexham out at any point tonight even if the Hatters look to have a solid lead.

How will they play? Who are their key men?

20-year-old Andy Coughlin will start in goal for the Reds having forced last season's regular Joslaine Mayebi out of the side in recent weeks.

Mark Carrington will play at right-back with Neil Ashton returning to full fitness to operate at left-back after missing a string of games with a head injury.



David Artell will partner Steve Tomassen at centre-back after re-signing for Wrexham following a loan spell last season.

Club captain Joe Clarke, who is equally adept as a central defender or midfielder, will act as a screen for the Wrexham defence whilst the box-to-box Jonny Hunt will be complimented by the ultra-combative Jay Harris in the centre of the park in what can be considered a functional rather than creative midfield.

Veteran Dean Keates may make an appearance late on if the game is stretched. Keates' playmaking abilities may enable him to find the space and penetrate the Hatters defence when legs are tiring.

39-year-old Brett Ormerod would have been suspended had the game not been postponed in January, but is available tonight.

Joe Ayinsah is likely play on the left of the front three with Andy Bishop, the club's joint top-scorer with six goals, leading the attack.



club data

Established: 1864

Nickname(s): The Dragons, The Reds

Stadium: Racecourse Ground

Capacity: 15,500 (Avg. attendance '13/14 – 3,296)

Final league position 12/13: Fifth BSBP

back to the future

FOOTBALL HISTORIAN LEIGH EDWARDS TRACES WHAT HAPPENED TO TWO OF WREXHAM'S GREATEST POST-WAR TEAMS

1961/62 PROMOTION WINNERS

KEVIN KEELAN: Goalkeeper who made 68 League appearances prior to joining Norwich City in July 1963. Later with New England Teamen and Tampa Bay Rowdies, he became a salesman in Florida.

PETER JONES: Ex-England Youth right-back who netted seven goals in 226 League games before moving to Stockport in July 1966, then Altrincham, Chorley and Radcliffe Borough, settling in Swinton.

ALY McGOWAN: Scotland B international left-back who joined Bethesda Athletic in November 1965. Later Wrexham's groundsman and steward of St Mary's Catholic Club, he died locally in July 2005.

KEN BARNES: Player-boss who was sacked in February 1965. He managed Witton Albion and Bangor City, then held various posts back at Manchester City. His son Peter was an England international.

ALAN FOX: Welsh Under-23 centre-half who joined Hartlepool United in June 1964, then Bradford City, Dundalk, Limerick and Sligo. Settling in Hartlepool, he worked for a brewery and an oil rig supply firm.

GEORGE EVANS: Left-half who scored nine times in 175 League games before joining Chester in June 1963, then Bethesda and Colwyn Bay. He became a fitter at Bersham Colliery, settling in Wrexham.

RON BARNES: Outside-right who later played for Norwich City, Peterborough, Torquay and Cape Town City. He worked in the print trade in South Africa for 20 years and died in Bolton in December 1991.

STAN BENNION: Inside-right who netted 18 goals in 55 League games before joining Halifax Town in May 1963, then Chester, New Brighton, Rhyl and Hoole. He was a clerk with Chester City Council.

WYN DAVIES: Welsh international who moved to Bolton in March 1962, then Newcastle, Manchester City, Manchester United, Blackpool, Stockport, Crewe and Bangor. He is a retired baker in Bolton.

MIKE METCALF: Leading marksman who joined Chester in December 1963, then Altrincham, Bangor City, Connah's Quay Nomads and Bethesda. He later ran his own laboratory supplies company.

RON ROBERTS: Welsh Under-23 outside-left who joined Tranmere Rovers in March 1963. Later with Oswestry, Stafford Rangers and Pwllheli, he was a manager at the Sharp Manufacturing factory in Llay.

1992/93 PROMOTION WINNERS

MARK MORRIS: Goalkeeper who played 101 League games before joining Runcorn in July 1994. He worked in his father-in-law's gardening business, then the probation service, also a goalkeeping coach.

BARRY JONES: Right-back who netted five goals in 195 League games before joining York City in December 1997. He later had spells with Southport, Runcorn Halton, Prescot Cables and Bangor City.

PHIL HARDY: Republic of Ireland Under-21 left-back who helped to twice win the FAW Premier Cup and scored once in 349 League outings before moving to Port Vale in July 2001, then joined Southport.

GARETH OWEN: Welsh Under-21 midfielder who netted 36 goals in 350 League games prior to joining Doncaster Rovers in July 2001, then Connah's Quay Nomads, Airbus UK, Rhyl and Airbus UK again.

TONY HUMES: Former Ipswich Town central defender who was captain and netted eight goals in 199 League outings. He has since been a youth coach at Wrexham, back at Ipswich and Colchester United.

MEL PEJIC: Central defender who scored four times in 106 League games before becoming a coach and later Wrexham's physio. He has since been physio at Bolton Wanderers and Macclesfield Town.

GARY BENNETT: Crowd favourite who scored 82 goals in 136 League games in two spells before rejoining Chester City in July 1997. Injury curtailed his career and he has since been a publican in Skelmersdale.

MIKE LAKE: Former England Semi-Pro international midfielder who netted six goals in 58 League outings before injury ended his career in May 1995, since working for Royal Mail in hometown Denton.

KARL CONNOLLY: Long-serving favourite who scored 88 times in 358 League games before moving to QPR in May 2000, then Swansea City, NEWI Cefn Druids, Prescot Cables and Warrington Town.

STEVE WATKIN: Leading marksman who netted 55 goals in 200 League outings before joining Swansea City in September 1997. Later with Caernarfon Town, he ended his career at NEWI Cefn Druids.

JONATHAN CROSS: Winger who scored 12 times in 119 League games while at the Racecourse Ground prior to joining Chester City in August 1998. He later played for Colwyn Bay, settling in Wallacey.

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a hatter and...

...A DRAGON

WILLIAM HARVEY McCREADIE



After becoming Accrington Stanley's youngest ever League player at the age of 16 in 1959, young Scottish

centre-forward Harvey began to attract the scouts with the eventual winners being the Hatters, who paid £5,500 for his services in January 1960.

Harvey was given only one chance at Luton, in a 3-2 defeat at Wolves, as the Town slipped out of Division One but by then off field problems were beginning to bite with fines for failure to report for training and going absent without leave.

The final straw came with his arrest following an altercation at the California Ballroom in Dunstable and manager Sam Bartram quickly offloaded him to Wrexham.

He fared little better at the Racecourse and swiftly moved onto Northwich and Mossley before returning to Scotland with Hibs.

Other players to have played for both include Gareth Salisbiry, David Bayliss and current Town winger Shaun Whalley, who played for the Dragons during 2008/09, scoring four goals in 16 league appearances.

HAVEN'T WE MET BEFORE?

Absolutely. Today's meeting between the two clubs will be the 47th in all competitions, with Wrexham currently leading 20-17 in the head-to-head records.

The clubs have won a combined 37 games between them but, interesting, 28 of those – 76 per cent – have been won on home soil. A case of the Town usually win when they play at Kenilworth Road and Wrexham do the business when they host the Hatters at the Racecourse.

The last time the two sides met a youthful Town side knocked out holders Wrexham out of the FA Trophy in December but the Dragons had the upper hand in the previous league meeting between the clubs. Andy Morrell's side are the last team to beat the Hatters in the Skrill Premier – 20 matches ago. Since that 2-0 defeat at the Racecourse, the Town have been unbeaten.

In the past three seasons today's visitors have in fact not lost in regular season competition. A 1-0 win in 2011/12 is sandwiched by two draws – 0-0 last season and 1-1 in 2010/11. However, the Town had the last laugh in two of those seasons by winning the home legs of the two Play-Off meetings.

The Town's biggest win against the Red Dragons came in November 2004 at Kenilworth Road when five different goalscorers helped the Hatters record a 5-1 win. The Town were 4-0 to the good at the break with Steve Robinson, Sol Davis, Steven O'Leary and Steve Howard on target. Ahmet Brkovic added a fifth before Hector Sam pulled one back for the visitors.

Wrexham have also scored five goals at Kenilworth Road. The Red Dragons beat the Town 5-2 in September 1997. The Hatters equalised twice through Steve Davis and Phil Gray but the visitors roared back in the second half.

Today's visitors will also have fond memories of their 2000 visit to Bedfordshire. The Town stormed into a 3-0 lead thanks to goals from Mark Stein, Julian Watts and Liam George but Wrexham fought back to win 4-3 with two goals in the final seven minutes.

from the oak road

Town fans have experienced the full range of emotions against Wrexham down the years – from winning the League 1 title at The Racecourse in 2005 and those epic Play-Off victories, to that infamous capitulation from 3-0 up to 4-3 down in 2000 and countless miserable nights in North Wales. Red Dragons' fan Carl Hogan looks forward to another memorable clash this evening.

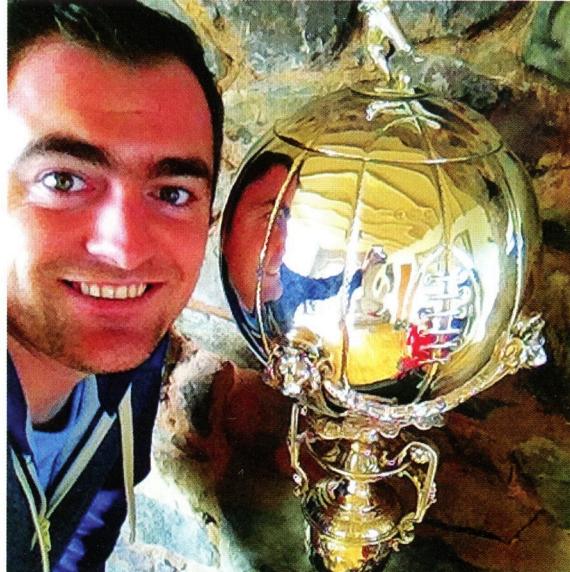
TALK OF THE TOWN: Wrexham have been desperately close to gaining promotion in the last couple of seasons – losing in last year's Play-Off final and finishing second in 2011/12, despite amassing a huge 98 points. With this in mind, is it a major surprise to be so far off the pace this time round – or is this a necessary transition season in which you rebuild a squad capable of gaining promotion?

CARL: It's a little surprising as the remit for the club is always promotion back to the Football League. Unfortunately, the squad has been dogged mainly by injuries along with some dubious suspensions during this campaign. I feel we are in somewhat of a false position in the league table as the squad is much stronger than its position suggests.

TOTT: The sides have met a lot in recent years – is there a player in your ranks who Hatters fans may be less familiar with that could have a major impact on the game today?

CARL: Hatters fans today will probably see Wrexham's hottest prospect - Robbie Evans. He's an 18-year-old lad who was born and bred in Wrexham. There's something about a home-grown player that catches supporters' imaginations, but Robbie backs that imagination up with promise on the pitch. He's an 18-year-old midfielder who captained last term's youth team to the league championship. A tidy footballer who shows real commitment and flair. A good passer of the ball who pulls the strings in the centre of the park. Robbie has had the honour of captaining the first team on three occasions this season too, being Wrexham's youngest ever skipper.

TOTT: What is the best match involving your side you have witnessed this season – and which opposing team has impressed you most?



CARL: We have been impressive on a number of occasions this season but our home victory over Forest Green Rovers was special. It was rounded off with a fantastic goal from our player-manager Andy Morrell who had come on as a substitute. We moved the ball around well and optimised our pacy players late on while making a star filled Forest Green look rather ordinary.

TOTT: Wrexham currently lie adrift of the Play-Off places – but have games in hand on Gateshead and Nuneaton. Do you still believe the club can achieve a top five finish?

CARL: Yes. Forever the optimist! My dad warned me as a six-year-old before my first Wrexham game: "It's going to be tough following the Reds son, we do nothing the easy way!" - and boy was he right! As for this season, I think now, with the return of key players, we can now put a run together. Some of the teams above us seem



to have peaked in form too early, something Hatters and Dragons fans alike can relate to from seasons past.

TOTT: Wrexham were the last team to beat the Hatters in league action – are you surprised by how Luton's form has markedly improved since our defeat in north Wales in September?

CARL: No. When Luton Town appointed John Still, I thought "promotion won't be far away". He's a great manager who builds teams that are hard to beat. Early form counts for nothing as long as you keep in and around there, with a decent points tally, and push on from there.

TOTT: Do you feel the Red Dragons will end Luton's unbeaten run tonight? What's your prediction?

CARL: I hope so! We seem to play better against the stronger teams this season. The Hatters are going to be one of the strongest teams we will come up against, especially being in such fantastic form. I predict a narrow 2-1 Wrexham win.



Steve McNulty takes on Wrexham striker Andy Bishop during the Hatters visit to the Racecourse Ground in September

TOTT: The last few years has seen multiple matches postponed during the season as snow, ice and, this year, rain make pitches unplayable. Would you like to see the football calendar adjusted at all – for instance, clubs playing on through May and taking a winter break – or is the onus on clubs to take steps to protect their pitches?

CARL: As far as the season calendar goes I am a traditionalist. I think moving the calendar may remove some of the charm away from experiencing watching your team in all weathers and conditions possible.

Although, having said that, something needs to be done to help clubs who can't get multiple games on. For instance, Wrexham

as tenants can't be held responsible for protecting the pitch - the onus passes on to the ground's owners to get games on. Maybe with extra funding passed down from the Premier League it should be a mandatory requirement to have all weather pitch covers at a certain level of professional football.



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TOWN 7-0 HEREFORD

A stupendous six second half goals helped the Hatters to a stunning 7-0 victory over Hereford to go nine points clear at the top of the table.

Andre Gray led the way with yet another hat-trick – his third treble of the season – and he was ably assisted with goals from Paul Benson, Jake Howells, Pelly Ruddock and Alex Lawless as the Town ran riot.

The Hatters were a goal up at half-time thanks to Gray's first of the afternoon on 12 minutes but, after Hereford rallied in a competitive first half, the Town turned on the style in the second to record their 11th consecutive home league win and also extend their unbeaten run to an astonishing 22 games.

It all started with John Still fielding an unchanged team that beat Macclesfield and after a bright opening to the game it was Gray who broke the deadlock with a predatory finish. Scott Griffiths and Luke Guttridge combined to tee-up Cameron McGeehan to drive a low shot goalwards from the edge of the box. His effort was spilled by Daniel Lloyd-Weston in the Hereford goal and Gray was first on the scene to tuck home the loose ball.

Hereford, who arrived at Kenilworth Road with just two away wins all season, responded well to going behind, but despite having their fair share of possession, the Bulls failed to seriously test Mark Tyler in the Town goal.

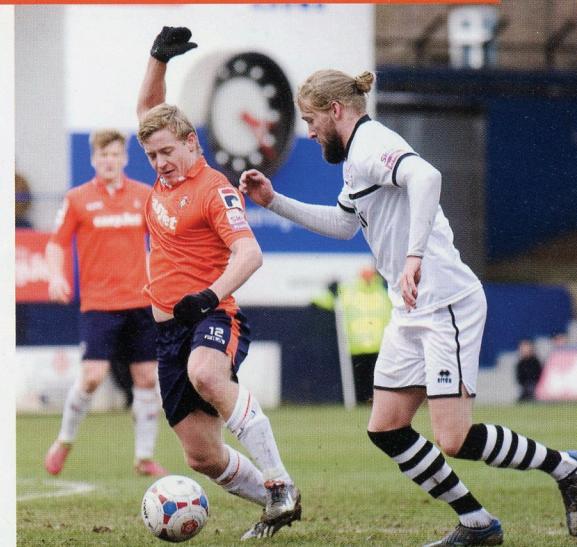
Gray came close with two further efforts in the first half, one which he saw cleared off the line, whilst Benson was denied by a smart save by the legs of Lloyd-Weston after Gray had swept a ball forward for his strike-partner to chase.

However, despite Hereford's best efforts to pull a goal back before the break it remained 1-0 and the Bulls' threat would diminish considerably in a second half completely dominated by the Hatters.

The first of six second half goals arrived on 49 minutes when McGeehan headed on Howells' right-wing corner, and Benson stole in to nod home from two yards out for his 12th goal of the season and his first at the Kenilworth Road end of the ground.

Two became three seven minutes later when Howells struck from the spot. Guttridge and Ruddock combined superbly before the latter was upended in the penalty area by Kingsley James and Howells coolly dispatched past Lloyd-Weston for his fifth goal of the season, and fourth from 12 yards.

By now Hereford's resistance had completely broken as the Town continued to surge forward in the hunt for more goals.



Scott Griffiths clears the danger against Hereford

And on the hour it was 4-0 when Ruddock scored his first senior goal by smashing a shot in off of the crossbar after a fine flowing, one-touch move involving Guttridge and Benson.

Benson then tracked back in this own half to pinch the Bulls of the ball and feed Guttridge on 68 minutes, and his pass then sent Gray racing away and the in-form striker made no mistake with a confident finish to make it 5-0. It was four goals in a devastating 15 minutes for the Town.

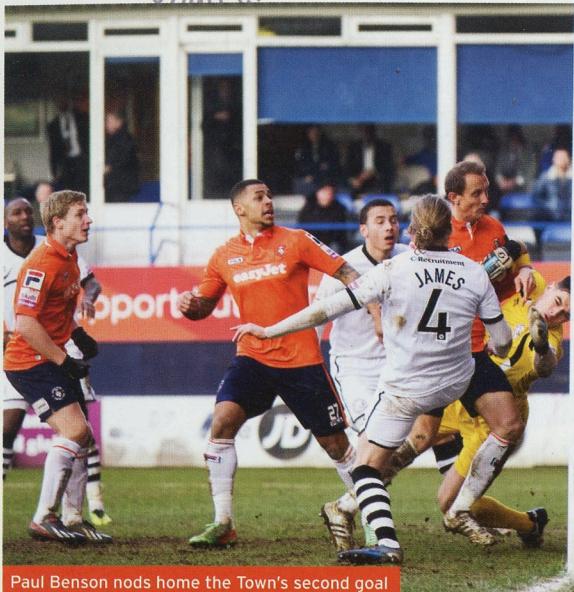
Treble

With Tyler a spectator as the Hatters pinged the ball around for fun, poking holes in the visitors' defence, five became six on 82 minutes when Gray netted his treble. Lawless wriggled down the left flank to cut the ball back into the penalty area and Gray was there to side-foot powerfully past Lloyd-Weston for his 22nd goal of the season.

Gray came close to adding a fourth for himself moments later when his shot hit the side netting, but the Town did apply the coup de gras in the final minute. Lloyd-Weston made a fine save to stop Matt Robinson's vicious 30-yard free-kick but both Lawless and fellow sub Jon Shaw were quickest to the loose ball with the former getting the verdict post-match as the Town crowned a fine week with a sterling performance.

TOWN 7-0 HEREFORD

Gray 12, 58, 82, Benson 49, Howells (pen) 56, Ruddock 60, Lawless 90



Paul Benson nods home the Town's second goal

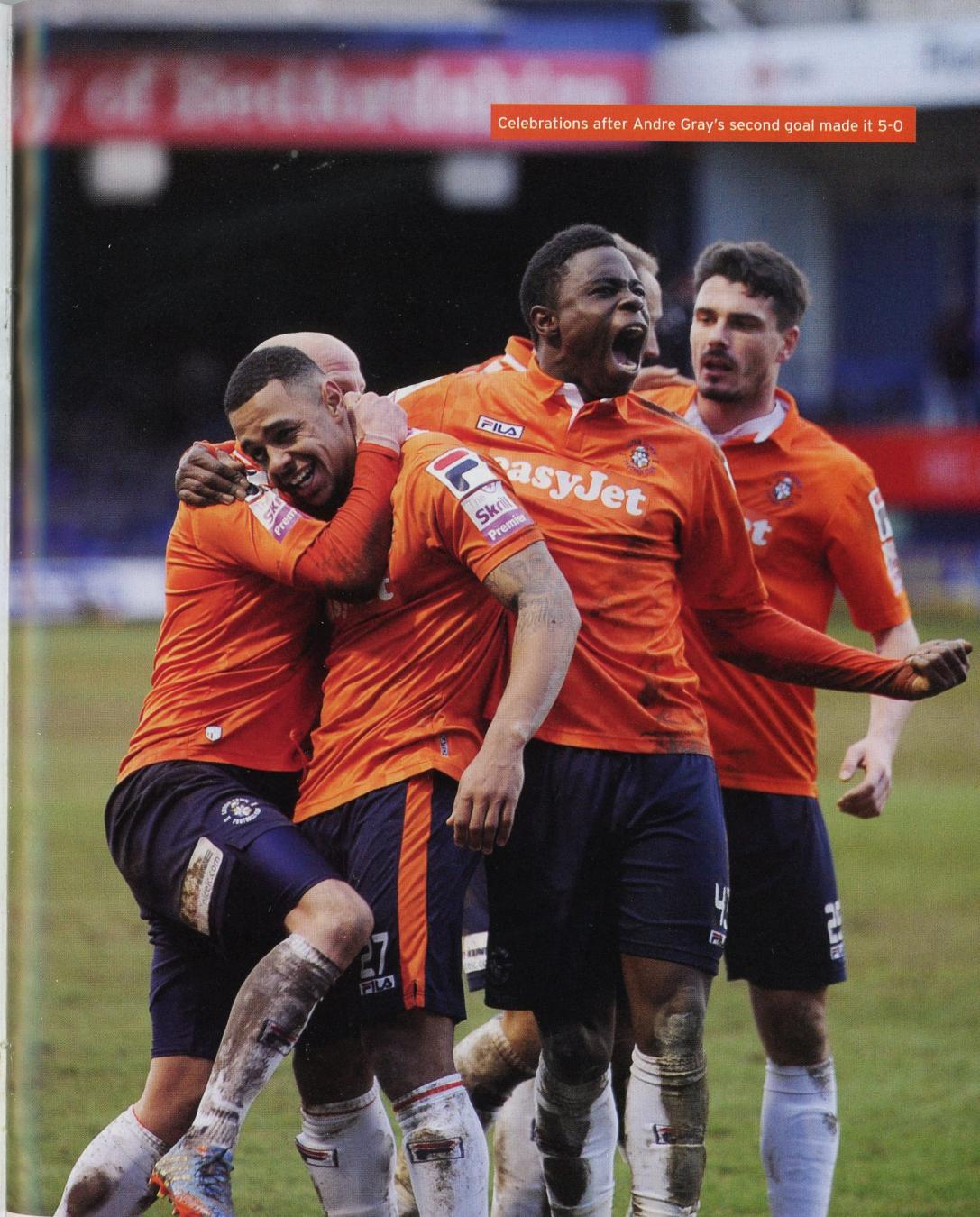


Pelly Ruddock slams home to make it 4-0

TOWN: Tyler; Henry, Griffiths, McNulty, Franks, McGeehan (sub Robinson 69), Ruddock, Guttridge, Howells (sub Lawless 76), Gray, Benson (sub Shaw 79). **SUBS NOT USED:** Charles, Justham.

HEREFORD: Lloyd-Weston, Leadbitter, Graham, McDonald, Bush (sub Collins 70), Edge, James (sub Purdie 59), Brown, Rankine, Sharp (sub Smith 62), Walker. **SUBS NOT USED:** Williams, Evans.

Celebrations after Andre Gray's second goal made it 5-0

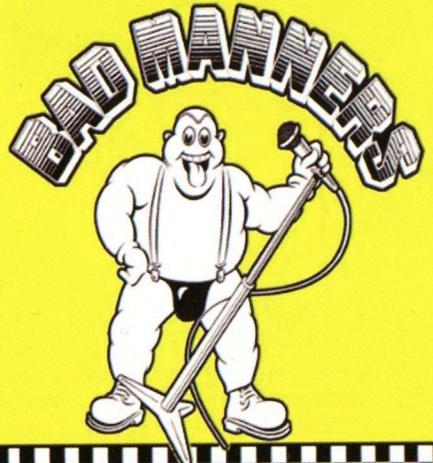


POSSESSION	56%	44%
CORNERS	10	3
SHOTS ON TARGET	12	1
SHOTS OFF TARGET	9	5

FOULS	9	1
YELLOW CARDS	2	2
RED CARDS	0	0

ATTENDANCE: 7,111 (156 HEREFORD)

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NUNEATON 0-5 TOWN



The Hatters surged even further clear at the top of the Skrill Premier with a five-star performance at Nuneaton to make it 23 games unbeaten.

Two goals from Paul Benson – one in each half – as well as further strikes from Andre Gray, Luke Guttridge and Jake Howells – sealed an emphatic victory as the Town ran riot for the second week in succession after the 7-0 win over Hereford to go 11 points ahead of second-placed Cambridge.

The Town started unchanged at a blustery Liberty Way and it wasn't until the 11th minute that either side forced a chance when Wes York's shot from the edge of the box was saved by Mark Tyler, diving down to his right.

Almost immediately the Hatters then raced down the other end to win a corner from which Cameron McGeehan saw his shot from eight yards bravely blocked by a number of Nuneaton players. On 17 minutes, the Town came even closer to breaking the deadlock when clever play from Guttridge fashioned a chance for Howells and his fierce drive from the edge of the box was turned over the crossbar by home stopper James Belshaw.

Gray was finding life tough on the right flank up against home defender Theo Streete and on 21 minutes the striker did well to take a Ronnie Henry cross in his stride into the box but the ball ran away from him and the chance was gone.

The wind was wreaking havoc as both sides attempted to play football but a minute after Benson, Gray and Pelly Ruddock combined in some eye-catching football, the Town took the lead. Gray's throughball wasn't cut out by the home defence allowing Benson to stride clear. The striker scuffed his first shot which eluded Belshaw and Benson was able to run around to tuck home into the unguarded net for his 13th goal of the season.

Three minutes before half-time Benson came within a whisker of doubling his and the Town's lead when he volleyed wide inside the penalty area having taken a superb pass from Guttridge.

Leading at the break the Town defended well four minutes after the restart when home skipper Gaz Dean's header was hacked away on the post.

After that near miss the Hatters came close to making it 2-0 when Gray sprinted clear down the right flank at pace.

His cross was inches away from finding Ruddock before Howells' shot was then half-cleared to Scott Griffiths whose volley was comfortable for Belshaw.

However, the Town did double their lead on 63 minutes. Guttridge found a pocket of space in the box to ghost past two men and his cross was bravely flicked on by the diving head of Benson and Gray was on hand to bundle home his 23rd goal of the season from a yard out. It was his 50th goal in Town colours.

It got even better for the Town on 71 minutes when Guttridge made it 3-0 with yet another superb team goal. McGeehan, Ruddock, Benson and Gray were all involved in a fine passing move in and around the penalty area before Guttridge was teed-up to power home his 10th goal of the season.

The Hatters were playing some delightful football and it soon became 4-0 on 81 minutes when Benson grabbed his second of the afternoon, diving to head across goal to meet Howells' pin-point left-wing cross.

Four minutes later it was 5-0 as the Town turned on the style. Substitute Jon Shaw eked out a cross from the right to swing in a perfect ball for the on-running Howells and he buried a header past Belshaw from inside the six yard box.



NUNEATON 0-5 TOWN

Benson 34, 81, Gray 63, Guttridge 70, Howells 85



Paul Benson looks on as Andre Gray makes it 2-0



Benson heads home his second to make it 4-0

NUNEATON: Belshaw, Cowan, Dean, Delfouneso (sub Hibbert 74), Sleath, Streete, Walker (sub Trainer 81), Arsmson, York, Brown, Taylor (sub Moult 56).
SUBS NOT USED: Gordon, Adams.

TOWN: Tyler; Henry, Griffiths, McNulty, Franks; McGeehan, Ruddock, Guttridge (sub Robinson 87), Howells, Gray (sub Lawless 84), Benson (sub Shaw 83). **SUBS NOT USED:** Charles, Justham.



Luke Guttridge celebrates putting the Town 3-0 up

POSSESSION	47%	53%
CORNERS	4	7
SHOTS ON TARGET	1	9
SHOTS OFF TARGET	8	3

FOULS	4	6
YELLOW CARDS	0	0
RED CARDS	0	0

ATTENDANCE: 3,480 (1,991 LUTON)

centre spot



Whose touch? Alex Lawless and Jon Shaw both put their best foot forward in scoring the Town's final goal in the 7-0 win over Hereford

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reaction

TRIO'S DELIGHT AT 7-0 WIN

Andre Gray scored his third hat-trick of the season in the demolition over Hereford United in the Town's last game at Kenilworth Road.

The in-form striker has now netted back-to-back hat-tricks on home soil and moved into pole position in the leading goalscorer charts for this season, with 22 goals to his name.

Gray reflected on his treble following the win against Hereford United and admits that he could have scored even more goals, particularly in the first half when the striker had numerous chances to add to his tally.

"I could have had a hat-trick in the first half and maybe more in the second half. The positive thing is that the chances were there for me and I'm glad I got my hat-trick," Gray said following the 7-0 victory.

Gray admitted that confidence has played a huge factor in the striker's brilliant form this season and feels that there is a huge difference in the squad's mentality this season compared to last.

"At certain times last season it was difficult for us being so far down in the table," Gray told Hatters Player.

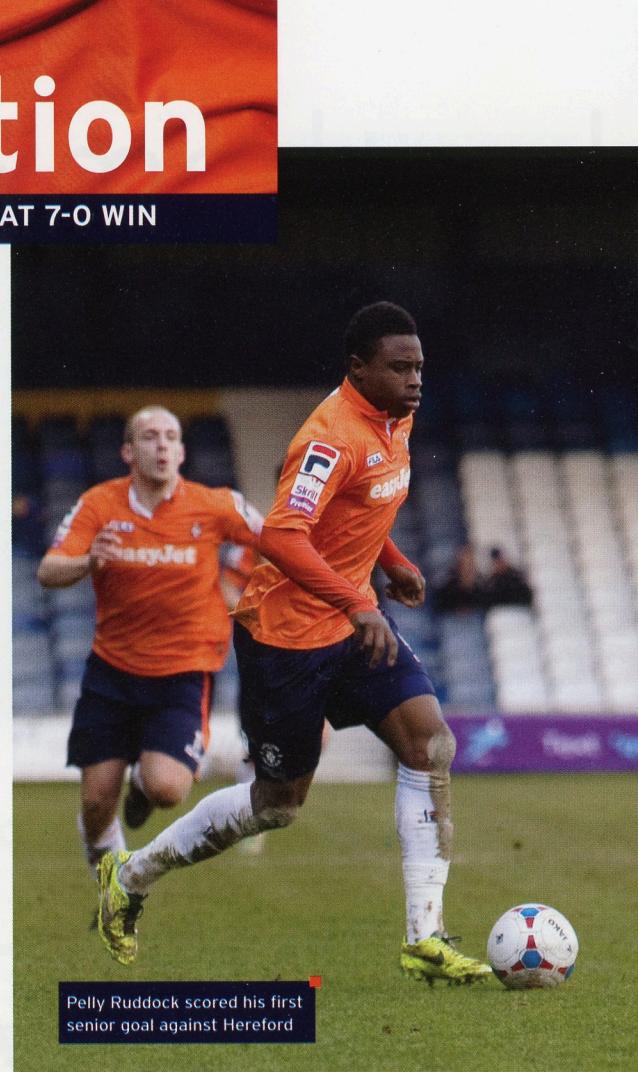
"The team's confidence was dented as well as mine, which put more pressure on me to score. This season, if I don't score I feel like I will get more chances."

The Town's latest signing Pelly Ruddock scored his first senior goal for the Hatters in the victory over the Bulls, a goal that will live long in the memory of many Luton Town fans.

"It was my home debut and I am happy I scored such a great goal. It was good to get the win and move us further ahead at the top of the table. I said hours before the game I would score and I did," said Ruddock.

"It's good to play in a team that can create so many opportunities. I enjoy passing the ball around, so having a team around me that can do that means I can trust my teammates to put the ball where I want."

Another player who was on the score-sheet against the Bulls was striker Paul Benson, as he nodded home his 11th goal of the season with his first in front of the Kenilworth Road end.



Pelly Ruddock scored his first senior goal against Hereford

Memories

Benson reflected on the win and admitted that his time at the Town is amongst some of the best memories, in a career which boasts several league promotions.

"I'm very lucky to have achieved so many promotions in my career," said the experienced forward, who won promotion with Dagenham & Redbridge under John Still."

"I am proud to have achieved the promotions I have, but your most favourite one is the most recent. If we can go on and get promoted I will hold this as my favourite promotion."

"When I first came to Luton, the crowd were desperate to get back in the Football League and it would be nice to be one of the players who help achieve that."

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reaction

BOSS' DELIGHTED AT FIVE-STAR SHOW



The manager John Still was thrilled with his side's 5-0 victory at Nuneaton on Saturday which lifted the Hatters 11 points clear at the top of the Skrill Premier.

The Town scrapped against a dogged Boro side in the face of a strong wind but led at the break through Paul Benson's goal before the Hatters scored four in the second half to make it 12 goals without conceding after the previous week's 7-0 annihilation of Hereford.

The boss said: "It's a nice position to be in, and probably teams will look at us and go 11 points, look at their goal difference as well. That's all very nice, but the time to celebrate is when the job's over and that's what we've got to do, we've got to get the job done.

"We're doing well, but we're here to do a job and the job is not done yet. We've got to keep working hard and try to complete the job, simple as that."

On a difficult pitch and in tricky, gusty conditions the Town really turned on the style in the second period.

"The pitch was so bobbly, quite a few players were kicking the ball out and you have to deal with that," continued Still. "The wind was up, the pitch was very bobbly and to consistently try and pass move, pass move wasn't easy. But we dug in first half, worked hard, got in front and I say to the players, champions and winners win in all sorts of conditions, all sorts of refereeing decisions, all sorts of fourth official decisions, you have to find a way. We've played in difficult conditions over the last five weeks, ankle deep mud, water, wind and we come up with what's required.

"It's really important that we do and important that's out of our heads now and we look to Tuesday

"We hit patches in games where we get a tempo up and the quality, the movement and the passing was first class.

"We move the ball quickly and the quality of finishing was excellent. Jake Howell's header was a terrific goal, Luke Guttridge's goal was a terrific goal, Paul Benson's second goal was a proper centre forward's header.

"Nuneaton a tough team, they've got some good players. I know why they're in a good position that they're in and we had to make sure we defended all over the pitch.

"I thought the back four was outstanding, Scott Griffiths was tremendous and first half Cameron (McGeehan) was absolutely terrific.

"He won every single challenge and that gave us a cornerstone to push on a little bit second half as the goals were well worked and well finished."

The Hatters take on Wrexham tonight – the last team to beat Still's side in the Skrill Premier back in September.

"It will be a tough game, I think they're a decent side, they beat us there and I hold my hands up as afterwards I said I didn't pick what I realised would have turned out to be the right team," admitted Still.

"We all make mistakes and I made one, that's gone, it's got no relevance to what's coming up.

"We've got to go and play for this club on Tuesday, work as hard as we can and try and get the best result."

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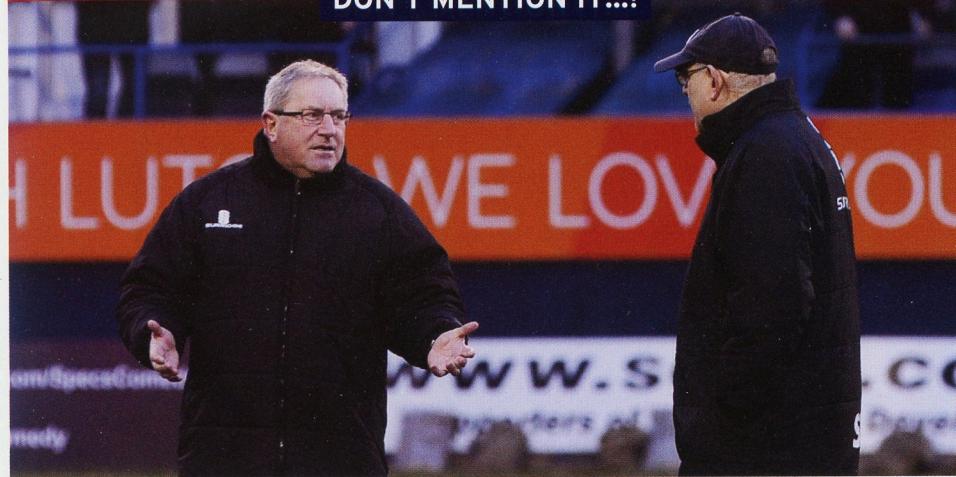
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Terry Harris

DON'T MENTION IT...!



The P word. You know, the one that ends in "tion". Yep, that one.

The Town might be 11 points clear at the top of the Skrill Premier after a run of 23 games without defeat but that particular p-word has not been mentioned once around the Hatters camp.

Cliché, it maybe, but for the Hatters it's a case of taking it one game at a time, as assistant manager Terry Harris explained last week.

"No-one has mentioned it. I know I keep saying it, but it really is a case of one game at a time," said John Still's right-hand man.

"It's the old adage, and we've mentioned it so many times, but no-one's mentioned anything at all."

The Town have now hit 12 goals without conceding in their last two matches after 7-0 and 5-0 victories within seven days.

Almost 2,000 Hatters fans roared the side onto victory on Saturday and Harris is all too aware of the help that support has had on the team.

"The atmosphere – you really can sometimes hear it, and it's obviously a lot better."

"We've always worked on the premise that John has mentioned before, that we're never too high and never too low. We try to keep an even keel, don't run away with yourself."

"Come into work, do the work that you're meant to do and as professionally as you can and as good as you can, and then hopefully everything will follow."

"Since day one we've had a really good atmosphere, we've always built the team ethic really and it's no different now. Obviously winning helps."

With crowds flocking back to Kenilworth Road Harris is also aware of the weight of expectation that the success has brought to the loyal Town following.

"The supporters' expectations have been raised and quite rightly so," said Harris. "When you go on a 23-game unbeaten run and we're in the position that we are and you look at the league table."

"John, Hakan and myself have been in the game long enough now to know that it's not always rosy in the garden and you have to point these things out to players."

"The three of us have got our feet firmly on the ground we know what we're doing and just one game at a time."

On the Town's support at Nuneaton, Harris added: "The position that we are in at the moment I don't know man Conference clubs that could or would take 2,000 away from home. It's absolutely unbelievable. It's gradually built up as the season's progressed."

But that fervent support hasn't just been restricted to matches on the road says Harris.

"It was absolutely fantastic to see and really the reception the players got at the end of the Hereford game I don't think many people left the ground prior to the end of the game really."

"I thought the reception the players received was great, and the stadium seemed packed as it did at three o'clock – it's absolutely fantastic."

picture the past

CLUB HISTORIAN ROGER WASH DELVES INTO HIS PHOTOGRAPHIC ARCHIVE

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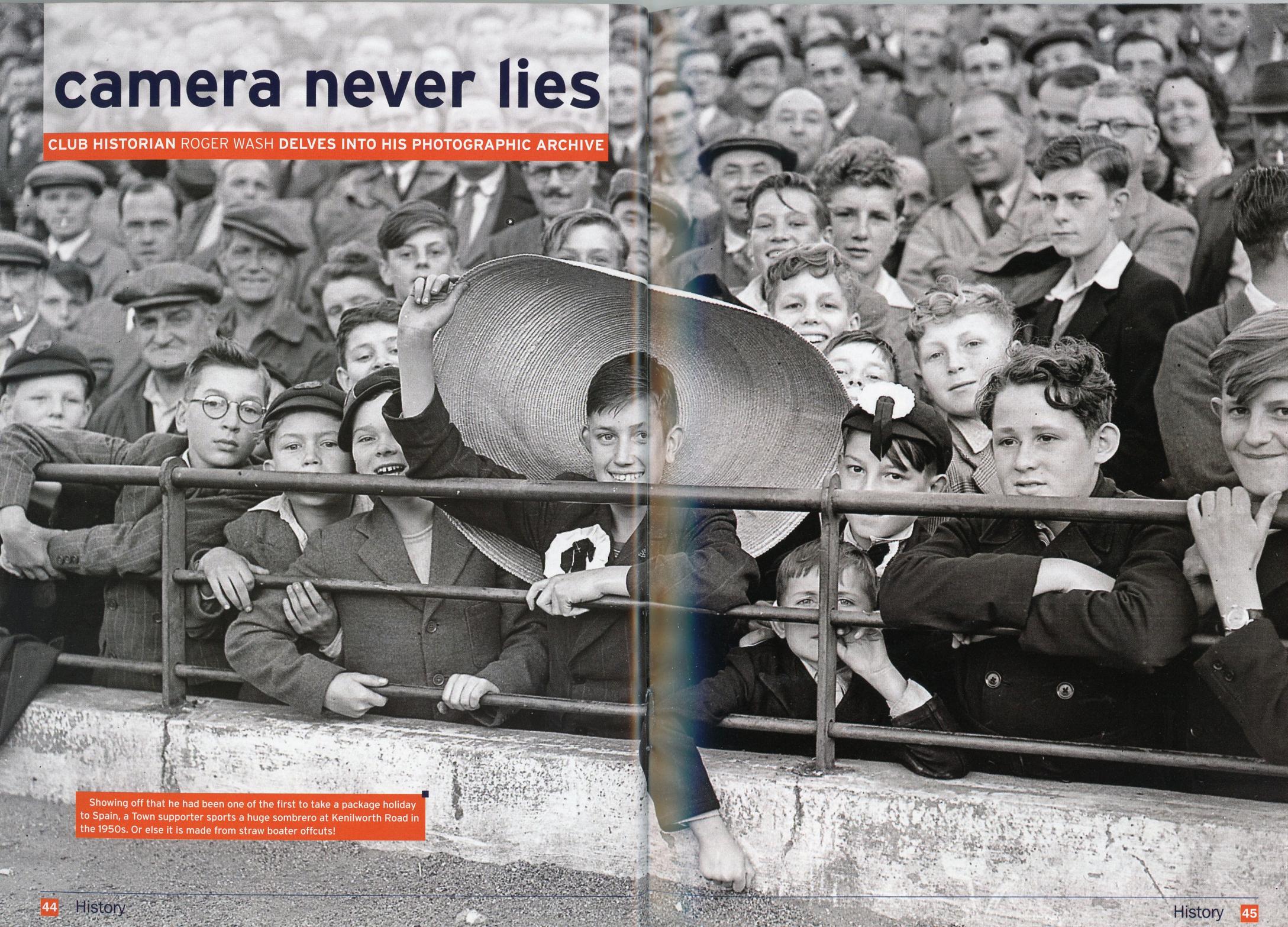


Derek Hales bangs in his only Luton goal during the 1-1 draw with Cardiff at Kenilworth Road in February 1973. Jim Ryan watches closely while in the background Barry Butlin loiters.

camera never lies

CLUB HISTORIAN ROGER WASH DELVES INTO HIS PHOTOGRAPHIC ARCHIVE

Showing off that he had been one of the first to take a package holiday to Spain, a Town supporter sports a huge sombrero at Kenilworth Road in the 1950s. Or else it is made from straw boater offcuts!



yesterday's pages

CLUB HISTORIAN ROGER WASH LOOKS THROUGH PAST PROGRAMMES

LUTON TOWN 3-0 LIVERPOOL

FA CUP 28TH JANUARY 1987

When the Hatters announced the banning of away supporters, effective from the beginning of the 1986/87 season, little did they know the furore they would cause in the football world and the number of column inches they would produce in the sports pages.

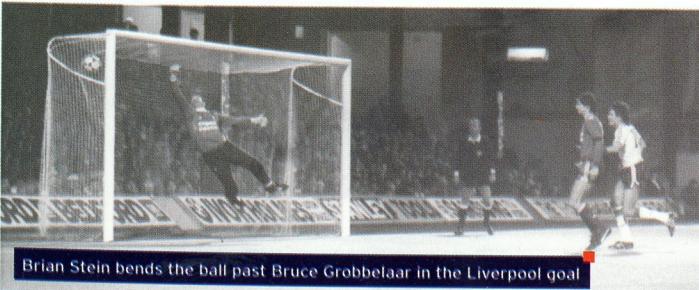
Initially the scheme was strictly enforced with the first big test coming when the Town were drawn at home to lowly Cardiff in the Littlewoods Cup. Cardiff immediately demanded 5,000 tickets insisting that number of supporters would travel to a mid-week second round tie.

The Town refused and after a Mexican stand-off were unceremoniously dumped out of the competition.

The club were worried that the Football Association would go the same way as the Football League in insisting that they allocate a quarter of the available tickets to away supporters in the event of a home draw in their competition. The FA were rather more flexible, however, and the Town responded by allowing a couple of hundred Liverpool supporters into the main stand when the two clubs came out of the hat together in the third round. It also helped from a crowd problem point of view that the game was televised live.

Liverpool were hoping they had seen the last of the Town that season having suffered a 4-1 hammering earlier in the campaign at Kenilworth Road and came to Luton to shut up shop hoping for a replay.

On a cold, snowy day, the game proved a good advert for the Town's artificial surface as on grass the contest would not have started. With the Reds paying the Hatters



Brian Stein bends the ball past Bruce Grobbelaar in the Liverpool goal

the ultimate compliment of playing ten men behind the ball they managed to keep the game scoreless with manager Kenny Dalglish barely hiding his delight at the result.

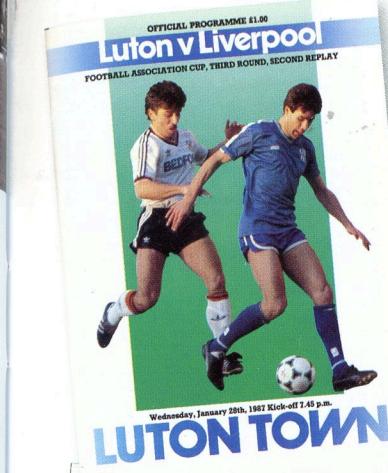
On the day of the replay the Town decided to fly, having heard of bad weather threatening the roads in the north, but on reaching Heathrow found that there were no flights out because of the conditions. They were stranded without a chance of getting to Anfield in time and the game had to be postponed despite the pitch being perfectly playable.

Liverpool, and in particular Dalglish, were scathing in their criticism of the Town who, of course, should have made arrangements to travel up the day before. The moaning went way over the top and had even moved on to the number of pies that had gone to waste before the listening press got bored.

When the game was eventually replayed the Town were really up against it with a highly critical, vociferous home support to contend with plus the might of the best team in the land. That they held out for 120 minutes to force a second replay speaks volumes for the resolve of the players and made John Moore, who was thinking of resigning after the debacle of the postponement, a proud man. On balance, Liverpool should have won at Anfield but resolute defending and no small amount of good fortune kept the ball out of the Luton net.

The Town won the toss of the coin for choice of venue for the second replay and it was back to Kenilworth Road two days later. Dalglish would live to rue the day he slated the Luton surface after the first tie never thinking he would be returning to Luton so quickly!

On a famous night under the floodlights the Town hammered Liverpool with Brian Stein proving that you could bend free-kicks on an artificial surface when giving the Town the lead on 34 minutes, Mick Harford netting from the spot after Stein was tripped by Jan Molby after 78 minutes and Mike Newell hammering a piledriver following Steve Foster's opening three minutes later.



ELSEWHERE IN FOOTBALL

The EEC had put pressure on countries whose football clubs were restricting the number of foreign players allowed.

The Football League had decreed that no new synthetic surfaces were to be laid by member clubs for the next three years.

Sunderland manager Lawrie McMenemy had agreed to take a pay cut. His reputed £3,000 per week was the highest in the country.

Chelsea's Kerry Dixon puts in a transfer request.

THE PROGRAMME

Considering the club had only 48 hours to produce a programme the normal 40-page issue was issued.

Manager John Moore, in his column, spoke about the recent defensive performances which had seen no goals conceded in the five matches played in January – it was to become six shortly afterwards.

It was emphasised that the club and Liverpool still enjoyed cordial relationships off the field and that the Town's directors were presented with a pre-match meal at Anfield which did not consist of cold meat pies!

1st Team ACTION

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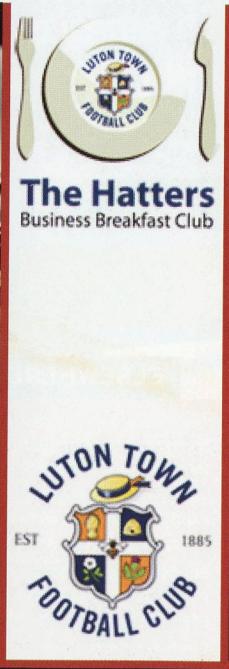
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on this day

25th FEBRUARY

THE RECORD

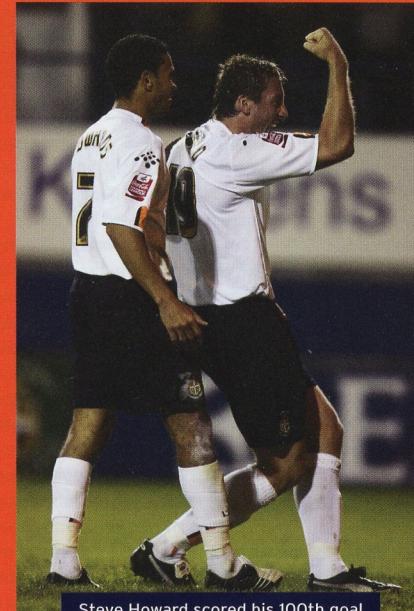
The 25th February is a real date for forget as far as Town fans are concerned down the years with a record reading just six wins from 18 matches. The Hatters have drawn just three and lost nine. 27 goals have been scored and 29 have been conceded.

If you're looking for some positive spin how about this: the Town have lost just one of their last five matches played on this day in history, winning two and drawing two. The last defeat on this day came in 2006 when the Town went down 2-1 at Elland Road against Leeds United in the Championship. Steve Howard netted the Hatters' consolation that day which was his 100th goal for the club.

The Town's last game on this date came two years ago when goals from John Paul Kissack and a rare goal from Keith Keane gave the Hatters an FA Trophy quarter-final victory over Gateshead in front of 2,499 at Kenilworth Road.

SIXTY-FOUR YEARS OF HURT

The Hatters beat Swansea Town 6-3 at Kenilworth Road in a Division 2 fixture in 1939 with Hughie Billington netting four of the Town's goals. That, however, would be the Hatters' last win on 25th February for 64 years. The Hatters went 10 games without a win on this date until a solitary goal from Tony Thorpe earned the Town a 1-0 win over Plymouth Argyle at Kenilworth Road in 2003.



Steve Howard scored his 100th goal for the Hatters on this day in 2006

TOP FLIGHT TOWN

The Town have played five times in the top division on 25th February, picking up just one point from a single draw, incidentally in the last match competed by a Hatters side in the top division. In 1992 a Mark

Pembrey penalty helped the Town earn a 1-1 draw against Crystal Palace at Selhurst Park.

The Hatters were beaten 2-1 at home to Huddersfield in 1956; 3-1 away to Everton at Goodison in 1975 – John Aston scoring the goal; 2-1 at Southampton (Mal Donagh netting); and 2-0 at Highbury against Arsenal in 1989.

WIN, WIN SITUATION

Four of the Hatters' six wins on this day came in four successive fixtures between 1911 and the aforementioned 1939 win over Swansea.

Norwich City were the Town's victims in 1911, the Hatters running out 3-1 winners in the Southern League before Brentford were seen off 11 years later, the Town triumphing 3-0 in Division 3 (South). Six years later Exeter were beaten 2-1 at Kenilworth Road, also in Division 3 (South), before that 6-3 thumping of Swansea. The run of four straight wins was ended by a 3-2 defeat away to Leicester City in a Division 2 clash in 1950.

IN ALL LEAGUES

The Hatters have played in five different divisions on this day. Tonight's match will be the first time the Town play in the Conference but two matches in the Southern League, against Portsmouth and Norwich, were, at the time, the fifth level of football. The Town played just once in the fourth level – Division Four as it was named at the time – in 1967. That day they were held to a goalless draw at home to Southport at Kenilworth Road.

smith all smiles

AN INTERVIEW WITH JONATHAN SMITH

After being on the end of a horror tackle on Boxing Day that saw him break his leg in two places, Town midfielder **JONATHAN SMITH** is now walking unaided and smiling as he watches his team-mates continue the fine form which he was a part of in the first place.

In an exclusive interview with Hatters Player, Smith reflects on the day and the subsequent messages of goodwill that he received in the aftermath from thousands of Hatters fans.

TALK OF THE TOWN: It's great to see you back at Kenilworth Road Jonathan, what have the last few months been like?

JONATHAN SMITH: It's not been the easiest, but progress has been good and I'm trying to stay positive. Things are going really well and the injury wasn't as bad as I initially thought it was.

TOTT: When the injury happened on Boxing Day, what was the first thing that went through your mind?

JS: You fear the worst at first, but everything has gone really well since the injury, it honestly hasn't been as bad as I thought it would be.

TOTT: There was a lot of concern about the injury at the point in time; the quick thinking of the medical staff must have helped in the overall context of recovery?

JS: A lot of people helped me on the day; I think the Barnet physio did a good job as did our own Simon Parsell. Everything went to plan.

TOTT: You went to Harrow hospital and stayed there for a number of days, how was that?

JS: I stayed there for a couple of nights and the staff were pleased with how the operation went. They got me on crutches straight away and I was good to go.

TOTT: The progress has been quite remarkable given the extent of the injury, what was it like being told what had happened to you on the day?

JS: I don't let many things get me down; I tried to look at the positives. There were always people around me and I had a lot of support from the fans. I got a lot of cards and messages, the support was unbelievable. I received great support from John Still, Terry Harris, Gary Sweet and everyone involved with the club. Everyone was rallying around me, and I didn't let anything get me down.

TOTT: Were you blown away with the amount of support you received?

JS: The support was unbelievable. I know the club has great supporters, but to stick by someone like that is amazing, I will never forget that whatever happens in life, looking back at that will help me get through anything. I am so keen to get back to help the club and pay back the faith they have shown in me.

TOTT: The fans and the players are trying to repay the faith shown in you by trying to win the league for you, what's it like watching this?

JS: The lads are doing really well at the minute; as long as they keep working hard as they have been doing they will get to where they want to be, the attitude of the club is fantastic. I keep reminding them and telling them to keep going. It's great to watch the results coming in. I am as much behind the team as everyone else is.



Smith is carried off the field against Barnet on Boxing Day



Smith was back at Kenilworth Road to witness the 7-0 win over Hereford

TOTT: The show of support in the games straight after with the likes of Andre Gray wearing a shirt saying "Doing it for Smudger" must give you so much confidence?

JS: It's been fantastic; all the lads have helped me out. Luke Guttridge has helped me a lot; he has let me stay at his house a few times. It's not easy when you're on crutches, but he has taken me in and looked after me. Every single member of the squad has been really supportive towards me and I'll never forget that.

TOTT: You are off crutches now and that must be a big step for you, the next step must be to start jogging?

JS: I have got my aims of where I want to be. The next step for me is to come back and start pre-season as a League Two player. The way it's going at the minute it looks achievable.

TOTT: Have you always been mentally tough, but have you ever had an injury as bad as this one?

JS: I've played a lot of games and I've never had a serious injury before. I've had things such as a dead leg and other small niggles, but not enough to make me miss a game. The only time I have ever missed a game is through suspension or being ill so this is new to me.

TOTT: Were you aware straight away of what had happened to you at the time?

JS: The first thing I did was look at the referee to call for a foul. I didn't even know where the player who tackled me had come from and I looked down and saw my leg. A lot of the team came over and didn't notice at first, but I knew there was something wrong.

TOTT: The player that caused the injury is one of the nicest players you could meet, did he come out and apologise to you after the game?

JS: Yes he came and apologised to me. It's part of the risk when you play football, I've gone in for many tackles before, it's just part of what happens.

TOTT: Were you frustrated at the timing of the injury because it looked as though you were starting to find your best form?

JS: I thought I was playing well at the time, but I'll come back stronger.

I'm keeping myself fit and I'll be ready to come back, it's just a case of letting my bone heal now. I know I will have a job on my hands when I return as there are a lot of good players here such as Matt Robinson, Cameron McGeehan and Pelly Ruddock.

I don't expect to come back and get straight back in the team, I have a job on my hands when I come back to show that I'm good enough for this club.

TOTT: Will you be there every week to watch your team-mates play?

JS: I'm desperate to come and watch the lads, I'm gutted I'm not out there myself but I'll be right behind the team when they play.

TOTT: You were there for the win against Macclesfield, is it the kind of game that you would have loved to get stuck into?

JS: Yeah I would have been desperate to play; being around the lads before and after the game means a lot to me.

The gaffer still tries to get me involved as much as possible and it makes me feel like I'm still a part of everything even though I'm not actually on the pitch.

TOTT: Is there anything you would like to say to thank the fans for their support?

JS: The support I've had from the fans has been unbelievable. The messages and cards have made me feel a real part of everything that's happening.

I'll never forget the support I've received and it will spur me on when I return from injury.

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academy update

THE LATEST FROM
THE UNDER-18s



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The Hatters Under-18s had their first home game since late November on Saturday and entertained local rivals Stevenage at Venue360 in Luton and unfortunately lost 2-1 with a late header from a corner giving the visitor all three points.

As with the two recent away games, boss Paul Driver again fielded a very young side with only Ian Rees and Tinashe Chabata of the second year scholars involved.

The Hatters started the better and should have taken a second minute lead when Tuki Tayali dispossessed a defender and was one on one with the keeper who saved with his legs to deny the striker.

Drove

The next clear effort came in the 16th minute when Rees drove forward and shot from 20 yards but saw his effort tipped over the bar. Rees then departed the action in the 23rd minute with a calf injury to be replaced by Gabriel Oakley.

In the 32nd minute Tayali had two further excellent chances to open the scoring firstly with a header that went just wide and then a run and shot which also went wide of the far post.

The Hatters did finally take the lead in the 42nd minute when Luke Trotman broke into the box and sent into a shot that the Stevenage keeper was unable to hold and the ball went into the corner of the net.

Stevenage hit back early in the second half when they broke quickly from a Hatters corner and their striker burst through the middle to finish clinically past Craig King.

The rest of the half had few chances for either side with the Hatters' best efforts coming through Trotman runs into the box which were scrambled away. In the 86th minute one of the clearances fell to Daril Ngwala but his goalbound effort struck the legs of a defender and deflected wide of the goal.

The visitors got their winner three minutes into added time with a header from 10 yards from a corner to deny the Hatters youngsters a point that would be the least their efforts had deserved.

"Apart from the result, I was pretty pleased with the performance," Driver said afterwards. "We have switched up our formation as we are now a much younger group with most of the older boys either on loan (Smith, Barnes, McKenzie-Lowe), with the first team (Banton) or injured (Amu, Maguaraushe).

"I thought Harry Tamplin and Luke Trotman were excellent and I am seeing improvement all the time in Lee Hawkes and, especially, Osamu Allman. We held the shape well, played the conditions in the right way and created more chances

than we have for a number of games.

"Unfortunately, we didn't take them and this puts you under pressure when it shouldn't and we paid the price in the end. It's always disappointing to concede from set plays as happened with the winner."

HATTERS: King, Justin (sub Crilley 69), Perry, Chabata, Hawkes, Tamplin, Rees (sub Oakley 23), Trotman, Ngwala, Tayali, Allman. **SUB NOT USED:** Amadi.



Daril Ngwala

TERM 3 STARTS THIS WEEK

FOR DETAILS CALL 01582 583618 OR EMAIL: TIPS.LTFC@HOTMAIL.CO.UK

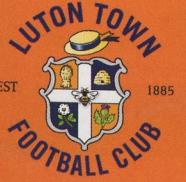


TERM 1
Sept 16th - Nov 22nd 2013
(9 weeks)
TRIAL MATCH
Sat 9th & 16th Nov 2013

TERM 2
Nov 25th 2013 - Feb 14th 2014
(9 weeks)
TRIAL MATCH
Sat 1st & 8th Feb 2014

TERM 3
Feb 24th - May 9th 2014
(9 weeks)
TRIAL MATCH
Thurs 24th April & 1st May 2014

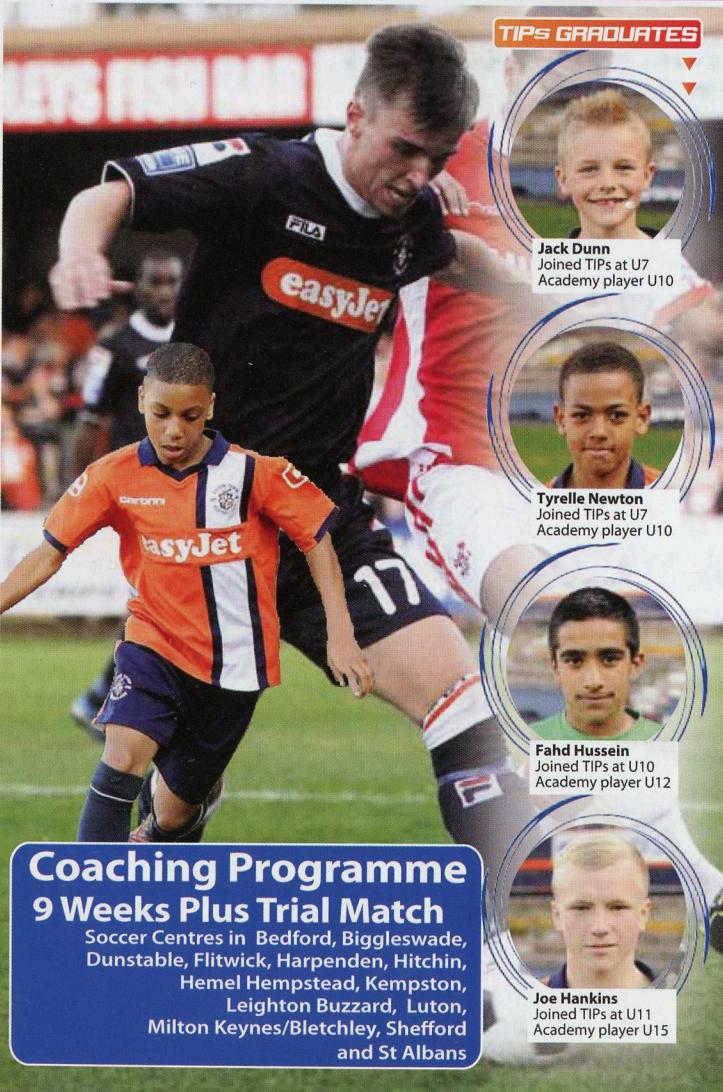
TERM 4
May 12th - July 18th 2014
(9 weeks)
TRIAL MATCH
Thurs 3rd & 10th July 2014



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Luton Town FC

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Luton Ladies

TOWN MOVE INTO LAST FOUR

The Luton Town Ladies moved into the County Cup semi-final after a nail-biting finale in the first ever meeting with AFC Dunstable at Creasey Park.

The hosts proved a hard nut to crack and probably shaded the goal less first half. The Town were thankful to goalkeeper Hollie Staples who made an excellent double save to push the ball out for a corner. AFC then struck the top of the crossbar from a trademark Danni Cartwright free kick and it remained goalless at the break.

The teams continued to trade blows in the second period but there was little goal mouth action until a ball dropped in over the Town defence and Dionne Manning touched the ball into the net.

A shock seemed on the cards when the ball again ended up in the Town net only to be ruled out for offside.

At last Luton sprang into action and should have equalised when Henny Horsler played the ball into the far post but there was no Town player there to convert.

Several half chances went begging but the Town finally equalised when Maisie Wyatt bundled the ball in at the far post from a Lauren Goodier corner.

Luton really took hold of the game during the final 25 minutes but the finishing failed to match the approach play.

With almost the final kick of the game a far post corner was punched in to her own net by the home goalkeeper but this time Wyatt was harshly penalised for a foul on a defender.

With no extra time the tie went straight to penalties with both teams missing their first attempts. Amy Nash opened the scoring with a shot into the roof of the net which was matched by the hosts. Natalie Richardson netted for Town which was again matched, to tie the score at 2-2. The Hatters again missed the target with number four, but Staples was able to hold onto the reply. With the pressure on Wyatt she scored the best penalty of the shootout calmly picking out the top left corner of the net. With AFC needing to score to take it to sudden death Staples flung herself to her left to save and give Town a 3-2 victory on penalties.

The Hatters will now face Bedford Ladies in the last four following their 6-2 victory over St Martins.

SOUTH EAST WOMENS COMBINATION LEAGUE

		P	W	D	L	GD	PTS
1	C&K Basildon	15	11	2	2	26	35
2	QPR	13	10	2	1	35	32
3	Milton Keynes Dons	14	7	4	3	6	25
4	Norwich City	9	7	0	2	13	21
5	Enfield Town	13	5	3	5	2	18
6	Denham	14	5	3	6	-5	18
7	Ebbesfleet United	12	4	3	5	0	12 *
8	Cambridge Women	14	3	3	8	-5	12
9	Ipswich Town	13	2	6	5	-6	12
10	Luton Town	11	1	3	7	-25	6
11	Brentwood Town	14	0	3	11	-41	3



The victorious team in the dugout after the shootout win over AFC Dunstable



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my only luton

A FAN'S TALE

MY NAME: Ryan Anderson

MY AGE: 20

MY LOCATION: Bedford

MY TIME SUPPORTING LUTON TOWN: I have been following the Hatters since I was 10 and have followed the club home and away for the last couple of years, going up and down the country with my friends. It is a family affair as my granddad and dad are also Luton supporters have been for many years.

MY FIRST LUTON GAME: My first game was the first of the 2003/04 season where we ran out 3-1 winners over Rushden & Diamonds at Kenilworth Road. I remember it being absolutely boiling – I don't think I've been to a game hotter than it was that day. Tony Thorpe scored twice and Matthew Spring scored once.

MY FAVOURITE LUTON GAME: I was lucky enough to see the team win the League 1 title in just my second season following the Hatters.

There was a number of games from that season that stand out, including the win at Wrexham to win the title but I'll never forget the 1-0 win over Hull thanks to Ahmet Brkovic's late goal. However, the best game for me has to be the Johnstone's Paint Trophy win over Scunthorpe at Wembley in 2009. It was a game that had everything and in front of 40,000 Luton fans it was a great day and great result which I'll cherish forever.

MY FAVOURITE LUTON GOAL: This season we have scored some really good team goals, Luke Guttridge's against Kidderminster, Pelly Ruddock's against Hereford and Andre Gray's at Alfreton. However, I'd pick Steve McNulty's against Southport this season as my favourite ever because it was so unexpected by a player not used to scoring goals! It was an amazing volley and it made us all laugh because he didn't know how to celebrate!

MY FAVOURITE LUTON PLAYER: Kevin Nicholls. Nico was a massive driving force behind our title-winning season in 2004/05. He could pass, tackle and take an excellent penalty. It was great that he came back to the club at the

start of the 2008/09 season but it was sad when he left. His performance in the JPT final was incredible.

MY MOST TREASURED LUTON TOWN POSSESSION: I have a signed shirt by the 2004/05 season winning team that I got framed and is on my wall in my bedroom. It took me ages to work out whose signature was whose!

MY ALL-TIME LUTON TOWN XI:

Goalkeeper: **Mark Tyler** – Dependable and experienced, Mark can always be relied upon to make those vital saves at important times.

Right-back: **Kevin Foley** – Another dependable player, Kevin was always a consistent, and quality player for us.

Left-back: **Sol Davis** – I was too late to see Matt Taylor but I'd have to go for Sol. A real Luton hero best loved for his tackles and passion!

Centre-back: **Curtis Davies** – He first came into the team in my first season and right from the start we knew he was going to go far. Classy defender who we likened to Rio Ferdinand.

Centre-back: **Steve McNulty** – Well, the scorer of one of my favourite ever goals has to go in, right?

Left-midfield: **Paul Underwood** – Unsung hero of the 2005 title season. Not your out-and-out flashy winger but could cross superbly and work so hard.

Right-midfield: **Andy Drury** – Easily one of the best players we have had during our time in the Conference.

Centre-midfield: **Kevin Nicholls**. The captain. Obvious choice.

Centre-midfield: **Keith Keane**. A real Luton stalwart. Over 250 games for us across four divisions. Remember the Oxford winner?!

Striker: **Steve Howard**. Scored 100 goals for us in three divisions, including the Championship. An easy choice.

Striker: **Andre Gray**. His form this season has catapulted him into the team. Pace, finishing and much more to come!

YOU ARE MY LUTON, MY ONLY LUTON...WHAT MAKES YOU HAPPIEST ABOUT FOLLOWING THE HATTERS?

Everything. They are my team, my family's team and our team! COYH

from left midfield

BY KEVIN CROWE

I SMELLED THE SPRING ON THE SMOKY WIND

11am. A chilly Friday morning. The queue from the Kenilworth Road ticket office stretches back to the scruffy corner of Luton's Beech Path.

No one's interested in work today. For these men, women, boys and girls are the cagouled collateral of a renaissance.

Five years they've waited. Some have been there every week, through thin and thinner. Others have given in to their tightened financial belt, or found alternative Saturday afternoon activities harder to resist. But not now.

That rosy-cheeked queue for Cambridge away tickets on Friday said as much about our season as Andre Gray's thumping hat-tricks or Paul Benson's swooping diving header at Nuneaton; the buzz from the portacabin counters of the ticket office, an equally valid onomatopoeia.

Because as I write this we sit 11 clear. ELEVEN. Is it me or does it feel like that bit of a long distance race when the gangly Kenyan makes a break with a few laps to go and the crowd glances back at the bunched pack to see who will go with him? At the moment, they are all looking tired.

There has been plenty to get down-hearted about during the long and rainy five-year winter that has persisted in Bedfordshire. At times it's felt like the place was ready to tear itself apart as managers offered-out supporters and English Defence League marches threatened to drag our good name through the media mud. The terraces booed and bickered and the players and staff stood embattled, separate from the Luton we knew.

Last year it felt very close to the end at times. Not in the sudden, winded, sucker-punch of a points deduction, or a receivership. It was the relentless sense that something that was ebbing away slowly. The prevailing mood was that of the bedside of an elderly relative or, if you've got a bit more perspective than me, a stadium band reduced to the Bedford Corn Exchange. We were still there, hanging on, but with distraction and fading hope.

That feeling didn't really lift until after the last time we played Wrexham in the league, just five short months ago. It already feels a world away.

Five months is all it's taken. Five months of winning and drawing to revive us from our five-year slumber. Now the talk is of juggernauts and League 2 bounces and sunny days ahead.

At times like this I like to think of the few supporters, younger than me, that might not have seen us have a spell of relative success on the pitch, save for brief forays into Cup romance. All they've known is rain clouds and depleted crowds.

Well savour this feeling boys and girls. This is what makes that empty main stand and all that stick off your mates at school worthwhile. As the latest Sloop John B song goes "We're on our way back" and whatever happens for the rest of this season, those lyrics will ring true into the next.

Finally, after five years, like seven thousand battle-scarred Shane MacGowan's crooning Dirty Old Town through a new set of brilliant white false teeth, we smell the spring on the smoky wind. And wouldn't it be great to get back in the sunshine.



THE NON-LEAGUE PAPER

ESSENTIAL READING FOR FOLLOWERS OF THE NATIONAL GAME

BY STUART HAMMONDS



So, the big clubs don't care about the FA Trophy, eh? Try telling that to the grand from Grimsby who filled the away end at Cambridge United for the first leg of their semi-final 10 days ago.

It has become popular to bash Non-League football's premier knockout competition, and our fans' forum page in The NLP has been awash with letters criticising former Football League clubs' attitudes.

OK, the early rounds might be played out to smaller crowds than league fixtures, but with season tickets not counting, this is the case in every cup competition the world over.

Some clubs might change their line-up, but as Luton manager John Still said earlier this season, he has a squad of players he believes can all do a job in the first-team, so a Trophy tie is a shop window for those boys to earn a regular spot.

More of Luton in a moment, because for starters, I want to reinforce Grimsby boss Paul Hurst's praise of the thousand Mariners - 1,023 to be precise - who followed their team south last week.

If my end-of-season award for best away fans were to be handed out now, it would be to the Cleethorpes crew. On Tuesday 28th January, almost 500 of them sang their hearts out in the same stand as their team became the first to win a league game at Cambridge this season. Many United fans described them as the best to visit the Abbey in years.

Less than three weeks later, more than double that amount bought tickets to see the first half of their bid to reach a second successive Trophy final.

Horrendous tailbacks on the A14 due to a lorry blown over in the gales meant some didn't get into the ground until after half-time, but they still continued on their road to Wembley rather than turn around and go home.

That they had to watch their team turn in arguably their worst display of the campaign was a shame for them, but they sang their songs almost continuously for 95 minutes before Lenell John-Lewis' injury-time header halved the advantage Ryan Bird had given Cambridge, and finally gave them something to cheer.

Of course, Grimsby's main aim is to return to the Football League. But there is no big-time attitude at Blundell Park.

Their fans care about the 'Tinpot Cup', as I've heard the Trophy described, and from what I've seen over the last five seasons, so do Luton's.



The FA Carlsberg Trophy Final
2013 Winner



Wrexham celebrate winning the FA Trophy at Wembley.
The final was watched by 35,266 at Wembley

The best atmosphere I've sampled at Kenilworth Road was when the Hatters hosted the second leg of their Trophy semi against Mansfield in 2010/11.

The majority of the 6,133 who turned out that day went home disappointed. But with their team reduced to nine men in the second half and extra-time, the Luton locals were the loudest I've heard them –

even after Mansfield's dubious 117th-minute penalty rebound winner.

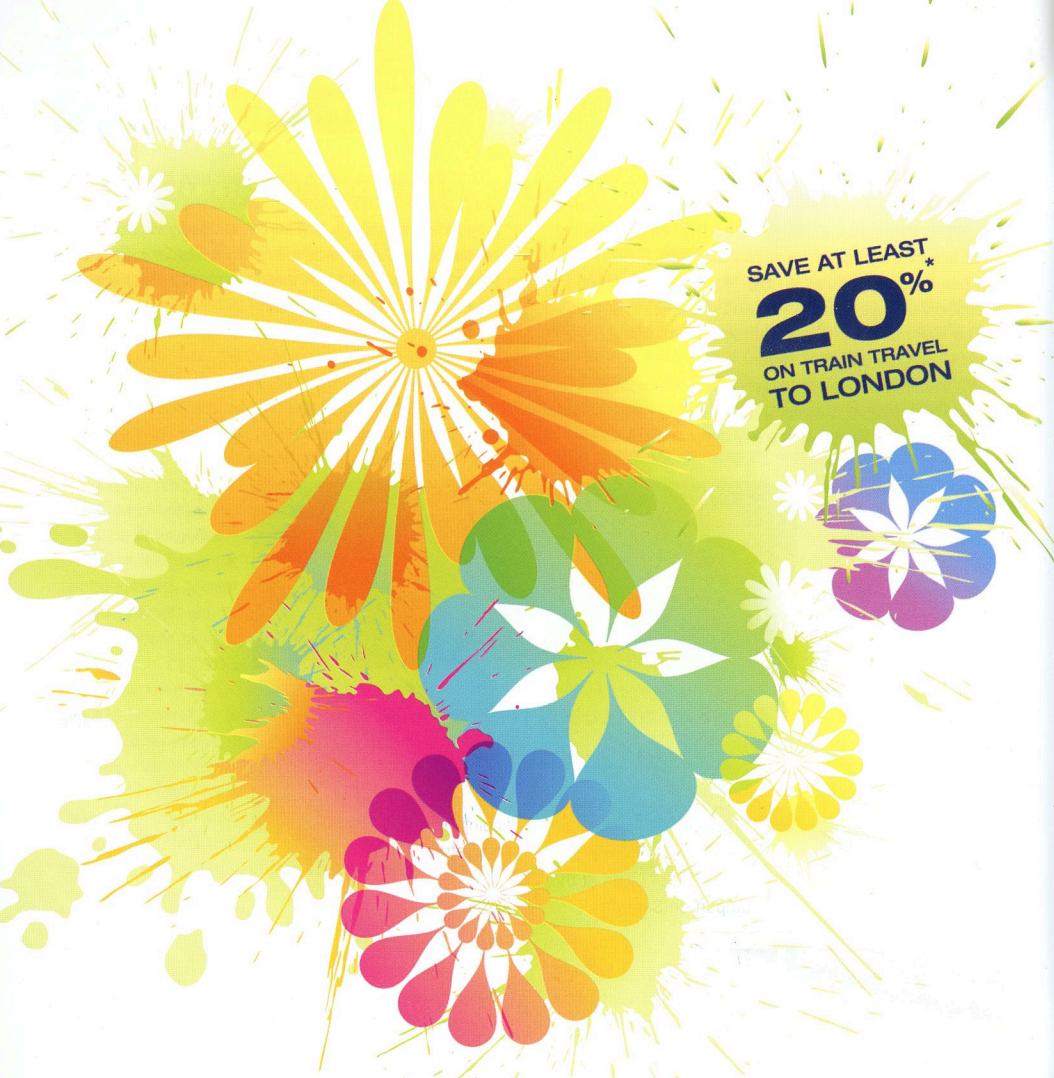
There will always be criticism, especially of the two-legged semi-final set-up and Saturday league games being moved.

But since 2006, only two finals – Stevenage v Kidderminster in 2007 and Darlington v Mansfield in 2011 – have not featured a club that has qualified for the Play-Offs or won the Conference title that same year.

And since the final returned to Wembley in 2007, only one – Barrow v Stevenage in 2010 – has not featured a recently-relegated Football League club.

So don't let it be said the big clubs – and especially their fans – don't care, because the evidence suggests otherwise.

Bursting with ideas



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league look

THE LATEST IN THE SKRILL PREMIER

The Town stretched their lead at the top of the Skrill Premier on Saturday after the fantastic 5-0 win at Nuneaton but it was a day where a number of teams failed to close the gap on the top five.

Barnet were the side to benefit the most, their 1-0 win at tonight's visitors Wrexham hoisted the Bees into fourth place. Jake Hyde's late goal at the Racecourse puts the Bees just a point behind point Alfreton and four behind Cambridge.

Alfreton could have leapfrogged Cambridge into second place but failed to see off 10-man Gateshead at the Impact Arena and had to settle for a 1-1 draw, the first time this season Nicky Law's side have drawn on home soil. Gateshead lie seventh, just two points off of the Play-Offs.

Salisbury remain in the top five despite not playing. The Whites leapfrogged Nuneaton after Boro's goal difference took a hit following the Hatters' romp at Liberty Way.

There are a plethora of sides that will still fancy their chances of gatecrashing the top five places, including Grimsby, Halifax, Kidderminster and Forest Green.

Grimsby, now out of the FA Trophy, can begin to play their games in hand. The Mariners lie in eighth place, four points off the Play-Offs but have as many as five games in hand over Alfreton, Barnet and Salisbury.

Halifax have played more games than anyone – 34 – and sit in ninth, five points off the top five, while Kidderminster – who came from two goals down to draw 2-2 with Braintree on Saturday – are five points adrift of the Play-Offs with two games in hand.

And don't discount Forest Green, who won again at the weekend. Their 3-1 win over Southport on Saturday was



Alex Wall has scored three goals in his last two games for Dartford

their third in four games and despite the fact they sit in 11th place they are just nine points off of the top five with as many as four games in hand over those sitting in the Play-Off places.

At the other end it is looking increasingly desperate for Hyde who, despite picking up a point in a 2-2 draw at home to Aldershot on Saturday, lie 23 points from safety.

Dartford's fine run of form continued at the weekend with the Town's Alex Wall scoring again. After his brace helped the Darts beat Woking 5-1 in midweek, he struck again in a 2-0 victory over Hereford. Tony Burman's side are now level on points with Chester and Aldershot who sit just outside the relegation zone.

Tamworth lie just one place off of the bottom after being held to a 1-1 draw at home to mid-table Welling on Saturday. The Lambs are three points from safety but have a number of games in hand over the sides above them in the table.

LEADING GOALSCORERS

Gray (Luton) 23

Gregory (FC Halifax) 20

Williams (Aldershot) 17

Tomlinson (Lincoln) 15

Norwood (FGR) 14

Benson (Luton) 13

Fitchett (Salisbury) 13

Moult (Nuneaton) 13

AVERAGE ATTENDANCES

Luton Town	6,775	Woking	1,404
Grimsby Town	3,479	Nuneaton Town	1,258
Wrexham	3,184	Forest Green Rovers	1,198
Cambridge United	3,003	Dartford	1,142
Lincoln City	2,400	Braintree Town	1,060
Chester FC	2,251	Southport	1,030
Kidderminster Harriers	2,131	Tamworth	975
Aldershot Town	1,939	Salisbury City	881
Barnet	1,774	Welling United	800
Hereford United	1,702	Alfreton Town	773
Macclesfield Town	1,495	Gateshead	724
FC Halifax Town	1,449	Hyde	613

TONIGHT'S FIXTURES

Braintree v Cambridge

Dartford v Aldershot

Forest Green v Barnet

Hereford v Macclesfield

Kidderminster v Woking

Southport v Grimsby

Tamworth v Chester

Welling v Gateshead

fixtures and results

DATE TIME H/A OPPONENT SCORE ATT AWAY POS STARTING XI

AUGUST

Sat 10	3.00pm	A	Southport	L 0-1	2,210	839	18	Tyler	Smith	Griffiths	McNulty	Lacey	Taiwo ▲	Guttridge	Martin ▲	Whalley
Tue 13	7.45pm	H	Salisbury City	W 2-0	6,520	92	12	Tyler	Smith	Griffiths	McNulty	Charles ▲	Taiwo 1	Guttridge 1	Martin ▲	Whalley
Sat 17	3.00pm	H	Macclesfield Town	D 1-1	6,216	80	13	Tyler	Henry	Griffiths ▲	McNulty	Lacey	Taiwo ▲	Guttridge 1	Martin ▲	Whalley
Sat 24	3.00pm	A	Forest Green Rovers	D 0-0	1,858	653	14	Tyler	Henry	Griffiths	McNulty	Lacey	Smith	Guttridge	Martin ▲	Whalley
Mon 26	3.00pm	H	Cambridge United	D 0-1	7,517	963	11	Tyler	Henry	Griffiths	McNulty	Lacey	Smith	Guttridge	Martin ▲	Whalley
Sat 31	3.00pm	A	Kidderminster Harriers	W 2-0	2,866	821	11	Tyler	Henry	Griffiths ▲	McNulty	Lacey	Smith	Parry	Guttridge	Howells 2

SEPTEMBER

TV Sat 7	5.30pm	H	Grimsby Town	D 0-0	6,131	265	14	Tyler	Henry	Griffiths	McNulty	Lacey	Smith	Parry	Guttridge	Howells
TV Fri 13	7.45pm	A	Wrexham	L 0-2	3,122	190	14	Tyler	Henry	Griffiths	McNulty	Parry	Smith	Guttridge	Howells ▲	Gray
Tue 17	7.45pm	H	Dartford	W 3-0	5,433	142	11	Tyler	Henry	Griffiths	McNulty	Parry	Smith	Guttridge 1	Stevenson ▲	Howells ▲
Sat 21	3.00pm	H	Lincoln City	W 3-2	6,203	227	9	Tyler	Henry	Griffiths ▲	McNulty	Parry	Smith	Guttridge 1	Stevenson ▲	Howells ▲
Tue 24	7.45pm	A	Woking	W 4-0	1,955	731	5	Tyler	Henry	Griffiths	McNulty	Lacey 1	Smith	Parry	Guttridge ▲	Howells ▲
Sat 28	3.00pm	A	Hereford United	D 0-0	2,386	580	6	Tyler	Henry	Griffiths	McNulty	Lacey	Smith	Parry	Guttridge	Howells ▲

OCTOBER

Sat 5	3.00pm	H	FC Halifax Town	W 4-3	6,519	260	5	Tyler	Henry ▲	Griffiths	McNulty	Lacey	Smith	Parry	Guttridge 1	Lawless ▲
Tue 8	7.45pm	A	Aldershot Town	D 3-3	2,693	840	4	Tyler	Henry	Griffiths	McNulty	Lacey	Smith	Parry 1	Guttridge 1	Howells ▲
Sat 12	3.00pm	H	Hyde	W 4-1	7,081	30	3	Tyler	Henry	Griffiths	McNulty	Lacey	Smith	Parry ▲	Guttridge 1	Lawless ▲
Sat 19	3.00pm	A	Tamworth	W 4-3	2,066	1,199	3	Tyler	Henry	Griffiths	McNulty	Lacey	Smith 1	Parry 1	Guttridge 1	Howells ▲
Sat 26	3.00pm	A	Woking (FA Cup)	W 1-0	1,452	537	-	Justham	Henry	Howells	McNulty	Charles	Smith	Parry	Guttridge	Howells ▲

NOVEMBER

Sat 2	3.00pm	A	Gateshead	D 0-0	1,080	302	3	Tyler	Henry	Griffiths	McNulty	Lacey	Smith	Parry	Guttridge 1	Lawless ▲
Sat 9	3.00pm	A	Welling United (FA Cup)	L 1-2	1,555	740	-	Justham	Parry	Howells ▲	McNulty	Lacey	Smith	Stevenson	Guttridge 1	Lawless ▲
Tue 12	7.45pm	A	Braintree Town	W 2-1	1,518	728	2	Tyler	Henry	Griffiths	McNulty ▲	Lacey	Smith	Parry 1	Guttridge 1	Lawless ▲
Sat 16	3.00pm	A	Chester FC	D 1-1	3,291	890	3	Tyler	Henry	Griffiths	McNulty	Lacey	Smith	Parry	Guttridge	Lawless ▲
Sat 23	3.00pm	H	Welling United	W 2-1	5,652	124	3	Tyler	Henry	Griffiths	McNulty	Lacey	Stevenson ▲	Parry	Guttridge	Lawless ▲
Tue 26	7.45pm	H	Southport	W 3-0	6,057	16	2	Tyler	Henry	Griffiths	McNulty 1	Lacey ▲	Smith 1	Parry	Guttridge	Lawless ▲
Sat 30	3.00pm	A	Staines Town (FA Cup)	D 0-0	621	tbc	-	Justham	Chabata	Howells	Ruddock	Davis	Mendy	Robinson	Whalley	Parry

DECEMBER

Tue 3	7.45pm	H	Staines Town (FA Cup)	W 2-0	911	47	-	Justham	Chabata	Howells	Parry 1	Davis	Ruddock	Robinson	Whalley 1	C. Smith ▲	
Sat 7	3.00pm	A	Alderton Town	W 5-0	1,279	649	2	Tyler	Henry	Griffiths	McNulty	Manson	Smith	Ruddock	Guttridge 1	Lawless 1	
Sat 14	3.00pm	H	Wrexham (FA Cup)	W 2-0	1,617	89	-	Justham	Longden	Howells	Charles	Davis	Ruddock	Robinson	Whalley	Parry 1	Lawless 1
Sat 21	3.00pm	H	Gateshead	W 4-2	6,913	23	2	Tyler	Henry	Griffiths	McNulty	Davis	Smith	Ruddock	Guttridge 1	Lawless 2	
Thur 26	3.00pm	A	Barnet	W 2-1	3,608	1,700	2	Tyler	Henry	Griffiths	McNulty	Davis	Smith	Ruddock	Guttridge 1	Lawless 1	
Sat 28	3.00pm	H	Kidderminster Harriers	W 6-0	8,488	203	1	Tyler	Henry	Griffiths	McNulty 1	Griffiths 1	Robinson	Ruddock	Guttridge 2	Lawless 1	

JANUARY

TV Wed 1	12.00pm	H	Barnet	W 2-1	7,543	292	1	Tyler	Henry	Griffiths	McNulty	Davis	Robinson	Howells	Guttridge 1	Lawless 1	
Sat 4	1.00pm	A	Lincoln City	D 0-0	2,928	974	1	Tyler	Henry	Griffiths	McNulty	Davis	Robinson	Howells	Guttridge 1	Lawless 1	
Sat 11	3.00pm	A	Cambridge United (FA Cup)	D 2-2	3,194	687	-	Justham	Longden	Howells	Charles	Davis	Ferdinand	Viana	Whalley	Parry 1	Lawless 1
Tue 14	7.45pm	H	Cambridge United (FA Cup)	L 0-1	2,312	326	-	Justham	Trotman	Longden	Charles	Davis	Rees	Whalley	Parry	Guttridge 1	Lawless 1
Sat 25	3.00pm	H	Nuneaton Town	W 3-0	7,310	182	1	Tyler	Henry	Griffiths	McNulty	Inness	Inness	Howells	Guttridge 1	Lawless 1	

FEBRUARY

Tue 11	7.45pm	A	Macclesfield Town	W 2-1	1,705	401	1	Tyler	Henry	Griffiths	McNulty	Franks	Ruddock	Howells	Guttridge	McGeehan
Sat 15	3.00pm	H	Hereford United	W 7-0	7,111	156	1	Tyler	Henry	Griffiths	McNulty	Franks	Ruddock	Howells 1	Guttridge	McGeehan
Sat 22	3.00pm	A	Nuneaton Town	W 5-0	3,480	1,991	1	Tyler	Henry	Griffiths	McNulty	Franks	Ruddock	Howells 1	Guttridge	McGeehan
Tue 25	7.45pm	H	Wrexham	W 3-0	7,310	182	1	Tyler	Henry	Griffiths	McNulty	Franks	Ruddock	Howells 1	Guttridge	McGeehan

MARCH

Sat 1	3.00pm	H	Alderton Town	W 2-0	911	47	-	Justham	Chabata	Howells	Parry 1	Davis	Ruddock	Robinson	Whalley 1	C. Smith ▲	
Sat 8	3.00pm	A	Salisbury City	D 0-0	2,928	974	-	Justham	Longden	Howells	Charles	Davis	Ferdinand	Viana	Whalley	Parry 1	Lawless 1
Tue 11	7.45pm	A	Cambridge United	D 1-1	6,216	80	13	Tyler	Henry	Griffiths	McNulty	Parry	Smith	Stevenson	Guttridge 1	Lawless 1	
TV Mon 17	7.45pm	H	Woking	W 2-1	5,854	894	1	Tyler	Henry	Griffiths	McNulty	Parry	Smith	Stevenson	Guttridge 1	Lawless 1	
Sat 22	3.00pm	H	Chester FC	W 3-0	7,310	182	1	Tyler	Henry	Griffiths	McNulty	Parry	Smith	Stevenson	Guttridge 1	Lawless 1	
Tue 25	7.45pm	A	Grimsby Town	W 2-1	5,854	894	1	Tyler	Henry	Griffiths	McNulty	Parry	Smith	Stevenson	Guttridge 1	Lawless 1	
Sat 29	3.00pm	A	FC Halifax Town	W 3-0	7,310	182	1	Tyler	Henry	Griffiths	McNulty	Parry	Smith	Stevenson	Guttridge 1	Lawless 1	

APRIL

Tue 1	7.45pm	A	Dartford	W 2-1	1,705	401	1	Tyler	Henry	Griffiths	McNulty	Franks	Ruddock	Howells 1	Guttridge	McGeehan
Sat 5	3.00pm	H	Alderton Town	W 7-0	7,111	156	1	Tyler	Henry	Griffiths	McNulty	Franks	Ruddock	Howells 1	Guttridge	McGeehan
Tue 8	7.45pm	H	Tamworth	W 3-0	7,310	182	1	Tyler	Henry	Griffiths	McNulty	Franks	Ruddock	Howells 1	Guttridge	McGeehan
Sat 12	3.00pm	H	Braintree Town	W 2-1	5,854	894	1	Tyler	Henry	Griffiths	McNulty	Franks	Ruddock	Howells 1	Guttridge	McGeehan
Sat 19	3.00pm	A	Welling United	W 2-1	5,854	894	1	Tyler	Henry	Griffiths	McNulty	Franks	Ruddock	Howells 1	Guttridge	McGeehan
Mon 21	3.00pm	H	Forest Green Rovers	W 2-1	5,854	894	1	Tyler	Henry	Griffiths	McNulty	Franks	Ruddock	Howells 1	Guttridge	McGeehan
Sat 26	5.30pm	A	Hyde	W 3-0	7,310	182	1	Tyler	Henry	Griffiths	McNulty	Franks	Ruddock	Howells 1	Guttridge	McGeehan

Jake Howells keeps his cool from the penalty spot to put the Town 3-0 up against Hereford



LEAGUE TABLE 2013/14

1 Luton Town	P	W	D	L	F	A	GD	PTS
31	20	9	2	74	24	50	69	

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hold the back page

WITH LUTON NEWS SPORTS EDITOR MARK WOOD

With the season finally entering its final stretch people are already beginning to talk about who Luton's player of the season will be. Who's yours?

It's a difficult one to call. Crowd favourite Steve McNulty has been in imperious form at the back. Never could an old adage be more true than don't judge a book by its cover in his case.

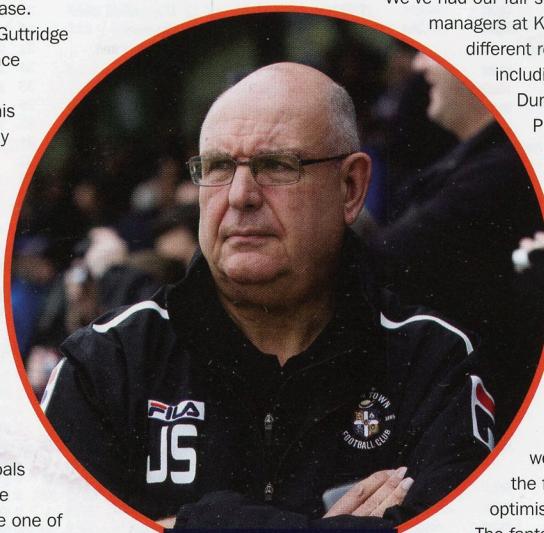
Midfield dynamo Luke Guttridge has been a revelation since his summer move from Northampton Town and his 10-goal haul has certainly helped to fire Town's promotion push.

Since joining from Swindon Town Paul Benson has knitted not only Town's play together, but also allowed strike partner Andre Gray to flourish.

The livewire striker is currently racing clear at the top of the division's scoring charts with 23 goals despite a slow start to the season, and will surely be one of the frontrunners for the award. With such impressive form he will surely be among the favourites for the gong and will certainly attract interest over the summer. It will be a massive boost if the Town can keep hold of their prized asset. But, there is one person more important than all of these who has been integral to Luton's turnaround in fortunes - please take a bow Mr John Still.

Brought in almost a year ago today from Dagenham & Redbridge, Town's fortunes have been completely turned on their head and Luton's long-suffering fans are finally daring to contemplate a return to the Football League at the fifth time of asking.

Hatters stars rightly deserve plenty of plaudits for the club's success on the field this season, but it has often puzzled me how managers can so often get overlooked.



Can John Still write his name into Hatters history?

In a week where Wayne Rooney was handed a £300,000-a-week deal by Manchester United, just how much was Sir Alex Ferguson and the success he brought worth?

Pantheon

We've had our fair share of successful managers at Kenilworth Road for varying different reasons over the years including the likes of Dally Duncan, Harry Haslam, David Pleat, Ray Harford and Jim Ryan.

But if Still can finally help the Hatters back into the League he will surely join the aforementioned pantheon of greats.

The Town finally appear to have found the missing piece in the jigsaw with the appointment of Still and we can all finally look to the future with a sense of optimism.

The fantastic attacking brand of football the Hatters are currently playing is a joy to watch and the feel-good factor is finally back at Kenilworth Road.

Just a year ago we were still reeling from the surprise departure of former boss Paul Buckle.

A 3-2 home defeat to Mansfield Town and the subsequent 2-0 defeat at Braintree left Luton well adrift of the Play-Offs and with little hope of promotion.

With Still at the helm, a promising but ultimately disappointing end to the season followed.

No end of season supporters' bash followed, with only muted player of the season awards from the fans being doled out by some of the supporters groups.

This end-of-season I think will be very different. What a difference a year makes...

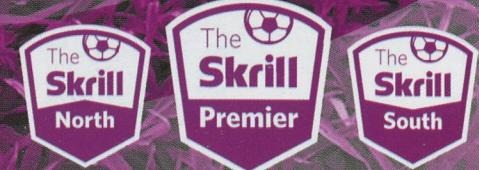


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tonight's teams



LUTON TOWN

1	Mark Tyler
2	Fraser Franks
3	Danny Fitzsimons
4	Jonathan Smith
5	Steve McNulty
6	Anthony Charles
7	Alex Lawless
8	Solomon Taiwo
9	Jon Shaw
10	Alex Wall
11	Jake Howells
12	Scott Griffiths
13	Mark Cullen
14	Andy Parry
16	Elliot Justham
17	JJ O'Donnell
18	Dave Martin
19	Cameron McGeehan
20	David Viana
21	Luke Guttridge
22	Shaun Whalley
23	Matt Robinson
24	Jernade Meade
25	Ronnie Henry
26	Paul Benson
27	Andre Gray
28	Jim Stevenson
29	Kane Ferdinand
30	Alex Lacey
31	Jake Woolley
32	Brett Longden
33	Jerome Jibodu
34	Zane Banton
43	Pelly Ruddock Mpanzu



WREXHAM

1	Joslain Mayebi
2	Stephen Wright
3	Neil Ashton
4	Kevin Thornton
5	Danny Livesey
6	Joe Clarke
7	Elliott Durrell
8	Jay Harris
9	Andy Bishop
10	Brett Ormerod
12	Dean Keates
13	Andy Couglan
14	Steve Tomassen
15	Rob Ogleby
16	Johnny Hunt
17	Leon Clowes
18	Jay Colbeck
21	Robert Evans
24	Kyle Parle
25	Theo Bailey-Jones
26	Joe Anyinsah
28	David Artell
29	Mark Carrington

Referee: **J. Amey** | Assistant: **A. Howson** | Assistant: **M. Hutchinson** | Fourth official: **J. Smith**

HERE NEXT

v ALFRETON TOWN

SATURDAY 1st MARCH 2014 • 3PM

SKRILL PREMIER

