

DEPARTMENT OF THE ENVIRONMENT

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PERSONAL

Mark Addison Esq
10 Downing Street
LONDON

The Minister:

*More developments on
Luton's "no away supporters"
scheme*

MS

TV

21 July 1986

21/7

Dear Mark,

In the inevitable (and fruitful) inquests after the meeting on football at No 10 last Wednesday, I raised with Ted Croker of the FA the concerns expressed by the PM about the apparently hostile attitudes of the Association and the Football League to Luton Town's proposals. The PM may raise this again, so you should be briefed. I gather that neither the FA nor the League has yet made any definite decision on Luton's cup matches next year. Both have deferred a firm conclusion until perhaps October, when there will be some direct and practical experience of any problems arising from the ban on away supporters. League and FA representatives will attend Luton home matches to see at first hand how the scheme works. But, as you know, there are difficulties for both bodies with the application of their existing Cup rules to Luton's proposed arrangements.

The Football Trust discussed last Thursday Luton's application for the substantial grant to assist with the costs of the scheme. Trustees are generally against banning away supporters; they believe - as do many in football - that it could be counter-productive and also that it is against the grain of recent measures and developments. Nevertheless, the Trust's researchers, the University of Leicester (partly funded by this Department) are studying the Luton scheme and will be asked to provide an interim report in October to enable Trustees to take a view then on a possible retrospective grant.

Finally, you should know that Ted Croker has expressed his own personal support for what Luton are trying to do. I attach copies of some correspondence he gave to me; this does not look to be consistent with what the PM herself has heard from the club about their apparent difficulties with Croker,

D V Teasdale

D V TEASDALE
SPORT AND RECREATION DIVISION



LUTON TOWN FOOTBALL AND ATHLETIC CO LTD

179-185 Dunstable Road Luton LU1 1BT
Tel: 0582-411622 Grams: Football Luton

Reg. Office: 70-72 Kenilworth Road Luton Reg. No. 53130

F A CUP FINALISTS
CHAMPIONS - DIVISION 3(S) 1958/59
RUNNERS UP - DIVISION 2 1956/57
CHAMPIONS - DIVISION 2 1954/55
CHAMPIONS - DIVISION 4 1967/68
RUNNERS UP - DIVISION 3 1969/70
CHAMPIONS - DIVISION 2 1973/74
1981/82

JRS/CAC/B4 Your Ref EAC/JKY/1362

14 July 1986

Mr. Ted Croker,
General Secretary,
The Football Association Ltd.,
16, Lancaster Gate,
LONDON.
W2 3LW

RECEIVED

Dear Ted,

Members Scheme

Thank you for your interesting letter of 11 July regarding the above.

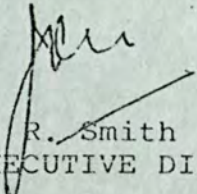
I thoroughly enjoyed reading your 'bearing of heart' to me. We will, of course, be continually reviewing the scheme but, in the short term, we do not see any alternative. Indeed, the police are insisting at the moment on excluding all visiting supporters for all matches.

As you know, the Football League have determined that we cannot comply with their ^{CUP} rules and, therefore, we either have to withdraw from the Competition or make some alternative arrangement. Naturally we feel this is grossly unfair, bearing in mind what we are trying to achieve.

I shall ask our Public Relations Department to keep you advised of what is going on and we do appreciate your interest.

Regards.

Yours sincerely,


J. R. Smith
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

EAC/JKY/1362

11th July, 1986.

Mr. J.R. Smith,
Executive Director,
Luton Town Football Club,
179-185, Dunstable Road,
Luton, LU1 1BT.

Thank you for sending me the copy of the article from the local Chamber of Commerce Magazine about developments at Kenilworth Road and the Luton Club.

Although we have never discussed this in detail, I should say straight away that I am totally in favour of your Members Only Scheme and making it extremely difficult, if not impossible for visiting supporters to attend.

Many years ago, at least 10, when hooliganism first reared its ugly head, I remember discussing this with Denis Howell, Alan Hardaker and one or two others at a number of meetings and I advocated all the time taking every possible step to discourage visiting supporters. I received no support whatsoever, certainly not from Denis Howell who was Chairing the meetings at that time, and particularly not from Dick Wragg, who was a League representative, although I never really understood his point of view. To me it seemed obvious that the trouble was caused by conflict and if one could create an exclusive club then the numbers would grow simply because the problems of football would no longer exist.

I was very optimistic when Coventry City went to an all seated stadium with a limited capacity and I very much regret that they did not have two or three exceptionally good seasons that would have ideally sold out the complete ground to season ticket holders and for them hooliganism would have been a thing of the past. Unfortunately that did not work out and they have had to backtrack on their progress and put back terrace supporter facilities.

Contd.....-

Mr. J.R. Smith

11th July, 1986.

It was always my opinion that if supporters could be encouraged to visit their home ground, this was undoubtedly in the best interests of a club, as they would be able to attend more matches at home as the expense of travelling away was far greater, although I suppose for many people it is the pleasure of visiting other football grounds, that means a great deal to them.

Possibly you will find that other club membership schemes will enable you to introduce the right type of supporters from the other clubs.

No doubt by now you have had an opportunity to give considerable thought to the particular problems that exist in the one off matches, such as in some rounds of the Littlewoods Cup and in every round of the F.A. Cup, and how we get over the problem of a club being denied supporters for a sudden death match. I would hope that a reasonable solution can be found, but so far it has eluded me.

I shall be interested to hear your further comments.

Yours sincerely,

E.A. Croker
General Secretary



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FA CUP FINALISTS	1958/59
CHAMPIONS — DIVISION 3(S)	1936/37
RUNNERS-UP — DIVISION 2	1954/55
CHAMPIONS — DIVISION 4	1967/68
RUNNERS-UP — DIVISION 3	1969/70
RUNNERS-UP — DIVISION 2	1973/74
CHAMPIONS — DIVISION 2	1981/82

JRS/CAC/B4

30 June 1986

The Secretary,
The Football Association,
16, Lancaster Gate
LONDON.
W2 3LW

Dear Sir,

Members Scheme

I enclose herewith a copy of an article from the local Chamber of Commerce magazine for your information.

Yours sincerely,

J. R. Smith
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



How season brings new hope

THE WAVE of dismay sent through football by the Brussels disaster affected not just players and managers but club directors who saw football's increasingly 'bad image' as a further and perhaps fatal blow to the game's viability. Of course, few League clubs had been able in the profit-and-loss sense for a decade or more, but the lurid headlines and sporadic incidents led many to believe that spectator interest, especially among families, would sink to a new low.

Luton Town's answer was a course of action that was little short of revolutionary.

First came the installation of a synthetic playing surface which has had a dramatic and beneficial effect on the club's income and community relations. Next will be the building of 28 private executive suites, giving first-class facilities and a superb view for the business user. Fifteen of these suites have already been leased.

The 1986-7 season, however, will see the most far-reaching change of all: the introduction of a 'Members Only' policy.

In effect, football at Luton will become, quite literally, a club event open only to members. Membership will be restricted to Luton Town supporters, thus eliminating the need for an extensive police presence to 'shepherd' visiting



A major new policy for the new football season should switch attention back to the action on the field at Kenilworth Road.

supporters to and from the ground, the fencing-off of parts of the terracing and the potential hostility between two sets of fans.

Local residents have indicated their support for such a policy, saying that they will be prepared to allow their own children to attend matches when the atmosphere is more congenial. The area's traders are particularly pleased at the development as their businesses have been badly hit and often forced to close on

match days to avoid problems with visiting supporters.

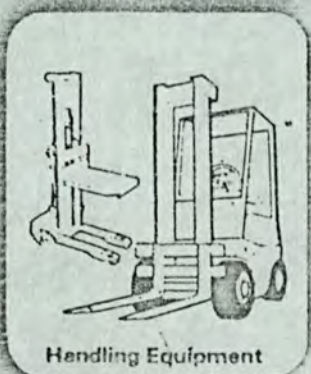
The upshot of the policy will be to encourage family attendance, providing the sport with a new, acceptable image.

The economic implications of a 'Members Only' policy have been carefully studied and it is believed that the loss of away fans will be more than made up by the additional family support. There is also considerable scope for commercial involvement in the scheme. The club's membership will number up to 40,000 people, spread throughout the catchment area. It is planned to invite selected companies to co-operate in providing special offers and discounts for members, a development which will bring benefits to club, member and company alike.

The new policy, radical though it is, represents a carefully thought-out step in Luton Town's revitalisation. As the club's football has improved in quality and results, so has its commercial prospects.

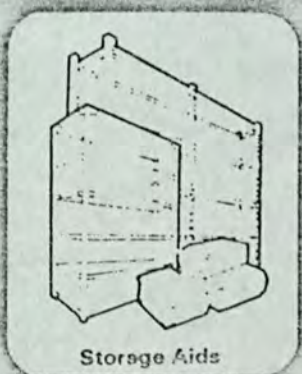
There are more steps to come but the future is looking brighter all the time.

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Handling Equipment

Question: Where are the best handling equipment bargains?
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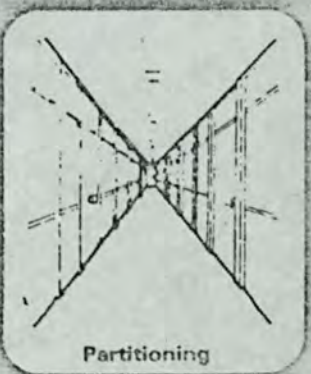
Storage Aids

Question: What's the best type of shelving and racking?
Answer: The combination which offers storage efficiency AND accessibility. Stanley supply containers, pallet racking, drive-in racking, narrow aisle systems, tiered shelving, frequently from stock. (Catalogue pack SSA 11)



Platforms

Question: How can a building store more or offer additional administration space?
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Question: How can admin space be more effective?
Answer: Partitioning and screening can convert otherwise redundant space into offices, executive suites, reception areas, conference rooms. (SPS 11 for further details.)

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