



THE LONDON WOLVES

February 2001

Founded in 1966

Rugby's great for Wolves

Stefan Leonard

Our journey to Wolverhampton for the Watford game was certainly eventful. With the rail network in utter chaos following the Hatfield crash, Peter Woodfield's task of getting us to the match, could have been made into a film sequel to the "Mission Impossible" series. For the Watford match though, he needed the invaluable help of Mark Sheldon, Railtrack's Team Leader based at Rugby station.

Let me explain. Peter was advised at Euston that the best way of getting us to the match was to catch the 9.55am to Stafford, and then branch down into Wolverhampton. Okay, that sounded like good advice from the people in the know. However, it didn't help that because no driver could be found for the train, we were still sitting at the platform at 11.35am. We eventually moved off slowly, or even very slowly, and crept our way up towards Rugby. At this point, special thanks must go to Peter Davies and Gordon for doing a typical WWLSC member's thing... namely, going to the match from their home station, Watford Junction, and mistakenly getting on to the Glasgow train which, surprise, surprise, didn't have a scheduled stop at Wolverhampton.

Travelling in front of us, they jumped off at Rugby, found Mr Sheldon for advice on their onward journey, and listened to his laughter when they explained how the main body of supporters were going to the match. Because of line difficulties between Stafford and Wolverhampton, he estimated that, with luck, we'd get to the game some time in the second half. After a couple of phone calls, 50 or so London Wolves travellers piled out of the train when it reached Rugby. There, Mr Sheldon explained that he had arranged for the next Wolverhampton train to make an unscheduled stop at Rugby to pick us up. Well done that man!

(Continued on page 2)



Above, Ludovic Pollet receives the WWLSC Player of the Year Award for the 1999/2000 season from club members. Left to right, Bob Richards, Dave Bracher, Ludovic Pollet and Peter Davies.

The Magazine

At last we're back in business after a lengthy delay caused by everything under the sun. Stuart explains in more detail overleaf. Because this edition includes all the matches up to the end of November, the layout has been altered slightly from the previous edition. The next issue will follow shortly after this one, updating most of the matches, the diary and other news.

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View from the Chair



So yet again I have to beg forgiveness for the late arrival of your mag. The delay has been caused by several factors, the loss of draft correspondence on the way to Andrew Stevens, and some personal problems for myself and Stefan, who at short notice had to rush off to Ireland on business, and who more recently has been taken ill. In fact he has been ordered by the doctor to do nothing for six months, and accordingly has asked that he be released, temporarily, from his editorial duties. I'm sure you will all join me in wishing him a speedy recovery, back to "normal".

As I have explained to several members over the past few months, the mag is produced by the committee in their own time, so please bear with us if we do suffer any delays. Your next issue should be out shortly after this one.

This year sees the thirty fifth anniversary of our Club, and at present, Tim is busy trying to arrange an appropriate event to help us celebrate the occasion. Anyone with any ideas, please contact one of the committee as soon as possible.

The Committee were very fortunate and privileged to receive an invitation to the Wolves Former Players' Association Annual Dinner, recently held at Molineux. What a night it turned out to be, with distinguished guests not only from Wolves, but also other Midland clubs. Tim has a report on the events of the night later in this edition. However, what struck me most was the way the players kept thanking us for attending, and yet right on the next table were my childhood heroes, sharing jokes and a glass or two with us. A great night...!

One final thing, in view of the delay in receiving your mag, the Committee has unanimously decided to extend membership by six months at no extra cost. This applies to the current membership year.

Stuart

"Rugby's great for Wolves" (Continued from page 1).

A taxi from Wolverhampton station to the ground saw us in our seats with the match some two to three minutes old. On the return journey home, the 5.19pm left on time and got into Euston just after 9.00pm. So, having left Bromley at nine that morning and returned at ten in the evening, for my thirteen hour day I'd managed to have: Two cans of station beer, watch eighty eight minutes of the match plus the half-time entertainment, and then shag myself out running for the 5.19pm train. Still, at least it was a good game and we played well. ■



Send in your articles and comments on all things Wolves. This magazine is read by those inside Molineux!

MOLINEUX DIARY

By Peter Woodfield



JULY

19th. Cork 0 Wolves 0

21st. Kilkenny 0 Wolves 2 (Robinson, Branch).

Man Utd have been ordered by a Football League Appeals Committee to pay Wolves £200,000 immediately as compensation for the signing of youth player Daniel Nardiello. Wolves will be entitled to further payments of £150,000-a-time if Nardiello goes on to play 5, 15, 25 and 40 first-team matches, and a further £250,000 will be payable if he plays in a UEFA/FIFA competitive international fixture.

Colin Lee is set to offer contracts to on loan Epepe Titi and Scott Leitch. Kevin Muscat is the new Wolves captain. Simon Osborn is made Club Skipper, and he will head a players' committee that also includes Mike Stowell, Andy Sinton and Paul Simpson.

George Ndah will return to full training this week after fears that he could be sidelined for the start of the season. Ndah returned early from Wolves' pre-season trip to Ireland complaining of discom-

fort in his knee.

Sheffield Wednesday midfielder Danny Sonner, available on a Bosman free transfer, is having talks with Wolves about a possible move to Molineux.

26th. Wolves 0 Coventry 1. Robbie Keane scores Coventry's winner.

27th. Akinbiyi completes move to Leicester.

30th. Wolves lose 2-0 to Aston Villa in Mike Stowell's testimonial match.

AUGUST

1st. Wolves have signed French defenders Epepe Titi and Mohamed Camara. Epepe Titi has joined as a free agent from Bordeaux, while Camara joins on a four-month loan from Le Havre.

Adam Proudlock has joined Scottish First Division outfit Clyde in a three-month loan deal. Robert Nicstroj has joined Greek club Iraklis, on a 5 month loan, with a view to a permanent move.

3rd. Saudi Arabian international striker, Sami Al-Jaber is on trial at Wolves with a view to a possible permanent deal. Al-Jaber will play in Saturday's friendly versus Southampton, along with another trialist, Cyril Eboki Poh from Bastia. Colin Lee is also being linked with a move for Bradford's Robbie Blake.

Wolves beat Leicester 2-0 behind closed doors, Sami Al-Jaber and Cyril Eboki Poh both feature in the game. Scorers are Eboki Poh and Colin Larkin.

Danny Sonner rejects a move to Wolves, and signs for Birmingham.



Attacking midfielder Temuri Ketsbaia joins from Newcastle.

4th. Wolves sign Temuri Ketsbaia for £900,000, subject to a medical and work permit being obtained.

5th. Wolves 1 S'ton 2. Wolves scorer is Andy Sinton. Sami Al-Jaber impresses.

Adam Proudlock gets a hat-trick on his Clyde debut against Falkirk.

9th. Wolves have opened talks with Saudi Arabian club Al-Hilal about signing Sami Al-Jaber but

have been warned they will have to spend £2 million if they want to sign him.

10th. Colin Lee is scouring the market again for a goalkeeper, amid fears that Mike Stowell could be facing another long spell on the sidelines.

11th. Man City accept Wolves bid of £1.6 million for striker Robert Taylor, with Portsmouth also said to have had a similar bid accepted. Wolves sign ex-Swindon keeper Frank Talia on a month's loan, with doubts about Mike Stowell's fitness. Paul Simpson's contract is cancelled by mutual consent, and he signs for Blackpool.

14th. Colin Lee has agreed a one year extension to his contract along with John Ward and Terry Connor.

15th. Man City striker Robert Taylor agrees to join Wolves on a four year contract. The fee is £1.55 million.

17th. Adam Proudlock is rewarded with a new extended contract.

18th. Wolves bid of £600,000 for midfielder Tony Dinning, is turned down by Stockport.

19th. Ludo Pollet is missing from the Stockport team and will be out of action for about 6 weeks, as he needs a hernia operation. Michael Branch is also injured and out of the team.

21st. Neil Emblen signs a new three year contract.

22nd. Sami Al-Jaber (Continued on page 4, column 1)

Collecting at the Museum of London

During the middle of last year, the Club was asked if it would like to participate in the "Collecting 2000" exhibition at the Museum of London. The purpose of the project was to display collected items from London's groups, clubs and societies, with each chosen exhibitor asked to submit something that "represents who or what they feel they are at the start of the 21st century". After careful deliberation, the Committee decided to submit the Player of the Year award presented to Ludovic Pollet.

MUSEUM OF LONDON

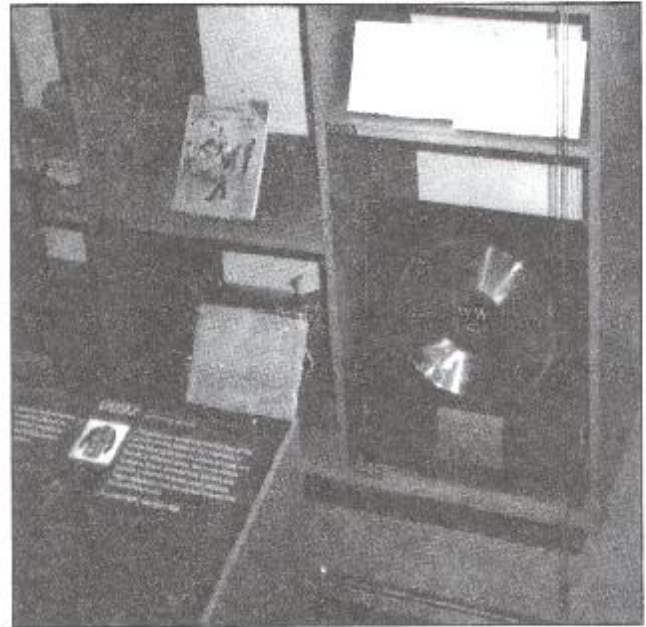
The Museum describes the exhibition as providing "a unique, often surprising, insight into the diverse interests, passions and beliefs that bring people together in London". The Museum is the largest specialist city museum in the world and covers every aspect of London's history. A recent exhibit is the hoard of Roman gold coins found during a City excavation. Collecting 2000 closes on the 29th April. Full details below.

Hours of Opening

Monday to Saturday	10.00am to 5.50pm
Sunday	12.00pm to 5.50pm
Last admission	5.30pm

Admission charges

Adults	£5
Concessions	£3
Age 16 and under	Free
Visitors with disabilities and helpers	Free



The WFLSC Player of the Year award currently on display at the Museum of London, in the Collecting 2000 Exhibition, which features "insights into the diverse interests, passions and beliefs that bring people together in London".

How to get there

Take the tube to St.Panis exiting the station on the left, following signs for the Museum. Proceed along St.Martins La Grand for two to three minutes until you reach London Wall. Museum straight ahead, on the island. Approach on revised pedestrian walkways.

Molineux diary (Continued from page 3).

signs for Wolves as the first English import from Saudi Arabia. The Saudi Football Federation have to give approval, and a work permit has to be secured. Al-Jaber is costing £1.3m in a transfer that includes an initial five-month loan and two exhibition matches to be played by Wolves in Riyadh.

23rd. Lee Naylor named in England U21 squad for friendly v Georgia at Middlesbrough on 31st August.

25th. Wolves sign Ips-

wich defender Manuel Thetis on a month's loan.

SEPTEMBER

5th. Wolves want to take Arsenal's young striker **Jermaine Pennant** on loan. Adam Proudlock makes a scoring debut for Wolves at Oxford, after being recalled to Molineux from his loan spell at Clyde. He has also signed a new three-year contract.

9th. **Scott Taylor**, taken off with a serious knee injury against Tranmere, is likely to be out of action for several months. Kevin Muscat sent-off in the match, is banned for one match.

12th. **Simon Osborn**, making his first start in six games versus Sheffield Utd, sustains a hamstring injury, which will keep him out of action for a month. Robert Taylor also sustains a calf strain.

15th. Former Managing Director **John Richards**, has resigned his position



New signing Robert Taylor suffers calf injury, adding to team selection problems

as a member of the board. The resignation was accepted by the board with

immediate effect.

Norwich have beaten Wolves for the signature of Leicester defender Steve Walsh.

Joleon Lescott signs a new four year contract with the club. Wolves will be without Steve Sedgley at Wimbledon. Sedgley joins Wolves mounting injury list, after suffering a recurrence of a knee injury, and Temuri Ketsbaia is rated doubtful after tweaking his hamstring in midweek.

16th. The highly rated midfielder Tony Dinning is set to join Wolves after the club agrees a £700,000 deal with Stockport.

21st. Tony Dinning completes his move to Molineux, and is expected to make his debut in Sunday's match versus Norwich. **Wolves sack stadium manager Clive Mountford, after an internal investigation.**

26th. Colin Lee is still keeping a close eye on a top European transfer target, but will not reveal who he is.

German defender Karsten Baumann has returned to Borussia Dortmund after failing to get international clearance to play in the reserves.

Colin Lee has revealed **Michael Oakes** was rested against Grimsby, and not dropped as some reports suggested.

28th. Wolves could lose Sami Al-Jaber for a month as he has been called up by Saudi Arabia for the Asia Cup in Lebanon. If Saudi Arabia reach the final of the competition, Al-Jaber will be away from Molineux until the end of October.

OCTOBER

2nd. George Ndah is to see a specialist this week as he bids to try and get back to full fitness.

3rd. Ludovic Pollet makes his comeback from injury with a 45 minute appearance for the reserves at Stockport.

Wolves have rearranged the home match v Grimsby for November 21st.

4th. Wolves have been told they will have to spend £1.5 million if they want to sign Andrejs Rubins.

8th. Press reports link Wolves with a move for Sunderland defender Paul Butler.

9th. Ludo Pollet is sent off in the reserves match versus Burnley. Simon Osborn makes a successful comeback in the same match. French trialist David Bettoni also plays, and impresses after appearing as a late substitute.

11th. Ludo Pollet could be fit to face Bolton on Saturday, despite missing vital match practice after being sent off.

Ryan Green has joined Wolves' injury list after picking up an injury in Wales U21's 2-1 defeat in Poland.

12th. Steve Sedgley is likely to be out of action for up to three months after undergoing knee surgery.

13th. Blackburn defender Darren Peacock is signed on a month's loan.

Men like Cullis should never be forgotten

Jim Holden, Chief Sports Editor
The Daily Express
25th October 2000



THE oldest living England football captain, the man responsible for sparking the creation of the European Cup, celebrates his 84th birthday today. Stan Cullis, sadly, will hardly understand the importance. He suffers from a form of dementia, his health a victim of another era when football was played with heavy, sodden leather balls, with little understanding of the consequences.

He is among the many neglected heroes of English football, men whose fate the game cruelly casts aside in feverish search for the new. But today it is surely worth pausing to salute a giant of football, the Iron Manager who won three titles and two FA Cups for his mighty Wolves in the Fifties. When they beat Honved, the incomparable Ferenc Puskas and all, in a friendly in 1954, Cullis said: "There they are; the champions of the world." It was an extravagant claim and one which infuriated the great clubs of the Continent such as Real Madrid, provoking them into the immediate creation of the European Cup.

The first English side to play in it were Manchester United, and their first match was at Anderlecht. What a quirk of fate it is that last night United were again playing Anderlecht in the competition on the eve of Cullis's birthday. Football has altered so much over 35 years. But one essential element is unchanged, the importance of a good manager. Sir Alex Ferguson proves that at United, a club he runs with the same fierce authority that Cullis employed. Once, Cullis took a player back on to the pitch after a game. The ground was dark but he walked the lad around for many minutes, saying "Now show me where this hole is you've been hiding in all day."

England's current quest for a new coach, with the Football Association setting out the list of qualities its Mr Perfect must have, is another illustration. The FA says it wants "integrity", sustained success at the highest level and the ability "to focus solely on the job". Years ago that would have been Cullis a tee: The muscular Christian who never swore, who won every trophy going, the

Farewell to a Molineux legend

A worthy tribute to Steve Bull

Martin Swain Express and Star Newspapers
August 2000

It was little more than a flippant, off-the-cuff remark. The Express & Star were sending me to the 1990 World Cup in Italy and, with the town then bursting with pride at Bully's inclusion in Bobby Robson's twenty two, wouldn't it be a good idea to invite folk to send in their best wishes cards for me to take out? Great idea, said the then Sports Editor Brian Clifford, before warning that hundreds would respond. Rubbish, I said, we'd do well to get 40 or 50. In the event we were both wrong. We got thousands. Great, bulging bag loads of the stuff that I then had to hawk across Italy with me, to feed to the Great Man in manageable batches of 20 or 25. There were letters and cards from men and women of all ages, but the most memorable messages were sent by the kids. Hours had been spent painting pictures of their hero; entire classes had signed their names; it had become a labour of love.

I guess those children are in their late teens now, a little more cynical about the world and even about Wolves. But not about Bully. He has remained an enduring source of immense pride for anyone who passed through the Molineux turnstiles even as his magical powers began to wane under the strain of those creaking hamstrings and swollen knees. The two huge sports bags I ferried around England's training sessions to bring to Bully became, I think, a source of some embarrassment to him. Not because of their contents, you understand, but because of the mickey-taking it ignited from his fellow England internationals. He was, after all, the one member of England's World Cup group from outside the old First Division.

He was the rough cut, the backstreet international, eventually after England's faltering start, the people's champion. Shilton, Lineker, Butcher, even Gascoigne could be out there warming up but when Bully made that unmistakable, elbow pumping sprint on to the pitch, even the non-Wolverhampton England fans began that familiar "Oo-Bully, Bully, Oo-Bully, Bully" chant. One day, when I sat down to hand over yet another batch of cards, the England sweeper Mark Wright walked past us and mimicked that very chant. Bully suspected - perhaps wrongly - that there was a measure of resentment among the millionaires around him, that this rough diamond with the impenetrable Black Country accent, could be so instantly popular.

The rumour from that World Cup that has passed into football mythology, is that Bull even dotted Lineker on the nose when the mickey-taking finally became too much. It was a rumour that has never been substantiated



and Bull has frequently denied. And yet it was possible to detect a distance between Bully and the rest of the party. While his room-mate and only other fellow West Midlands based player, David Platt, clearly had his heart set on joining football's aristocracy, Bully was never at ease with what he frequently called the "golf and gin and tonic set".



It was his experience at Italia 90 which contributed to his decision to reject any notion of leaving Wolves. He realised then that he was happiest among his own, where he did not have to apologise for who he was, or where he came from. He drew strength, confidence and heart from simply being around Molineux and although only he will know the depth of his pride when he walked out as an England player, I do not think he ever carried the same swagger into his international performances. It was as if he did not truly believe he should be there. But it is that endearing humility that made him the folk hero he is, while at the same time ensuring his Wolves team mates never resented his over-powering popularity.

The summer of 1990 will live forever in my memory and Bully's. Italy was vibrant with the World Cup, bursting with excitement and colour, and noisy instant parades every time the host nation played. There, in the thick of this richly layered carnival of so many different football cultures, was the uncomplicated, destructive goal scorer that was Steve Bull, fresh from the humble origins of the old Fourth Division barely three years earlier. It was a mighty achievement which deserved every one of the messages I dragged around with me. During that unforgettable summer, I too came to feel the hairs on the back of my neck stand up whenever Bully was in full cry, and I'm not a Wolves fan by birth. God knows the effect he had on you.

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Walking with the Gods.....

Tim Richards



"God, I wish you were all still playing" said Sir Jack to a room full of ex-Wolves greats. The following day at Crewe it appeared that he had been taken at his word and that Wolves had fielded a team of pensioners. But back to the night before....

London Wolves are the first ever supporters group to be offered a table at the Former Players Association Annual Dinner. Almost every living Wolves legend was there. All the former players (plus a few guests from other league clubs) were called into the room one by one as their list of achievements were read out. Bill Slater... Bert Williams... John Richards... Steve Bull... the list went on. The setting was the Hayward Suite at Molineux and the guest of honour none other than Sir Jack accompanied by our new Chief Exec, Jez Moxey, Rachael Heyhoe-Flint and Michael Lister (he's a Director!).

Surprisingly good food accompanied by dreadful wine, (admittedly supplied free by Halfpenny Green Vineyard) put us all in a good mood before the speeches. Bill Slater was first and easily the best, reminiscing on the Stan Cullis era and his unique style of management. Dennis Mortimer (ex-Villa) proved to be the "villain" of the piece, boring us all rigid: West Brom against Villa is apparently the Midlands' biggest derby?!? He also questioned why everybody hates Villa. It was tempting to tell him. After he had finished and those weaker souls

who had been sheltering in the toilets returned to their seats, Phil Parkes spoke briefly about the Wolves/West Brom Derby of 1969. To the great disappointment of the room he decided to sit down abruptly and in mid speech after recalling how he uttered, "Take that you bastard" as he thumped Tony Brown. Phil, along with members of London Wolves, was the last guest to leave the room some three hours later!

The main speech of the night was left to Sir Jack. Whatever you think of the state of Wolves and whether a demon or angel, he is an engaging and passionate speaker. It was, perhaps, unfortunate that the main content of his speech was to announce that a statue was to be erected in honour of Stan Cullis. A very admirable and deserved accolade, but perhaps symptomatic of the problems at Molineux. Rather than worrying about the present (three wins out of 16 league games being relegation form) the focus is again on the glorious past.

Our Chairman Stuart Earl had the sort of luck with the raffle that opposition forwards usually have with Wolves' defence and won two prizes, a video and bottle of Scotch. The latter did not last long.


Privately several of the former players who still follow the club expressed disappointment at the lack of desire of the current players. Who can argue?

"Men like Cullis..." (Continued from page 3)

boss so obsessed with the game that he knocked his trainer off the bench three times in an FA Cup final, because he was kicking, heading and tackling every ball.

It is a shame the FA could not consult Cullis in its search for the next manager. His football intelligence would have been invaluable. It is a matter of regret, too, that there was no reply when his daughter Susan wrote to the FA asking for an inquiry into the effects of heading those old footballs. Among all the glory, we should not forget the heroes who helped make football what it is. ■

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Beowulf

This column will re-appear in the next edition, with more comment and forthright views on all things Wolves.

Match Reports

compiled by Stuart Earl and Stefan Leonard

Unlucky for some

Wolves 1 Sheffield Wednesday 1
Sunday 13th August 2000



Wolves season finally kicked off a day after the others, and in a match full of drama, we saw a new unwanted record set by the visiting keeper. A delightful ball from Pollet after just thirteen seconds, put through new signing Ketsbaia who bore down at speed towards the Wednesday goal, only to be obstructed by Pressman. The linesman flagged, the referee pulled the red card, and the keeper was off. There was more drama after seventeen minutes when Wolves worked a new dead ball situation, and Ketsbaia blasted an unstoppable shot into the top corner from all of twenty five yards. Shortly afterwards the same player placed a free kick into the net only to see it disallowed because the Wednesday wall had encroached on the ten yard mark. The Wolves free kick was advanced ten yards for dissent, but instead of gaining an advantage they were actually worse off, as Wednesday packed the goalmouth and Ketsbaia blasted the ball wide.

After dominating the first half, Wolves seemed to think the rest was going to be a stroll, and it was no real surprise when Booth scored with just over ten minutes remaining. The points were shared but nonetheless, Ketsbaia looked to be an excellent acquisition; fast, difficult to move off the ball, and possessing a shot.

Attendance: 19,480

Members on trip: 38

Wolves: Oakes, Muscat, Naylor, Pollet, Emblem, Bazeley, Osborn, Ketsbaia, Branch, Sinton, Lescott.

Subs not used: Robinson, Murray, S. Taylor, Sedgley, Camara.

Stocks away

Stockport County 1 Wolves 1
Saturday 19th August 2000

In a match which they totally dominated, the old old story emerged as Wolves fell behind to the sucker punch. Ketsbaia, having another superb match, was denied a first half hat-trick by home keeper Jones. However, Moore scored ten minutes after the break, but Wolves did not let this setback put them off the task at hand. A super shot from Bazeley was deflected past Jones, to give Wolves the point that was more than deserved.

Attendance: 7,258

Members on trip: 21

Wolves: Oakes, Muscat, Naylor, Emblem, Bazeley, Osborn, Ketsbaia, Sinton (Ndah), S. Taylor, Lescott.

Subs not used: Robinson, Sedgley, Camara, Titi.

An unworthy performance

Wolves 0 Oxford United 1
Tuesday 22nd August 2000
Worthington Cup 1st round, 1st leg.

The annual "be kind to lesser mortals" cup came around again and one of our favourite charities came knocking once more! We also had a visiting keeper in good form with only efforts by Osborn and Robert Taylor, who hit the post, causing him any concern. However, on thirty seven minutes Oxford took the lead and then on Wolves showed only a passing interest in pulling the game back. Both Taylor and Ketsbaia had chances and later goalkeeper Knight saved point blank from Robertson. The only glint of light during the afternoon was Lescott, who seems to have tremendous potential.

Attendance: 9,399

Members on trip: 9

Wolves: Oakes, Muscat, Naylor, Emblem, Bazeley, Osborn (Robinson), Ketsbaia, Sinton (Ndah), S. Taylor (Sedgley), R. Taylor, Lescott

Subs not used: Camara, Talia.

Sedgers nearly fluffs it

Wolves 1 Burnley 0
Saturday 26th August 2000



The first half saw Burnley keeper Crichton make no saves from a Wolves side who showed a complete inability to put together an attacking move. In fact such was the performance that it bore no resemblance to the mediocre games against Sheffield and Stockport.

In the second half Wolves contrived only three efforts of note, of which Sedgley's mistimed shot from three yards, deflected off Briscoe into the Burnley net. The remainder of the match saw an improvement in the team performance with Lescott again confirming his talent of playing safe tidy football, whether breaking up an opposing attack or clearing his lines under pressure. However, despite the result this was a lack lustre performance, with Taylor again bearing the wrath of the crowd if any aspect of his game failed to impress.

Attendance: 20,156

Members on trip: 36

Wolves: Oakes, Muscat, Naylor, Emblem, Bazeley, Ketsbaia (Camara), Sinton (Ndah), Sedgley, R. Taylor, Lescott, Tietis.

Subs not used: Robinson, Osborn, Talia.