



SOCCER SPECIAL

Liverpool wrap

WE'LL KOP



SMILE of a champion as Peter Beardsley celebrates Liverpool's 17th League title after scoring the winner against Spurs. Pictures: ALBERT COOPER.

Lennie's laughing

By HARRY HARRIS Charlton 2, Newcastle 0

LENNIE LAWRENCE, the master of great escapes, is putting the relegation frighteners on London rivals Chelsea and West Ham.

The terrifying play-off position Lawrence describes from intimate knowledge as "traumatic and emotional" is set to face one of the three London clubs.

And Charlton are out to make sure it's not them, as the relegation finale reaches a climax.

Chelsea must go to West Ham and play Charlton at Stamford Bridge in the last game of the season.

Charlton's victory over Newcastle increased the tension at the bottom and Lawrence said: "For the last couple of matches we have hit top form, keeping six clean sheets in eight games — that's not bad by anybody's standards."

Optimism

Two early goals by Garth Crooks wiped out the Geordies and left Lawrence optimistic.

He said: "I've always said that 43 points will be enough — or 42 with a good goal difference."

"There's an outside chance Spurs could slip into the play-off dog-fight if they don't get a point at Luton. Otherwise it's between Derby, Chelsea, West Ham and us."

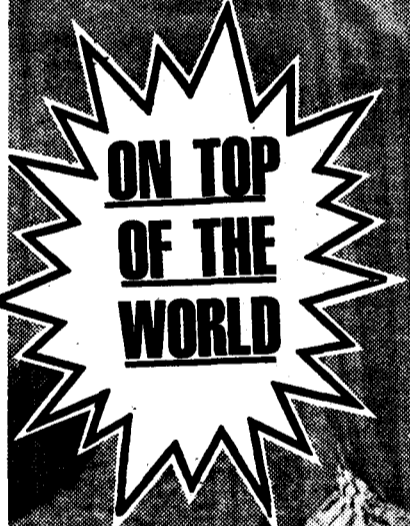
Mark blast

By IAN GIBB Oxford 1 Everton 1

OXFORD boss Mark Lawrenson hit out at the boo-boys who forced him to axe his keeper Peter Hucker.

Hucker was shattered by the decision, but Lawrenson said: "I had to leave him out because our fans slaughtered him in the last home game. It was diabolical."

Although the last rites still have to be read over Oxford's First Division life, Lawrenson is already laying his plans to bounce back next season.



By CHRIS JAMES Liverpool 1, Tottenham 0

THE experts have argued for months about it... is this the greatest Liverpool team of all time?

Now, as the Anfield kings celebrate yet another League title, we have the answer from the man who should know — skipper Alan Hansen.

After the euphoria of Liverpool's champagne party to celebrate their 17th League crown, Hansen admitted: "This could be the greatest team, but we're not there yet."

"We've done it in style this season, scoring lots of goals and not conceding many."

"But the Liverpool title-winning side of 1978-79 really turned on the style. That year we scored 85 goals and only let in 16 — and we played brilliant football."

"That was the great team. This one isn't there yet, but I'm convinced it will compare with them one day."

Hansen, who has now won seven championship medals, was a member of that superb '78-79 side

TOP OF THE TABLE					
DIVISION 1					
	P	W	F	A	Pt
Liverpool	36	25	79	29	84
Man Utd	36	19	61	35	69
Everton	37	19	51	24	68
I.P.R.	38	19	47	36	66
Hullin F	35	18	58	34	64
Arsenal	37	17	52	34	61
Wimbledon	36	13	55	44	52
Sheff W	37	15	47	57	51

which included such greats as Ray Clemence, Kenny Dalglish, Graeme Souness and Terry McDermott.

Hansen underlined his belief that the present Liverpool team are heading for more glory when he added: "I think this team are going to go from strength to strength."

"Whether I'm a part of it remains to be seen. I'll be out of the door as soon as they think the time is right because I've seen it happen to so many players before."

"It is the Liverpool way and I accept it. After you've won something, it counts for nothing because you're expected to start again."

"That's what keeps you going more than anything here."

Liverpool, who have ruled English soccer for a quarter of a century, still have a thirst for glory which remains unquenched.

The Anfield stars even

LOYAL TONY

By JACK STEGGLES W Ham 1, Cov'try 1
TONY COTTEE still wants to leave West Ham, but not in the Second Division.

The little striker grabbed his first goal in 10 games to keep struggling Hammers out of the First Division play-off place.

Now he says: "In view of our crisis I have put off talks about my own

He backs Hammers

future until the end of the season.

"But whether I stay or go I want West Ham to remain in the First Division. It would break my heart if they were relegated."

By GRAHAM BAKER Port'mth 2, Norwich 2

PAUL MARINER emerged from the fury of a last-minute penalty storm to admit that Portsmouth are sinking fast.

"It looks as if the penalty could decide our future with the other teams picking up points," said Mariner,

Mariner sinking

adjudged to have handled after earlier putting Pompey 2-1 up.

Wayne Biggins netted the spot kick to push Pompey nearer relegation.

up League title and say..

THE FLOT!



**This team
will be the
greatest**



Kenny Dalglish opens the bubbly and allows himself a rare smile as he savours Liverpool's triumph.

**Gordon puts
a stop to
the giggles**

By NIGEL CLARKE: Wimbledon 2, Chelsea 2

JOHN FASHANU found out that Wimbledon have learned to live without him as they came close to humiliating a Chelsea side who were once again a massive disappointment.

The FA Cup finalists should have buried the Blues as they mixed their best football of the season with the customary physical edge.

And said goal-scorer Lawrie Sanchez, who played superbly in midfield: "It's a fallacy that we are a one-man team."

"We were giggling among ourselves out on the pitch it was going so well. It was totally enjoyable."

"But at the end we were just sitting in the dressing room dazed because after being brilliant for 80 minutes we gave two goals away."

"Chelsea must be laughing their heads off. With that kind of good fortune they will definitely escape relegation."

Sanchez had put the Dons ahead and Dennis Wise, after seeing Kevin Hitchcock save his spot kick, finished off a fine move for the second.

Chelsea had to thank Gordon Durie for their comeback. He struck a penalty then got the equaliser.

COPPELL CHEER!

Plymouth 1, C.Palace 3

CRYSTAL PALACE boss Steve Coppell took his side to the West Country two days early — and the move paid off with their first away win since Boxing Day.

He opted against making the journey the day before the match saying: "We were beaten when we came here last season and this was a match we had to win."

Ace striker Mark Bright played a key role for Palace, having a hand in the first goal for Phil Barber and scoring the other two, bringing his season's tally to 24.

GLORY THIRST

broke off their celebrations to set their sights on further glories.

There is, of course, the little matter of the FA Cup Final at Wembley against Wimbledon in a bid for a unique second double in three years.

But Liverpool's vision is broader than that.

Peter Beardsley, with a 33rd minute goal against Spurs worthy of a £1.9 million British record player, clinched the game and his first title medal.

And he showed he has quickly acquired the Liverpool thirst for success.

"Now it would be nice to do the double and then go on one year to do a treble," he said.

"Liverpool have been so close so many times and I'd like to be a part of the team which does it."

Liverpool did, of course, add the European Cup to the League and Milk Cup double in 1984 to become the first English team to win

three trophies in a season.

But Beardsley's eyes are on a clean sweep of the three major domestic honours.

He added: "I've got four more years here and I hope there'll be three or four more championships."

"I hope I can win a lot more, because that is why I came here."

"You hope to win the title in your first season. To win it with four games left is tremendous."

THE true pedigree of Liverpool's latest champions will not be known until they are allowed back into Europe.

Bob Paistey, the former Liverpool boss, reckons it's impossible to compare the current team with previous great sides because of the lack of involvement in Europe.

He said: "I would have liked to have seen how they coped with the extra games."

"Another eight to ten matches in a season might have taken the edge off them."

SUMMARY

LITTLEWOODS CUP FINAL
Arsenal..... (0) 2 Luton..... (1) 3
Hayes, Smith B Stein 2, Wilson, 95,732

SPANISH FIRST DIVISION: Real Sociedad 0, Real Murcia 1; Real Madrid 6, Real Betis 0; Sporting 4, Celta 1; Real Zaragoza 1, Logrones 0; Espanol 1, Athletic Bilbao 1; Real Valladolid 1, Barcelona 1; Osasuna 1, Real Mallorca 0; Valencia 1, Cadiz 1.

RUGBY LEAGUE
Stones Bitter Premiership: First round: Bradford 32, Leeds 18; St Helens 40, Castleford 8; Widnes 36, Halifax 26; Wigan 12, Warrington 24.
Div 2 Premiership: First round: Featherstone 42, Mansfield 1; Wakefield 44, York 23.

GOLF
MADRID OPEN: Final placings with fourth round scores: 275: D. Cooper (GB) 68, 276: M. Pinaro (Spain) 71, M. Martin (Spain) 70, 278: S. Ballesteros (Spain) 72, 280: H. Clark (GB) 64, M. McNulty (South Africa) 71, J. Morgan (GB) 72, M. James (GB) 70, B. Gallacher (GB) 70.

TENNIS
SOUTH KOREAN OPEN: (Seoul) Men's singles final: D. Goldie (USA) bt A. Castle (GB) 6-3, 6-7, 6-0.

WARWICK POOL
Competition A - Pool 1: £2,000. Eleven winners, each receive £181.82.22 with any three from 3, 16, 28, 33, 52, 53, 56. Competition B - Pool 2: £275. Two winners, each receive £137.50. Any four from 4, 9, 24, 33, 32. Pool 3: £200. Six winners, each receive £33.33. Any four from 8, 26, 31, 47, 51, 54. Pool 4: £200.24 winners, each receive £83.35 with any two from 9, 42, 55 with any one from 1, 8, 15, 16, 24, 26, 29, 31, 38, 43, 47, 51, 52, 54, 56. Pool 5: £200. Three winners, each receive £66.67. 5 with any three from 1, 15, 38, 43, 56. Pool 6: £300. 150 gift winners.

TONIGHT'S SOCCER
BARCLAYS LEAGUE
SECOND DIVISION
Blackburn v Swindon
THIRD DIVISION
Port Vale v Wigan
FOURTH DIVISION
Tranmere v Crewe

SIZZLING GRAHAM

GRAHAM GOOCH was again in blistering form for Essex yesterday as he hammered 90 off 87 balls to bring a nine-wicket win over Kent in the Refuge Assurance opening game.

The previous day the England opener had hit a career-highest 275 against the same suffering attack.

Hampshire's David Turner hit the day's only century — 103 not out — but his side were still beaten by Surrey by 22 runs.

Essex v Kent
CHELMSFORD— Essex (4pts) won by 9 wkts.

KENT	
Benson c East b Topley	9
Pienaar c East b Lever	6
Tavare b Miller	23
C Cowdrey c Lever b Miller	11
Hinks c Border b Topley	55
G Cowdrey b Gooch	45
Taylor c Border b Topley	7
Marsh c Fletcher b Pont	9
Elison not out	14
Kelchker not out	15
Extras (b 3, lb 7, w 7)	15

Total (8 wkts — 40 overs) 201
Bowling: Lever 8-0-43-1; Pont 8-4-41-1; Topley 8-0-46-3; Miller 8-2-29-2; Gooch 6-1-34-1.

ESSEX

Gooch b Davis	90
Hardie not out	78
Border not out	26
Extras (lb 7, nb 1)	8

Total (1 wkt — 36.3overs) 262
Bowling: Kelchker 6-0-31-0; Elison 8-0-40-0; Pienaar 4-0-23-0; Davis 7-3-1-41-1; C S Cowdrey 6-0-42-0; G R Cowdrey 5-0-18-0.

Hants v Surrey
SOUTHAMPTON— Surrey (4pts) won by 22 runs.

SURREY

Richards c R Smith b Connor	30
D Smith lbw b Tremlett	75
Stewart c R Smith b James	53
Lynch run out	25
Wood c R Smith b Nicholas	8
Saah c Terry b Tremlett	0
Greig c James b Jefferies	5
Bullen c Nicholas b Tremlett	11
Feltham b Connor	18
Clarke not out	2
Peters not out	1
Extras (lb 7 w 1)	8

Total (9 wkts — 39 overs) 236
Bowling: Jefferies 8-2-26-1; Tremlett 7-0-46-3; Connor 7-0-40-2; James 8-0-46-1; Cowley 3-0-23-0; Nicholas 6-0-46-1.

HAMPSHIRE

R Smith c Bullen b Peters	6
Terry c Clarke b Feltham	43
Nicholas b Greig	2
Turner not out	103
C Smith c Ward b Bullen	10
Jefferies c Peters b Greig	39
Cowley not out	1
Extras (lb 10)	10

Total (5 wkts — 39 overs) 214
Bowling: Peters 8-1-22-1; Greig 8-0-27-2; Feltham 8-0-57-1; Bullen 8-0-51-1; Clarke 7-0-47-0.

Derbys v Leics
DERBY— Derbys (4pts) won by 9 wkts.

LEICESTER— 168 (37.3ov: Briers 42, Warner 3-21)

DERBYSHIRE— 171-1 (39.3ov: Barnett 77 not, Roberts 47 not).

Lancs v Worcs
OLD TRAFFORD— Lancs (4pts) won by 7 wkts.

WORCESTER— 172-8 (48ov: O'Shaughnessy 58).

LANCASHIRE— 176-3 (36.2ov: Fowler 43, Mendis 42, Fairbrother 40).

Middx v Notts
LORDS— Middx (4pts) won by 4 wkts.

Notts— 165-7 (40ov: Robinson 40).

MIDDLESEX— 166-6 (38.1ov: Embury 47).

Sussex v Somerset
HOVE— Sussex (4pts) won by 5 wkts.

SOMERSET— 191-6 (40ov: Hardy 45, Horden 42).

SUSSEX— 195-5 (39ov: Parker 90).

Gloecs v Glam
BRISTOL— Gloecs (4pts) won by 5 wkts.

GLAMORGAN— 176-4 (40ov: Shastri 84 not).

GLOUCESTER— 177-5 (39ov: Athey 67, Stovold 41).

TODAY'S CRICKET
BRITANNIC ASSURANCE CUPSHIP (11-530 or 6).— Derby: Derbys 324 and 66-0 v Leics 482-8dec; Chelmsford: Kent 400-7dec and 78-4 v Essex 610; Bristol: Glam 372-9dec and 217-5 v Gloecs 341-7dec; Old Trafford: Worcs 400-7dec v Lancs 101 and 161-4; Lords: Middx 199 and 505-5dec v Notts 308 and 10-0; Hove: Somerset 142 and 383 v Sussex 266 and 68-1.