

PORT VALE F.C. CENTENARY SEASON 1976-1977



OFFICIAL MATCH DAY MAGAZINE 15p

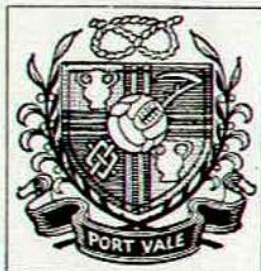
SWINDON TOWN

FOOTBALL LEAGUE DIVISION THREE

SATURDAY, 22nd JANUARY, 1977

Kick-off 3.00 pm

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COMMENT

THE excitement of the F.A. Cup is temporarily forgotten today as we return to League football here at Vale Park for the first time since Boxing Day.

As the weeks have passed and results have improved, we still find ourselves in the lower reaches of the Third Division due to improved performances by those around us. However, all those who witnessed the Cup replay against Hull must view the future with optimism.

It was such a tonic for the lads to receive such wonderful support in the two games with Hull. Trains, coaches and cars took Vale fans to Boothferry Park, and one particular group who enjoyed themselves were those on the experimental Executive Coach.

Vice-Presidents and their friends made it a day out to remember—leaving Vale Park early in the morning and stopping for coffee en route. Lunch was taken in Hull and of course the result made for a most pleasant trip home.

Keith Chadwick has now joined the ranks of the married and everyone here at Vale Park sends their best wishes to him and his wife Sue. Although it was reported some weeks ago that Keith would be forced into an early retirement due to his knee condition, the insurance procedure is still dragging on.

Tickets for the F.A. Cup-tie with Burnley next Saturday will be on sale at the main office after this afternoon's match. Stand seats are at the normal prices of 90p and £1.00 and there are also Railway Paddock tickets available at 70p.

A good gate is obviously anticipated for the Burnley visit and may I ask spectators to arrive at the ground earlier than usual to avoid long queues forming at the turnstiles around kick-off time. Leaving home a few minutes earlier could make all the difference.

Richard Dennis

PICTURE GALLERY



- Goalkeeper **JOHN CONNAUGHTON** is unaccustomed to being on the sidelines and the four games he has just missed is the longest spell he has had out of the Vale team. John arrived at Vale Park in the 1974 close season from Sheffield United and since then he has been absent, though injury, on just seven occasions.

A former England Youth International, John began his career with Manchester United and he also had spells on loan to Torquay and Halifax before being sold for £15,000 to Sheffield United. He was voted "Player of the Year" after his first season in the Vale goal and says: "I am delighted with the way the move to Vale has worked out. I am with the best set of lads I have ever known".



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PRESS BOX

A "lucky break" can often make all the difference between a player hitting the headlines or spending his career in obscurity.

Many a useful player can spend all his days in the lower reaches of the Football League simply because, although he may well have the ability to compete in a higher grade, he does not get the chance to prove it.

Alternatively, there may be many a player with a big club who never gets the opportunity to shine through and so spends his time languishing in the Reserves simply hoping for the day when his name appears on the first-team sheet.

Sometimes that "lucky break" occurs, as with the case of Steve Taylor, of Bolton

A "LUCKY BREAK" CAN MAKE ALL THE DIFFERENCE

Wanderers and late (on loan) of Port Vale

This week, Steve stepped out for Bolton against Everton in their League Cup Semi-Final, first leg tie which could lead to him treading the lush turf at Wembley in the Final on 11th March. Yet little more than a year ago, Taylor was with Vale in a move which could well have become permanent.

The sale by Bolton of Stuart Lee to Wrexham resulted in Taylor being recalled to Burnden Park by Ian Greaves; but apart from the occasional appearance as substitute, he still could not match up to the demands of the Second Division.

Taylor's name cropped up again at Vale Park earlier this season, when Vale were short of goal power, and Manager Roy Sproson all but arrived at a price with Mr. Greaves for the wiry-haired youngster. The deal was left in abeyance for a while because Peter Thompson was injured and John Byrom was talking in terms of retiring.

That situation forced Mr. Greaves to give Taylor his chance. "I needed a lucky break", says Taylor, "and I got it first when Neil Whatmore was also injured in Bolton's opening League game and then Gary Jones did his cartilage. I went like a train. I seemed to be scoring goals for fun".

Yet Mr. Greaves concedes: "I am amazed. I told Taylor at the start of the season that I did not think he was ready for the first team.

Taylor retorts: "I would have settled for dropping down a division to get regular first-team football. for there was no way that I was going to settle for another season in the Reserves".

It was at this stage that Steve was almost on his way back to Vale Park. Then, Vale might well have signed him for around the £10,000 mark. Now, a "luck break" has put his price beyond the reach of many a club.



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GOOD AFTERNOON



A major topic when discussions take place on soccer fans nowadays must be the hooligan element, which nobody seems able to combat.

Many meetings between various bodies have been convened and some good ideas and suggestions have been forthcoming. It seems to me that in most cases two questions are raised: who is to blame for the trouble and who is responsible for stopping it?

We must all take a certain amount of responsibility in trying to stop such an upheaval and, as Commercial Manager of a Football League club, and being the organiser of away coach travel, I find myself

involved more than most.

First, I must, in most cases, congratulate the Vale's away fans this season for their good behaviour. But we must not step out of line, otherwise the coach proprietors will have no alternative but to refuse transport in the future.

So, to bring Port Vale into line with many other League clubs, I have started an away travel club, known as the **"Travelling Valiants"**.

Any supporter wishing to travel by the coaches organised by the Promotions Office must be a member of this club and abide by its rules.

Enrolment forms are available at the office and, on completion, a membership card and number will be provided. These cards must always be produced when booking for away trips.

Already, after only a short while in operation, well over 200 Vale fans have joined this travel club, membership of which costs only 50p. Development Fund agents, however, will be allowed to join **FREE** of charge.

ROY COPE — Commercial Manager

MEMORIES of the early 1960's flooded back during the F.A. Cup replay against Hull City when the 10,000 crowd sang and cheered the team to victory.

Many a throat was hoarse after the match and you can all congratulate yourselves on such magnificent support.

However, for today's match, we will no doubt be back to the faithful few thousand with the others returning in numbers next week, having been lured back again by the magic of the Cup.

Talking of statistics, it is ironic that whilst the football team are enjoying a good Cup run, the Supporters Club membership has failed to reach even half of last season's figure. In this centenary campaign, those "lost" members are sadly missed.

The Vale "Quizball" team has reached the second round of the national competition owing to Birmingham's failure to arrive for the second leg, thus forfeiting the match.

Apologies to the team and all supporters who turned up for the match; but news of the opponent's non-arrival was known only an hour before the scheduled start.

In the next round, Vale meet either Coventry City or Bedford away, and Richard Dennison, the football club Secretary, has promised us an evening to remember if Coventry are the opponents. Richard, of course, was Assistant Secretary at Coventry before his move to Vale.

JIM FRAIN — Secretary



SUPPORTERS CLUB NEWS



VALEVISITORS

SWINDON TOWN

Mid-table Swindon Town arrive at Vale Park today still with their thoughts on promotion and their lips smacking in anticipation of next week's return to the F.A. Cup.

Certainly Everton, who visit Swindon's County Ground in the Fourth Round next Saturday, will not treat their task lightly after the humiliation suffered by Second Division Fulham (George Best, Rodney Marsh, Bobby Moore and all).

It was one of the performances of the round when the Third Division side went to Craven Cottage to earn a 3-3 draw, and the replay attracted a crowd of 23,883 to Swindon, who ran out winners by the remarkable score of 5-0! Now the Wiltshire club confidently expect a further bumper crowd when managerless Everton are the next to challenge Swindon's progress in the Cup. Meanwhile, Manager Danny Williams and his men will be concentrating on gaining further points to boost their bid for a return to the Second Division—which Swindon departed at the end of the 1973/74 campaign, when they finished bottom.

Swindon made a winning start to the term when a lone goal by David Syrett gave them victory over Port Vale and, since then, only promotion-seekers Rotherham have taken home both points from the County Ground with a 4-2 win last November.

Sheffield Wednesday crashed 5-2, lowly Northampton were stunned 5-1 and non-League Bromley were hammered 7-0 in the Cup. In all, Swindon have scored 38 goals in their 14 League and Cup games at home.

On their travels, Swindon have managed victories at Chesterfield and Bury and earned a point from visits to Lincoln and Mansfield.

JIMMY ALLEN (goalkeeper) — Became an apprentice in October, 1970 and signed pro nine months later. Made his debut in September, 1971 against Q.P.R.

WILL DIXON (defender) — Formerly with Arsenal and Reading, he joined Swindon in September, 1973 and has since clocked up 100 appearances, operating at full-back or in midfield.

JOHN TROLLOPE (defender) — Swindon's longest-serving professional, having signed his first contract in August, 1960. Has now made over 750 League and Cup appearances.

STEVE AIZLEWOOD (central-defender) — First played for Newport County at the age of 16 and made nearly 200 appearances before moving to Swindon in March, 1976.

GERRY TAYLOR (central-defender) — Played over 150 games for Wolves before joining Swindon, initially on loan, last season when he made 19 appearances.

KENNY STROUD (midfield) — Former apprentice who turned professional in 1970 and became established in the first team last season.

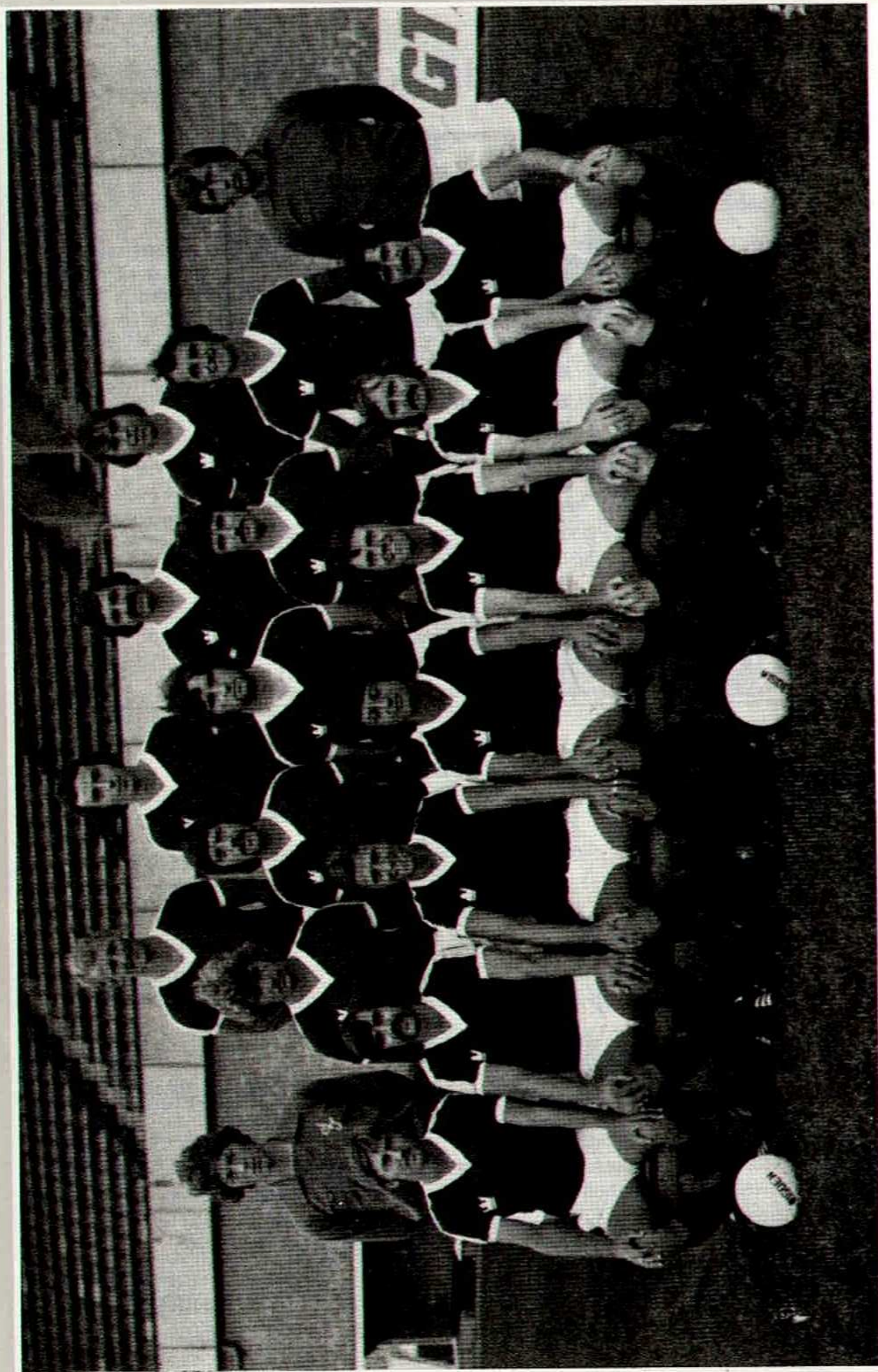
JOHN McLAUGHLIN (midfield) — Also plays as a defender. Began his career with Colchester and was capped at England Youth level. Joined Swindon in December, 1973.

RAY McHALE (midfield) — Has proved a good bargain since being signed for a modest fee from Halifax this season.

DAVID MOSS (forward) — Can play on either flank and has a lethal finish. Became an apprentice for Swindon before turning pro in 1969. Has proved himself a creator and scorer of goals.

DAVID SYRETT (forward) — Another former apprentice, turning pro in November, 1973. Was joint top scorer last term with 15 goals.

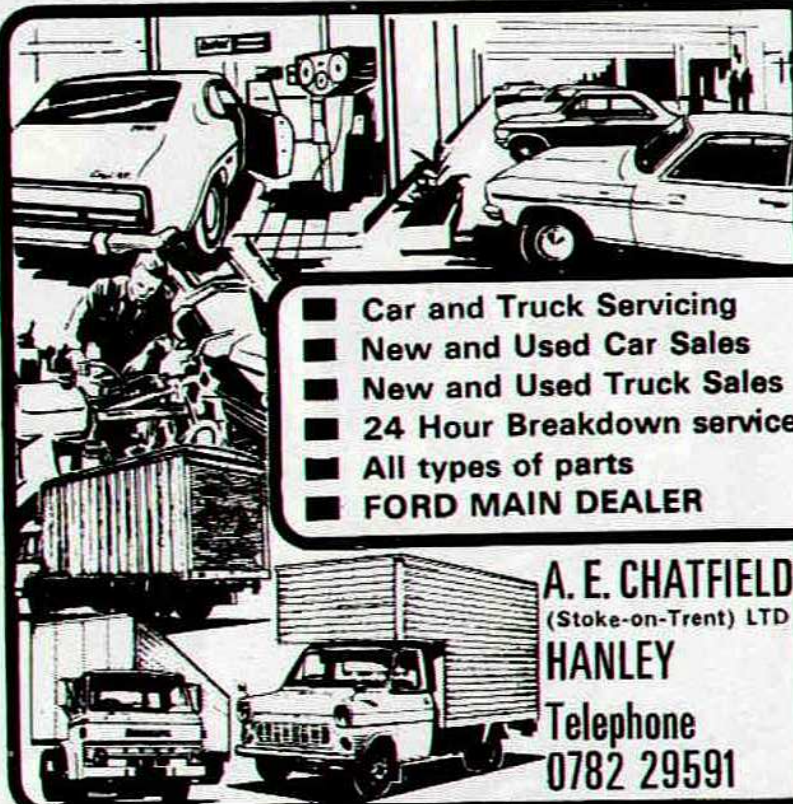
TREVOR ANDERSON (forward) — Started his career with Portadown in his native Northern Ireland before moving to Manchester United. Joined Swindon, making his debut in November, 1974. Hit 15 goals last season.



Back Row (left to right) : John Trollope, Mark Thomson, Don Rogers, Kenny Stroud. **Middle Row :** Jimmy Allen, Howard Goddard, Colin Prophett, Steve Aizlewood, John Gilligan, Frank Burrows, Jim Barron. **Front Row :** Geoff Chalkin, Will Dixon, Dave Moss, Dave Syrett, John McLaughlin, Gerry O'Brien, Trevor Anderson.



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VALE POST BAG

Never before have we received a poetic tribute to a team performance, so we are happy to print this verse, written in delight of the victory against Hull City in the F.A. Cup. It is a parody on Lewis Carroll's "Jaberwocky" and entitled by the author, "Soccerwocky".

'Twas brilliant as the floodlights shone
On Monday night at Port Vale's ground;
All hopeful were the waiting fans,
To see their club win through Fourth Round.

Beware the Hemmerman, our lads!
The feet that kick, the boots that score;
Beware the Haigh, and Lyall's corner
Though last week you forced a draw.

And though your midfield's not too strong,
And that first goal was never caught,

The Dance went on and stopped the rest
Longtime the F.A. Cup you've sought.

And when the Beech began to pass,
The other Ken with eyes aflame,
Came whiffing through the muddy grass
Scoring as it came.

One, two! One, two! And through and through
The Vale goals went snicker-snack!
They left Hull dead and decisively
Sent them galumphing back.

And hast thou slain Hull City now?
Dance for the fans, our Beamish boy!
O frabjous day! Callooh! Callay!
We're full of Cup-Tie joy!

A DELIGHTED FAN!

Grove Place, Shelton.

KIDS QUIZ

1. Where was Vale's last away win in the Third Division?
2. How many points did Vale take off Swindon last season?
3. Tommy McLaren scored one goal last season. Who was it against?
4. Name the only ever-present in the Vale team this season.
5. Three current Vale players are all qualified school teachers. Name two of them.
6. How many away games have Vale drawn this season?
7. In which match did Kenny Beech score his only first-team goal so far this season?
8. John Connaughton missed last season's game at Swindon through injury. Who was his deputy?
9. Who is this season's "Miss Port Vale"?
10. What was Vale Secretary Richard Dennison's former club?

Answers, please, on a postcard and sent to "Kids Quiz", Vale Park, Hamil Road, Burslem, Stoke-on-Trent, to arrive by next Wednesday, 26th January. Competition restricted to juniors under 16 and the sender of the first all-correct card drawn out will win an autographed ball.



Best Wishes to
PORT VALE F.C.
for the 1976/77 Season from

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100 VALIANT YEARS

PART TWELVE

VALE gained the better of Stoke City in their clash at Burslem before 36,271, and the teams shared the points at Stoke, where the match was watched by 36,362. There was a home F.A. Cup Tie against Everton, which Vale lost 2-3 before 44,000. Leading appearance makers were Potts and Sproson, both ever-presents in the League; Hayward, Cunliffe, King, Leake and Stephenson. Stephenson and Done scored 12 goals apiece, with Stephenson adding two more in the Cup.

Vale's hopes of furthering their improvement in Division Two were totally shattered in the 1956/57 campaign, when they could not have figured worse. They finished bottom.

Vale were soon struggling at the foot of the table, and most of the campaign was devoted to trying to pull clear. Some of the older players, who helped to club into the Second Division, were palpably deteriorating and there was a further blow when Freddie Steele announced his resignation as Manager in January, 1957.

The vacancy was filled a month later when Vale appointed Mr. Norman Low as successor. Mr. Low was, at the time, Manager of Workington, who were extremely successful in the Third Division (North) and challenging for promotion.

Born in Aberdeen, Mr. Low signed for Newcastle United as an amateur player but Liverpool became his first professional club. He remained at Anfield until the 1930's when he moved to Newport County and figured in their pre-War promotion team. In 1946, he went to Norwich as captain.

After two spells as acting Player-Manager, Mr. Low was appointed Norwich Manager in 1950 and had five seasons with the East Anglia club before stepping out of League football in a spell with Barry Town, of the Southern League. He returned with Workington and arrived as Vale's fifth post-War boss on 21st February, 1957.

There were other arrivals and departures. Eddie Baily moved on to Nottingham Forest for a £7,000 fee after only a short stay and promptly helped Forest destroy Vale 7-1 at Burslem; Bill Spurdle was signed by Mr. Steele from Manchester City.

FATE SEALED

Vale's fate, however, was sealed at Easter with a home defeat by Swansea on Good Friday and a 4-0 reverse at Doncaster the following day.

Not only did Vale go down, but they also suffered the ignominy of finishing at the bottom of the Second Division having conceded no less than 101 goals—an unenviable record for a defence which, at one time, boasted such a splendid reputation.

In truth, the season saw the gradual deterioration of some of the older players who had played such a big part in helping the club to achieve promotion—and Vale had to face the fact that there was nobody to replace them.

On the financial side, the cost of relegation was a drop of £20,000 at the "gate", yet a profit on the season of £1,268 was announced. Referring to relegation, the report from the Board of Directors stated:

"We have experienced the most difficult financial season since the opening of the new ground. The big drop in gate receipts caught us with an accumulation of debts that have caused us much anxiety. Mr. Norman Low came as new Manager too late in the season to save us from relegation. We start the new season with several new faces and many of the old familiar ones missing".

● To be continued



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Port Vale Football Club THIRD DIVISION FIXTURES

1976/77		F. A.	
AUG.	14	WREXHAM (LC1) H	1 1
	18	WREXHAM (LC1) A	0 1
	21	SWINDON TOWN A	0 1
	23	CHESTERFIELD ... H	1 1
	28	SHEFFIELD WED. H	2 0
SEP.	4	LINCOLN CITY ... A	0 2
	11	GILLINGHAM ... H	1 2
	14	PRESTON N. E. ... A	0 4
	18	READING ... A	1 1
	25	SHREWSBURY T. H	1 2
OCT.	2	WALSALL ... A	1 3
	8	NORTHAMPTON T. H	2 1
	16	WREXHAM ... H	2 3
	23	PORTSMOUTH ... A	1 1
	25	TRAN. ROV. (LC4) A	1 1
	30	GRIMSBY TOWN H	2 0
NOV.	1	PRESTON N. E. ... H	0 0
	6	YORK CITY ... A	0 1
	13	BRIGHTON & H. A. H	2 2
	20	S'THPORT (FAC1) A	2 1
	27	OXFORD UNITED A	0 0
DEC.	11	BARNLEY (FAC2) H	3 0
	18	ROTHERHAM U. A	1 1
	27	BURY ... H	0 1
	28	MANSFIELD T. ... A	1 2

1977

JAN.	3	GRIMSBY TOWN A	4 2
	8	HULL C. (FAC3) ... A	1 1
	10	HULL C. (FAC3R) H	3 1
	22	SWINDON TOWN H	.....
	29	BURNLEY (FAC4) H	.....
FEB.	1	CRYSTAL PALACE A	.....
	5	SHEFFIELD WED. A	.....
	7	YORK CITY ... H	.....
	12	LINCOLN CITY ... H	.....
	19	GILLINGHAM ... A	.....
	26	READING (5) ... H	.....
MAR.	5	SHREWSBURY T. A	.....
	11	WALSALL (LCF) H	.....
	14	CHESTER ... H	.....
	19	NORTH'TON T. (6) A	.....
	26	WREXHAM ... A	.....
APR.	2	PORTSMOUTH ... H	.....
	8	BURY ... A	.....
	9	MANSFIELD T. ... H	.....
	16	TRANMERE R. ... H	.....
	18	CRYSTAL PAL. ... H	.....
	23	B'TON & H. A. (SF) A	.....
	30	OXFORD UNITED H	.....
MAY	4	PET'BOROUGH U. A	.....
	7	CHESTER ... A	.....
	14	ROTHERHAM U. ... H	.....
	21	F.A. CUP FINAL	.....
		PETERBRO' U. H	.....
		CHESTERFIELD ... A	.....

FACTS & FIGURES

THIRD DIVISION PLACINGS

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Ps
Brighton & H. A.	24	14	5	5	48	23	33
Rotherham United	22	11	8	3	39	23	30
Mansfield Town	22	12	5	5	37	19	29
Preston North End	22	10	9	3	35	17	29
Wrexham	21	12	5	4	37	20	29
Sheffield Wednesday	24	11	7	6	35	27	23
Shrewsbury Town	22	12	4	6	36	20	28
Crystal Palace	22	9	9	4	26	16	27
Bury	22	10	5	7	32	36	25
Tranmere Rovers	22	7	10	5	26	23	24
Lincoln City	19	8	6	5	31	25	22
Oxford United	24	6	10	8	34	35	22
SWINDON TOWN	20	8	5	7	28	29	21
Chesterfield	22	8	4	10	28	29	20
Chester	21	8	3	10	19	28	19
Portsmouth	23	4	10	9	25	34	18
Reading	23	7	4	12	26	36	18
Gillingham	22	6	6	10	27	38	18
Peterborough United	23	6	6	11	24	35	18
PORT VALE	22	4	8	10	23	31	16
Grimsby Town	22	6	4	12	23	35	16
Walsall	23	4	7	12	20	36	15
Northampton Town	23	4	4	15	22	43	12
York City	20	4	4	12	20	43	12

(As at 19th January, 1977)

"KIDS QUIZ"

ANSWERS to the "Kid's Quiz" in the Bury Match Magazine were as follows:—

1—Two from Rotherham, Tranmere, Oxford, Portsmouth, Reading; 2—It was their first League visit to Oxford; 3—Vale 0, Chester 1 and Chester 1, Vale 0; 4—Oakwell; 5—Electrician; 6—Brighton; 7—Kenny Beech; 8—Colin Tartt; 9—Geoff Davies; 10—Northfield Juniors.

Congratulations to the winner — Andrew Paul Dodd, of Ashfields New Road, Newcastle, Staffs. — who receives an autographed ball as his prize.

MATCH SUMMARY

Wednesday, 8th December, 1976

Northern Floodlit League

SHREWSBURY 6 PORT VALE 1

Vale: Dance; Osborne, Nixon; Beech, Sproson, Bromage; Chamberlain, Robson, Brownbill, Vernon, Dulson. Sub: Worthington.

Score: : Robson

Saturday, 11th December, 1976

F.A. Cup — Second Round

PORT VALE 3 BARNSELY 0

(Williams, Griffiths, Beamish)

Vale: Connaughton; Thomson, Griffiths; Ridley, Harris, Tartt; McLaren, Bailey, Rogers, Beamish, Williams. Sub: Kennerley.

Attendance: 5,541

Midland Intermediate League

Shrewsbury 6 Port Vale 2

Vale: Deaville; Osborne, Nixon; Vernon, Sproson, Bromage; Cooper, Beech, Robson, Worthington, Chamberlain. Sub: Kelly.

Scorers: Robson, Chamberlain

Saturday, 18th December, 1976

League Division Three

ROTHERHAM 1 PORT VALE 1

(o.g.) (Beamish)

Vale: Connaughton; Thomson, Griffiths; Ridley, Dulson, Tartt; McLaren, Bailey, Rogers, Beamish, Williams. Sub: Kennerley.

Attendance: 4,812

Midland Intermediate League

Port Vale 5 Aston Villa 1

Vale: Dance; Brodie, Nixon; Potts, Sproson, Osborne; Cooper, Beech, Robson, Bromage, Chamberlain. Sub: Nicklin.

Scorers: Beech 2, Osborne, Chamberlain, Bromage

Monday, 20th December, 1976

Northern Floodlit League

PORT VALE 2 CREWE ALEX. 0

Vale: Dance; Brodie, Nixon; Dulson, Harris, Osborne; Chamberlain, Kennerley, Brownbill, Beech, Bromage. Sub: Robson.

Score: : Beech, Brownbill

F.A. CUP 4th Round — BURNLEY

NEXT AT HOME

SATURDAY, 29th JANUARY, 1977 — KICK-OFF 3-0 p.m.

TEAM SHEET

PORT VALE

1	John CONNAUGHTON
2	Bobby THOMSON
3	Neil GRIFFITHS
4	John RIDLEY
5	David HARRIS
6	Kevin KENNERLEY
7	Colin TARTT
8	Terry BAILEY
9	John ROGERS
10	Ken BEAMISH
11	Kenny BEECH
12	

SWINDON TOWN

1	Jimmy ALLEN
2	Will DIXON
3	John TROLLOPE
4	Kenny STROUD
5	Steve AIZLEWOOD
6	Gerry TAYLOR
7	David MOSS
8	John McLAUGHLIN
9	David SYRETT
10	Ray McHALE
11	Trevor ANDERSON
12	

HALF TIMES - OFFICIALS

A	CHESTER TRANMERE ROVERS	L	YORK CITY CRYSTAL PALACE
B	GRIMSBY TOWN BURY	M	SUNDERLAND STOKE CITY
C	NORTHAMPTON TOWN CHESTERFIELD	N	BIRMINGHAM CITY MANCHESTER UNITED
D	OXFORD UNITED BRIGHTON & H. A.	O	BRISTOL CITY ARSENAL
E	PORTSMOUTH WREXHAM	P	COVENTRY CITY MIDDLESBROUGH
F	PRESTON NORTH END MANSFIELD TOWN	Q	DERBY COUNTY NEWCASTLE UNITED
G	READING GILLINGHAM	R	EVERTON Q.P.R.
H	ROTHERHAM UNITED PETERBOROUGH UTD.	S	MANCHESTER CITY LEICESTER CITY
J	SHREWSBURY TOWN LINCOLN CITY	T	NORWICH CITY LIVERPOOL
K	WALSALL SHEFFIELD WED.		

The Records Played at this Match are
available from LOTUS RECORDS
2 PICCADILLY ARCADE . HANLEY

Referee :—

Mr. R. W. TOSELAND

Kettering

Linesmen :—

Mr. M. W. BEAMAN

Burton-on-Trent (Red Flag)

Mr. K. C. FERGUSON

Wednesfield (Yellow Flag)

The Directors wish to express
their sincere appreciation to

J. MIDDLETON

Who has kindly Donated
THE BALL for the Match