

Swindon Town Football Company Limited

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John Trollope says



Due to the Easter holiday period it has been necessary for me to write these notes before we travel to Hull for another very important league match, and I therefore have only the match versus Colchester last Saturday to comment on. Needless to say this was a very important win against another club striving for Third Division survival. Although this game could hardly be described as a classic, again the players showed the necessary endeavour that is required for the remainder of the season, and in doing so scored three excellent goals. The result of these points meant, of course, that we went up three places in the league table but from that moment until

this, we have two difficult away games which I am unable to comment upon, Hull City and Plymouth Argyle, but I am sure that if the players maintain their commitment then we should not come away from those clubs pointless.

The Reserves have had two unfortunate results, losing at Birmingham City 1 - 0 and at Hereford 3 - 2. It was necessary that I put on my boots once again for the latter game, as the Youth players have possibly five games in five days ending Satuday 18th April, a tight programme in anybody's standard.

On behalf of the players, I would like to thank all of those ladies who took part in the Sponsored Walk on Sunday, 12 April in aid of the player's close season tour fund. These magnificent supporters raised in excess of £1,000 for the fund and the players are overwhelmed by this tremendous effort. This event germinated from a tongue-in-cheek suggestion by the Office Staff, Pam Turner and Debbie Waylen, but big oaks from little acorns grow, and we are grateful to them for their interest.

The next event in the Players' Fund Raising activities is tonight in the Supporters' Club when they are holding a Cabaret evening featuring the League Cup Final film, of forty minutes duration and cabaret acts including Bob Gill, Comedy and Magic, and musical entertainment. We hope you will round off your Easter Holiday by coming along to this evening.

On the following Monday, there will be a Disco, again in the Supporters' Club, featuring the ALLFA 1 Disco.

In conclusion, we welcome the players and officials of Newport County for what I am sure is going to be a hard and difficult game, and I would ask you once more to give our players every encouragement throughout the match. Thank you for coming along this evening, and I hope to see you tonight.

Talk of the Town by the Chairman

In writing these notes for today's game with Newport County, I have had to omit from my mind two results from our away fixtures with Hull City and Plymouth Argyle. These results may have an important bearing on today's game which could be vital to both Newport County and ourselves. The reason, of course, for this omission, is the fact that our Easter programme contents had to be printed early because of the holiday period.

We extend our congratulations to Newport County for their great run in the European Cup Winners' Cup this season. Newport have known, over the past few years, what a hard task it is to run a Football Club on small gates but having gained promotion from the Fourth Division last season, continued their run of success by winning the Welsh Cup and bringing European Clubs to their ground. Their success has been rewarded by greatly improved home gates averaging nearly six thousand for their league games.

With Sport complexes springing up all over the country, indoor five-a-side football has become very popular at all ages and levels. Annually a five-a-side knock-out competition is staged indoors at Wembley organized by one of our daily newspapers between some of our leading Professional clubs. This interest has resulted in a small committee investigating the possibility of running an indoor competition between our league clubs. These discussions are at an early stage at the moment, but it could lead to a very interesting development with area leagues formed between our clubs, and I understand some very interesting, if different, rules being introduced into the game. Obviously regional finals would be played before reaching possibly Wembley.

Talking of five-a-side soccer, some of our players will be appearing at the Oasis in a soccer spectacular on Wednesday April 22nd at 2.00 p.m. including some members of our 1969 winning league cup side.

After today's home game we shall only have one more league game here and that is against Brentford. We hope that by today we shall not be depending on this last game to survive in the Third Division. This is the first year that I can remember so many clubs being involved in the

battle to survive, and in fact at one time, only the top nine clubs out of the twenty-four clubs in our league could feel relatively safe.

This morning our Supporters' Club have arranged a football match against a team from our Squash Club. I am told that it could have been a real blood match, but I hope that it was not. I can well imagine the referee's decisions being questioned.

Over the past few days our apprentices have been kept busy with a cup tie against Tottenham Youths at the County Ground, being the second game in this competition after drawing at the Spur's ground. This game was played on Tuesday last and some of the players had already played the previous evening at Hereford in the Reserve Team where we lost by three goals to two. On Thursday we had a youth fixture with Coventry on our Training Ground, and if we were successful against Tottenham on Tuesday, when I wrote these notes, then we were due to play the Final of this competition, against Cambridge United Youth, on Good Friday.

As you will see, with so many games in such a short period, one needs a lot of clean kit, especially if the weather is bad, and the backroom staff are kept fully occupied and of course, injuries can play a vital part in any success that may come.

Hoping that we have steered clear of injuries over the Easter and hoping that you all enjoy today's game, we wish you all a very Happy Easter and thank you for your support.

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Town through time Centre forwards

by paul plowman



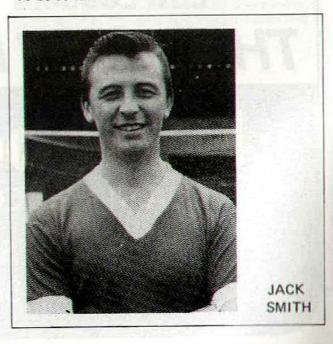
During October 1959 four names appeared at centre-forward in the seven League games completed by the Town, JOHN RICHARDS, who had made his debut back in April 1956, Scot WILLIE MARSHALL (ex-Bradford City), 'Bronco' Layne and JIMMY GAULD, Gauld had played much of his football at Britain's geographical extremities - he could name amongst his former clubs Elgin City in the far north of Scotland (close to his home town of Aberdeen), Waterford (Eire) and Plymouth Argyle. After spending 1959-60 here, his soccer meanderings came to an end through injury in 1961 and might not have progressed too much further anyway. For it was then that he began to encourage a number of former playing colleagues (Layne included) to perform below their true capabilities and in due course each was banned from the game and sine die and removed from society for varying periods, as was Mr. Gauld. Fifteen years later, in 1980, Jimmy was back in Devon, operating a confectionary stall at Paignton 'bus station - until it was found locked and shuttered one day with the owner having vanished to seek another new horizon.

Christmas 1959 saw MIKE SUMMERBEE briefly appear in the number nine shirt. A Cheltenham lad 'Buzzer' had football in his blood, being the son of George Summerbee the pre-war Preston star. Mike spent most of his career playing wide on the right and wore the white shirt of England after joining Manchester City in 1965. The former Mansfield Town pivot KEN MELLOR became sixth man to lead the Swindon attack during 1959-60 when he obliged for the last seven games and held his place for the first four of the following term. Another of manager Bert Head's youngsters took over at centre-forward on October 1 1960. On that date BOBBY WOODRUFF, who had made his league debut some eighteen months previously but spent most of the intervening period at winghalf, hit a hat-trick in a 6-0 drubbing of Port Vale. He went on to score thirteen goals that season, just one fewer than top scorer Ernie Hunt. Woodruff, who later developed a long throw of over forty yards, reverted to his number six shirt for 1961/62 when the Town received a sudden influx of experienced goalscorers in KEN McPHERSON, JACK SMITH and RALPH HUNT

It was the flame-haired McPherson who got the first chance to lead the front line. Signed from Newport County he had also seen service with Coventry and Middlesbrough after starting out with Notts. County back in 1950/51. Smith (who made his Swindon debut on August 29 1961) was, like McPherson, a native of West Hartlepool and joined Hartlepools United in 1954. The third member of the trio, Ralph Hunt, had no fewer than 131 League goals to his name before he arrived at the County Ground - and in less than 250 appearances! His tally of thirty-one for Norwich in 1955/56 has still to be bettered and he also topped Grimsby's list in 1959/60 when he found the net 33 times. From the Mariners he came to Swindon but after just twenty-five games (and fifteen goals!), he was on the move again, to Port Vale. He died in a motoring accident on New Year's Eve 1964.

Jack Smith's contribution to the promotionwinning campaign of 1962/63 was 25 goals nineteen in the League, which included a fine hat-trick in a 5-0 January win over Queen's Park Rangers amid treacherous conditions. On Easter Saturday 1963 another threesome was recorded by a 20-year old on amateur forms whilst with Her Majesty's Forces, JOHN STEVENS.

To be continued



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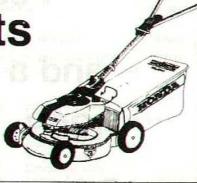
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IHONTDA
IN NORTH WILTSHIRE

Results Round-Up

FOOTBALL COMBINATION

28 March Southampton 3 Swindon Town 0

Knight Baverstock, Walsh, Batty, Rollings, Cockerill, Barrett, Slattery, Bristow, Short,

Bailie (s)

4 April Swindon Town 1 (Cockerill) Chelsea 4
Pullen, Baverstock, Bailie, batty, Rollings,
Round, Cockerill, Barrett, Bond, Greenwood,

Short.

8 April West Ham Utd 0 Swindon Town 1 (Cockerill)
Pullen, Baverstock, Peach, Walsh, Rollings,
Round, Cockerill, Barrett, Greenwood, Bond,

Short, Slattery (s)

11 April Birmingham City 1 Swindon Town 0
Pullen, Baverstock, Bailie, Walsh, Rollings,
Round, Cockerill, Barrett, Greenwood, Bond,

Bristow, Slattery (s)

13 April Hereford Utd 3 Swindon Town2

Round Slattery

Teasdale, Baverstock, Trollope, Walsh, Rollings, Cockerill, Barrett, Bond, Slattery, Short,

Bristow (s)

SOUTH EAST COUNTIES

Cup Semi-Final

6 April Tottenham 1 Swindon Town 1 (Jefferies)

Pullen, Baverstock, Bailie, Batty, Byrne, Westlake, Jefferies, Bristow, Furley, Short,

Coleman, Shaw (s) Hunter (s)

Swindon Town 1 (Bristow) Tott. Hots. 2 Pullen, Baverstock, Bailie, Batty, Byrne, Westlake, Donovan, Bristow, Furley, Niblett,

Coleman.

MIDLAND YOUTH

25 March Coventry City 1 Swindon Town 1 (Buckley) Pullen, Baverstock, Bailie, Batty, Round,

Westlake, Hunter, Bristow, Buckley, Short,

Coleman, Donovan (s)

9 April Wolverhampton Wdrs. 2 Swindon Town 0

Pullen, Baverstock, Bailie, Hunter, Round, Westlake, Jefferies, Bristow, Furley, Short,

Coleman

Cabaret Night with the Players

on

Easter Monday at 8pm in the Supporters Club

Featuring Bob Gill

and a 40 minute film of the 1969 League Cup Final Swindon Town v Arsenal

FOOTBALL COMBINATION

Nov 6 Portsmouth

Home

80-81

SOUTH-EAST **COUNTIES DIV 2**

Home

Away

Home

Away

	Á	1 1983		Score	A Part of the second	162 70		. Score
	- A				1	added to the second	Lula	
Aug.	16	Bristol C.	Away	1 - 3	Cambri	dge U	Home	4 - 3
	20	Tottenham H	Away	0 - 6			4.	
	23				Luton	The second secon	Home	4-1
1	30	Ipswich Town	Home	1 - 2	Peterbo		Home	1-0
Sep.	6	Oxford U	Home	1 - 2	Reading	9	Away	3 - 1
	9	Arsenal	Home	0 - 1	-		Henry	
	13		W. Grander de		Totteni	nam H	Home	4 - 1
	20	Cardiff C	Home	3 - 1				
	24	Reading	Away	3 - 1	181 11		A	
-	27	Bristol Rovers	Away	0 - 2	West H		Away	0 - 1
Oct.	4	Norwich C	Away	0 - 2	Crystal	Palace	Home	2 - 0
	7	Q.P.R.	Home	1 - 3			A	20
	11	West Ham U	Home	0 - 7	Millwal	l i	Away	3 - 0
	14	Orient	Home	2-0	0		11	2-1
	18	Plymouth A	Away	0-0	Orient		Home	2-1
	22	Leicester	Away	2 - 2	100			3 - 0
	25	Southampton	Home	1 - 2				
Nov.	1	Chelsea	Away	0 - 1	Oxford		Away	1-2
	8	Birmingham C	Home	1 - 4	Wimble		Away	3.0 000
	15	Bristol C	Home	0 - 1	Bristol		Home	2 - 2
	22	Orient	Away	2 - 3	Brentfo		Away	2-4
	29		-	100	Charito	n A	Home	2 - 1
Dec.	2	Tottenham H	Home	2 - 1				
	6			77-77-77	Cheisea		Away	1 - 1
	9	Fulham	Away	1 - 0				20
	13	Leicester	Home	0 - 3	Chelsea		Home	2-0
	27			20200000	Cambri		Away	1-3
	29	Luton T	Away	2 - 1	Luton		Away	2-0
Jan.	3	Crystal Pal.	Home	2 - 0	-			
	10					prough U	Away	1 - 1
	17	Ipswich T	Away	1 - 4	Readin		Home	3-0
	20	Hereford U	Home	1 - 1	Totten	ham H	Away	0 - 4
	24							Page 1
	31	Bristol R	Home	2 - 1	West H	am U	Home	0 - 2
Feb.	7	Arsenal	Away	0 - 2				Manager L
	14	Oxford	Away	3 - 4	Milwall		Home	11-0
	21	Reading	Home	3 - 1	Orient		Away	0
	28	Cardiff C	Away	2-0	Oxford		Home	3-2
Mar.	7	Norwich C	Home	1 - 3	Wimble	edon	Home	3-0
	14			All 1883	Bristol	R	Away	P
	17	Q.P.R.	Away	1-6	Name and		-	
	21	Plymouth A	Home	0-3	Brentfo		Home	P
	28	Southampton	Away	0 - 3	Charlto	on A	Away	2 - 2
Apr.	4	Chelsea	Home	1-4	Crystal	Pal	Away	1312
ripi.	8	West Ham United	Away	the contract	Cup			
	11	Birmingham C	Away	1 - 0		ept. Millwall	Away	1-0
	18	Luton T	Home		20113	ept. Williwall		
	22	Crystal Pal	Away		25th C	Oct West Ham Utd	Away	3-0
	25	Fulham	Home		6th Ap	ril Tottenham Hotspur	Away	1 - 1
			Home		Carlos and Johnson			0
MIDLA	AND	YOUTH FIXTURES			League			Score
2 -		Land Control of the C			Nov. 26	West Bromwich Albio		Home 2 - 1
Season	198	0/81			Dec. 6	Wolverhampton Wand	lerers	Away postpone
_		Lest, tre legislation			13	Birmingham City		Home postpone
Cup Co	ompe	tition		Score	15	Northampton Town		Away 2 - 0
-		I do a Tame	A	1.2	Jan 7	Bristol City		Away 0 - 1
	g 21	Luton Town	Away	1-2	14	Coventry City		Home postpone
Sep	ot 6		Home	3 - 2	14	Luton Town		Home 0 - 3
	10		Away	1 - 1	21	Leicester City		Away 1 - 1
	17	Leicester City	Home	6-0	28	Leicester City		Home 0 - 0
	25		Home	3 - 3	Feb 5	Luton Town		Away 2 - 3
0	ct 11	Bristol City	Away	0-1		Northampton Town		Home 3 - 0
	16	West Bromwich Albion	Postpor		Mar 19	Bristol City		Home 0 - 0
	25	Leicester City	Away	1 - 0	25	Coventry City		Away 1 - 1
FA	YOU	JTH CUP			Apr. 1	Birmingham City		Home postpone
1.A.	100	7111 001			9	Wolverhampton Wand	erers	Away
					16	Coventry City		Home

16

23

6

Coventry City

Birmingham City

Wolverhampton Wanderers

West Bromwich Albion

A-Z of Swindon Town

Part Eight - By Tony Pullein

GREENWOOD, Roy. Roy served his apprentice-ship with Hull City, turning professional in October 1970. It was against Swindon, coincidentally, that he made his League debut as substitute in September 1971. After spending four years as an established first-teamer at Boothferry Park, Roy was transferred to Sunderland for £140,000 in 1976. Two years later he moved on to Derby, who paid £50,000 for his signature, and he came to Swindon last season.

League reco	rd:		
4		Aps.	Goals
Hull City	1971/2	1 (6)	_
,, .	1972/3	20 (1)	3
"	1973/4	42	10
"	1974/5	31 (1)	5
"	1975/6	24	6
Sunderland	1975/6	13 (3)	2
"	1976/7	14 (2)	1
"	1977/8	15 (1)	4
"	1978/9	3 (5)	2
Derby	1978/9	19 (1)	1
.,,	1979/80	7 (4)	_
Swindon	1979/80	2 (2)	_
"	*1980/1	25 (1)	4
		216 (27)	38
	100		

^{*} up to and including April 4th

HARLAND, Stan. Stan Harland was the skipper of our triumphant team that defeated Arsenal in the 1969 League Cup final at Wembley. An outstanding defender, Stan was a model of consistency and he missed only one League game in the five seasons after he joined us from Carlisle in 1966. Stan had taken a long time to get his career off the ground. He was once on Burnley's books as an amateur and he then went non-League with New Brighton before Everton signed him.

He didn't get into the Toffees' League eleven and it wasn't until moving on to Bradford City that he made his League debut in 1961. He moved on to Carlisle three years later and, after his five-and-a-half years with us, he completed his playing days with Birmingham City.

		Aps.	Goals
Burnley		_	_
N. Brighton		(NOT I	(NOWN)
Everton			_
Brad, City	1961/2	42	7
	1962/3	41	8
	1963/4	37	5

		Aps.	Goals
Carlisle	1964/5	46	3
"	1965/6	31	4
Swindon	1966/7	46	_
"	1967/8	46	5
"	1968/9	46	1
"	1969/70	41	_
"	1970/1	42	_
"	1971/2	16	
Birmingham	197 1/2	19	_
"	1972/3	18 (1)	- ·
"	1973/4		-
		471 (30	33

HAMILTON, Bryan. Bryan Hamilton is one of only a handful of players to win 50 caps for N. Ireland and he came to the County Ground towards the end of his playing days in 1979. He was appointed reserve-team manager, though he continued to play the occasional game in our first-team. He left us last October to become a manager in his own right at Tranmere Rovers. Bryan began his playing career with Linfield and it was after a brilliant performance in the British Championship of 1971 that he was signed by Ipswich for £30,000.

Everton signed him for £40,000 in 1975 and he moved on to Millwall in a £12,500 deal in 1977. He remained at The Den until coming to Swindon.

League record (until his departure from Swindon)

		Aps.	Goals
Linfield		_	_
Ipswich	1971/2	8 (8)	1
	1972/3	42	11
"	1973/4	41 (1)	16
"	1974/5	33 (2)	10
	1975/6	18	5
Everton	1975/6	22 (1)	5
"	1976/7	16 (2)	
Millwall	1977/8	36	4
"	1978/9	12 (1)	2
Swindon	1978/9	18 (3)	1
"	1979/80	- (1)	
"	1980/1	1 (1)	_
		247 (20)	55

In the next instalment we shall be featuring former manager Bert Head and including items on two of the latest young players to make the grade in the first-team - - Charlie Henry and Brian Hughes.

Town Statistics 80-81

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1		AFC BOURNEMOUTH	(FLC1)	2				Peach	Kamars			Miller	Cockerill	Rowland	Mayes 118		- 197
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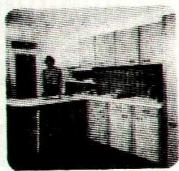


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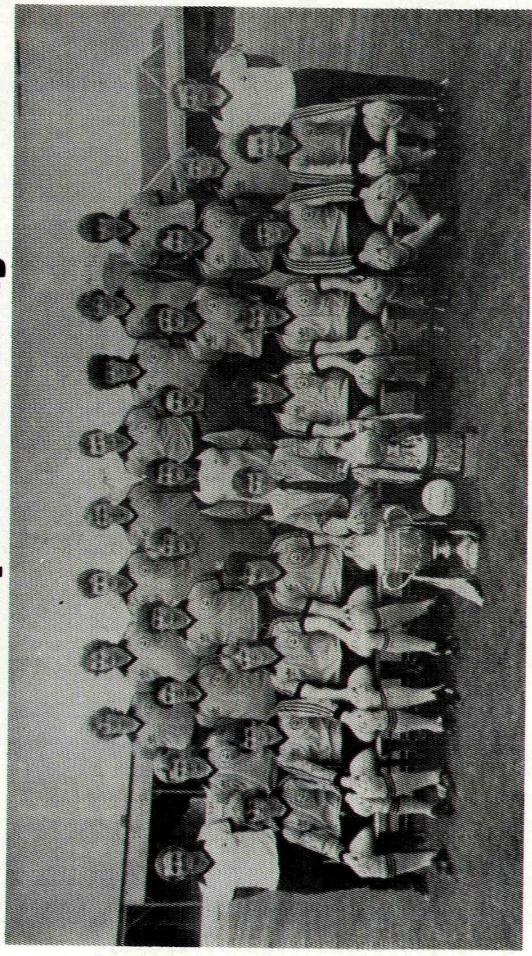
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Newport County



BACK ROW (I to R) Karl Elsey, John Aldridge, Richard Hamer, Dave Gwyther, Richard Walden. MIDDLE (I to R) Dai Williams (Asst. Trainer), Grant Davies, Gary Plumley, Dave Bruton, John Relish, Neil Bailey, Jimmy Goodfellow (Trainer/Coach) FRONT (I to R) Neil James, Steve Warriner, Tommy Tynan, Keith Oakes (Capt), Len Ashurst (Manager), Steve Lowndes, Howard Goddard, Kevin Moore, Nigel Vaughan

Newport County Pen-Pictures

MARK KENDALL (Goalkeeper) Mark is a Welsh under-21 international who developed with Spurs After holding his place in their first-team for much of 1978/79 season, he lost his place the following season and went to Chesterfield on loan Newport invested a then club record fee of £45,000 when signing him earlier this season.

GARY PLUMLEY (Goalkeeper) Gary spent his early days at Leicester where his father was once club secretary. He didn't get into their first-team so he joined Newport in 1976 and had been their permanent goalkeeper until a few weeks ago.

RICHARD WALDEN (Defender) Richard spent ten years as a regular first-teamer with Aldershot before transferring to Sheffield Wednesday in 1975. He didn't miss a game in two seasons at Hillsborough until signing for Newport in 1978.

KEITH OAKES (Defender) Keith made 64 League appearances for Peterborough and joined Newport for £15,000 in 1978. He is always ready to move forward to seek a scoring chance. He netted 11 times last season and has scored eight times this term.

JOHN RELISH (Defender) John earned his League debut for Chester in 1972/73 but was only an occasional first-teamer at Sealand Road. A transfer to Newport in 1974 gave him greater scope.

GRANT DAVIES (Defender) Grant made his League debut at Bournemouth in August 1978. He was signed from Preston, where he was a reserve player.

STEVE WARRINER (Defender/Midfield) Steve spent his early days with Liverpool but his first-team prospects at Anfield were not too bright so he joined Newport during the 1978 close-season.

NIGEL VAUGHAN (Defender/Midfield) Nigel is a local discovery who came into the side about four years ago. He was second-highest scorer with 12 goals last season when he was ever-present.

DAVID BRUTON (Defender) Bristol City introduced David to League football in 1971/72 but he was transferred to Swansea in 1973. He made more than 200 first-team appearances for the Swans and in 1976/77 he joined Newport on loan. It was in 1978 that he was fully transferred to Newport for a then club record fee of £17,500

KARL ELSEY (Midfield) Karl was signed from Queen's Park Rangers during the opening weeks of the season. With Rangers he was usually a reserve player though he did make his League debut in 1978/79 and got about half-a-dozen senior outings with the club.

TOMMY TYNAN (Midfield) Once with Liverpool, Tommy made his League debut whilst on loan to Swansea in 1975/76 and later became a top scorer with 21 goals for Sheffield Wednesday in 1977/78. He moved on to Lincoln in 1978/79 but, after only a few weeks, signed for Newport for £25,000. He scored nine goals last season and has 17 to his credit this term.

KEVIN MOORE (Midfield) Kevin joined Newport for £10,000 from neighbouring Swansea City in 1978 and scored on his first appearance for his new club at Portsmouth. It was with Blackpool that he got his first taste of League football in 1974/75 and he was transferred to Swansea in 1977 after a loan spell with Bury.

ALAN WADDLE (Forward) Newport paid a club record fee of £80,000 to sign Alan from Swansea a few weeks ago and he scored on his first appearance against Sheffield United. He first made his name with Halifax and Liverpool signed him in 1973. Five years laters he moved on to Leicester for £45,000 and it was during the 1978 close-season that he joined Swansea. He was top scorer with 21 goals in his first season and he added 13 more last season.

STEVE LOWDNES (Forward) Steve developed in the junior teams at Somerton Park and got his chance in their League in 1977/78. For the past two seasons he has been a fixture in attack and he has scored 10 times this season.

DAVID GWYTHER (Forward) David was three times top scorer for Swansea before moving on to Halifax in 1973. After leading their list, too, he joined Rotherham in 1976. Newport signed him to fill in for broken-leg victim Howard Goddard last season. David has now scored 150 goals in top-class football.

JOHN ALDRIDGE (Forward) John joined Newport from South Liverpool and made his entry into League soccer only last season. But he ended up top scorer with 14 goals. He has netted 10 times this season.

Soccer Scene

LEVELLING-UP PROCESS

By Tony Pullein

This season's success of Grimsby, Sheffield Wednesday and Blackburn in the Second Division the pursuit of promotion for the second season in succession by Portsmouth and Huddersfield in Division Three, plus the abject failure of clubs like Blackpool and Bristol City, bring home to us how much levelling-up has been going on in the Football League.

Whilst it is still accepted that there is an enormous gap between the leading six to eight First Division clubs and the rest of the pack, there is not really that much difference between standards in Second and Fourth Division football.

During the first 50 years of the Third Division, it was almost unheard of for a club to jump from that level to the First Division in successive seasons. Indeed, during all that time, Charlton and Queen's Park Rangers were the only clubs to do it.

Now it is almost common place for clubs to win promotion two seasons on the trot. Over the past four years, Cambridge, Swansea, Watford and Grimsby have all risen from the Fourth to the Second Division in quick succession.

Grimsby, this season, threatened to become the first side ever to hop from the Fourth to the First Division without a break.

All three of the clubs promoted from the Third Division last season - - - Grimsby, Blackburn and Sheffield Wednesday - - - have been among the most serious challengers for a place in the First Division this season.

It will be seen that one season's successful Fourth Division side can be equally as successful in the Third. The same situation exists between the Third and the Second Divisions.

Some cynics suggest there has been a general lowering, rather than rising, of standards. But I don't think the evidence points to this.

We have only to look at our clubs' records in European competitions to confirm that Liverpool, Nottingham Forest, Ipswich, Leeds and Arsenal of recent years have achieved far more than some of our past champions like Wolves, Burnley and Everton.

English clubs that have experienced a considerable amount of competitive European football have, in fact, opened up a gap between them and their rivals in the First Division. They have worked at consistency, coped with tension and developed an almost uncanny level of concentration.

Teams like Tottenham, Southampton and West Bromwich have produced some of the most delightful football seen from anyone - - on their day. These have lacked that certain other quality that transforms them into champion material. Maybe it will come. We shall see next season.

Lower down the scale, though, it is more difficult to draw a defining line. West Ham were quite above their class in the Second Division this season but, the Hammers apart, there was very little to choose between 16 or 17 other Second Division teams.

Most Third Division teams of this season could probably have held their own in Division Two.

If we take the other side of the coin, the Bristol City side that struggled in the First Division last season, has been in even deeper trouble in the Second Division. The Ashton Gate club will be parading in the Third Division next season. Will they, I wonder, follow the likes of Huddersfield and Portsmouth, of the recent past, and Blackpool of this moment, and drop farther down into the League's lowest Division?

Blackpool and Burnley were relegated from the First Division in 1971. Burnley, in fact, rose back into Division One but suffered relegation again in 1976.

By 1978 Blackpool were in the Third Division. Burnley followed two years later. Now Blackpool will be playing Fourth Division football for the first time next season.

The inter-change of clubs between the top and bottom levels of the Football League is far more rapid than it has ever been. Even non-League standards have risen, thus the early success in the Football League of clubs like Oxford, Hereford and Cambridge - - who all rapidly rose to Second Division status - - - Peterborough and Wimbledon.

Altrincham, the next club poised for admission, will probably gain promotion from the Fourth

Division if they are admitted for next season. In recent years Altrincham have held Everton and Tottenham to F.A. Cup draws on their own grounds and, on both occasions, the First Divison club avoided defeat only with the help of a penalty.

The level of Altrincham's performance suggests that they could be dropped into the Second Division and hold their own with reasonable comfort.

So how has all this levelling-up come about?

Television has been the biggest boon.

There are critics, arguing a good case, who say there is too much football on television, that TV fees should be much higher, etc. etc.

Yet the surfeit of television does rub off on clubs lower down the scale. Managers, coaches and players can watch excerpts from probably four First Division matches each weekend. They can study coaching techniques, tactical ploys, team formations, strategies at free-kicks and instantly work upon the same things themselves for their next game.

In the days before television it is doubtful if the average Third Division player got the chance of watching more than a couple of First Division games during the entire season.

Going back a few years, any Third Division side drawn against a team of Liverpool's current quality would have been scared stiff at the prospect. They would have read about their superb results, the goalscoring performances of Kenny Dalglish and Terry McDermott and a look at the First Division table would have been sufficient to send them into the tie with the world's biggest inferiority complex.

Today most of us know the entire Liverpool team intimately. We know each player's strengths and weaknesses, they have become almost personal friends. Any opposing side running onto the pitch with the Reds, whilst respecting their achievements, feels it knows almost everything there is to know about them.

Coaches can fully prepare their sides to combat Liverpool's weak spots whereas, in the past, it would have taken them the first 45 minutes to discover them and, by then, it probably would have been too late to do anything about it anyway.

It is no coincidence that we can pin-point the beginning of football's levelling-up process precisely to the time when full television coverage was introduced in the mid-sixties.

Since then previously unsuccessful clubs like Crystal Palace, Norwich, Luton, Carlilse, Bristol City and Brighton have all risen into the First Division, some with disastrous results. But, at least, they did get to the top.

Grimsby, Notts County and Swansea have been pressing to join them this year.

Many of the famous names from the past ---Blackpool, Huddersfield, etc. --- were taken by surprise. They didn't appreciate, in time, what sort of a quiet revolution was in progress.

Football is, after all, very much like life itself: a game of chance of missed opportunities and very difficult to plan in advance. It's very much a case of survival of the fittest. But that does ensure that those who most deserve success, and work at it, actually achieve it.

NEXT MATCH

Tuesday 28th April 1981 ENGLAND v RUMANIA Kick-off 7.30 p.m.

Saturday 2nd May 1981
DIVISION III

Brentford Kick-off 3.00 p.m.

Picture



Colchester 'keeper Mike Walker leaves his goal to save at the feet of Brian Williams (white shorts)



Andy Rowland attempting a second goal with his head against Colchester.

Parade



Acrobatic Roy Carter in action against Colchester at the County Ground.



Roy Carter heads goalwards in the Town's 3 - 0 victory over Colchester.

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FROM THE COMMERCIAL OFFICE!!!

We are pleased to welcome the parents and boys of Rodbourne Mannington Boys F.C. who are spending the day with us under our Ground Booking Scheme. We hope they enjoy their visit and will come again sometime.

With the season nearly over the income from the Commercial Department is more important than ever. As from April 30th we are introducing our SUPER DOUBLE CHANCE MOONRAKER LOTTERY. The Prize Money has been increased by £700 to £3,700 every week. There has been a tremendous demand for these tickets but we still have a few left for new agents. If you could help yourself and Swindon Town by selling a few tickets each week then fill in the form below and return it to us at the Commercial Department or phone Swindon 42984 for details. A commission of 10% on all sales plus a bonus of 10% on winners sold to the value of £5 is payable. No obligation or expense.

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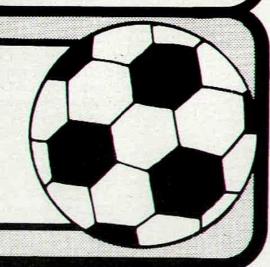
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SWINDON

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KEY OF THE BOARD

REFEREE:

12

MR, COLIN DOWNEY (Hounslow, Middx) Commenced refereeing with Middlesex F.A. in 1965 and has progressed via Spartan and Rothman's Isthmian League to the Football League list. Refereed an Anglo-Italian semi-professional tournament in 1976, also the Middlesex County Senior Charity Cup Final. Has also refereed other league and County Cup Finals. In 1977 was Linesman in the second round U.E.F.A. Cup and lined an International in 1979.

Married, with one son, he is a Systems Analyst in a Computer business, with interests in cricket, badminton and squash. He is Chairman of Hounslow Referees' Society and President of a local youth league.

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- A Barnsley v Chesterfield
- B Calchester v Brentford
- C : Millwall v Gillingham
- D Reading v Portsmouth
- E. Arsenal v Crystal Palace
- F. Brighton v Leicester
- G Manchester City v Everton
- H Norwich v loswich
- Nottm. Forest v Wolverhampton
- J. Stoke v Aston Villa
- K West Brom, Alb v Sunderland
- L Bolton v Wrexham
- M. Cambridge Utd. v Notts Co.
- N Cardiff v Bristol City
- O Chelsea v Luton
- P. Newcastle v Grimsby
- Q Oldham v Derby
- R Hereford v Aldershot