A man with short brown hair, wearing a white short-sleeved button-down shirt, is shown from the waist up, juggling a white soccer ball with his right foot. The ball is suspended in the air, showing motion blur. The background is dark and out of focus.

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Notts County FC
Official Matchday
Magazine 06-07

Pilkington

eye on the ball

Notts County v Swindon Town
Saturday 23rd September 2006, kick off 3:00pm





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On the Cover

In this week's Matchday Magazine we caught up with former Manchester United goalkeeper Kevin Pilkington. The 32-year-old revealed how he owes a lot to our former manager Bill Dearden, what his clean sheet aim is for the season and why he felt like a stranger in his own dressing room this summer.

Photograph: David Middleton

Contents

04-05

The Manager's Column

14

Boardroom Chat

18-19

Visitors

30-33

Getting Personal . . .

37

Colin Slater's Greatest Games

Please keep this voucher safe because it could qualify you to take part in competitions etc during the course of the season.

Matchday magazine
voucher 2006-07

05

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Thommo



Stay focused – that's the message

It's good to be back home again after nine days on the road and needless to say, I'm delighted to have picked up four points while we've been away – plus two clean-sheets and a place in the third round of the Carling Cup.

But although it's inevitable that everyone is talking about our heroic exploits at Middlesbrough, I'm absolutely determined that the players will not take their eyes off the ball and I would urge you to do the same.

Today's clash with Swindon Town is far more important to us than the trip to the Riverside – so is Tuesday's home game against Stockport – and I need everyone to be fully focused on these two matches. As I see it, today's clash against a very experienced and capable Swindon side will give us a good guide as to how far we have come this season.

It's interesting that since we deservedly beat Wycombe at Meadow Lane last month, they have won eight games on the trot and soared to the top of the table.

That suggests we are a match for the best in this division and I am really keen for us to go out this afternoon and confirm that against Dennis Wise's team.

As I have mentioned before, we like to break our season down into groups of six matches and we

need to win two of the next three games if we are to reach the stiff target we have set for ourselves. That will take some doing against Swindon, Stockport, and away to in-form Torquay, but the players couldn't be in a better frame of mind as they face up to the challenge.

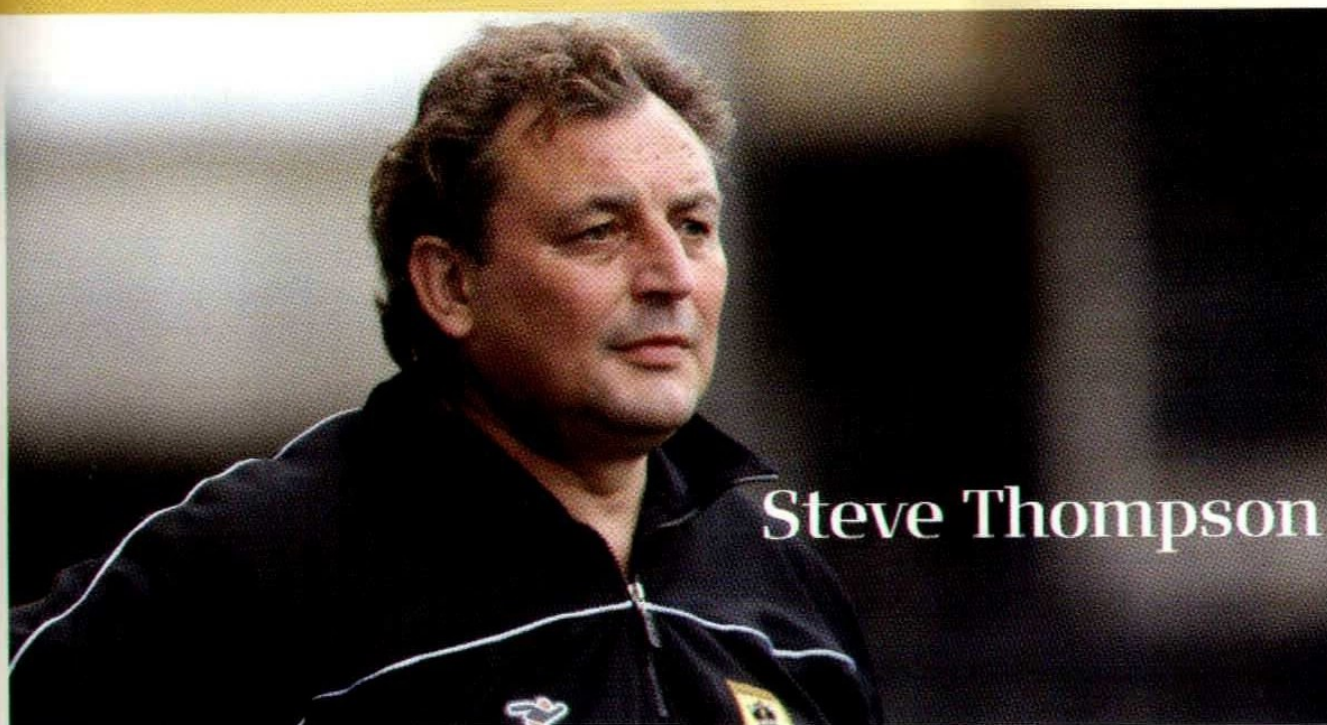
We decided at the start of the season that we would adopt a 'squad approach' to the Carling Cup, using a mixture of experience and youth and giving the fringe players the chance to show what they can do. And the players deserve enormous credit for going to Crystal Palace and Middlesbrough and not just causing upsets but winning the games on merit. You could say that Dan Martin came of age at Crystal Palace when he capped a fine performance with the winning goal and he has since gone a long way towards establishing himself in our midfield. At Middlesbrough, the likes of Stephen Hunt, Gary Silk and Saul Deeney showed that they have real potential and I suspect that you might have to go back a long way to find the last occasion that Notts County had such strong competition for places. It would be wrong of me to start singling out players because it was a fantastic team effort on Wednesday and as a consequence, I'm bracing myself for another round of visitors to my office over the next few days.

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Thommo



Steve Thompson



"It's absolutely essential that we don't get carried away by the events of one game, concentrate on doing what we know to be right and do not allow our standards to slip for one second."

There are bound to be some lads who are feeling hard done-by because they are not in today's starting line-up and that's understandable because anyone who played at Middlesbrough can build a strong case for selection.

But I just hope they can all see the big picture and recognise that every single one of them will have a key role to play in helping us achieve our ambitions this season.

While I'm on the subject, I'd like to extend that a little and also pay tribute to John Gannon for the part he has played in our encouraging start to the campaign. He is an excellent coach, hard-working and thorough in everything he does, and he's very good with the players.

I already knew that from our time at Sheffield United and although we hadn't worked together for a while, it took all of three minutes when we were re-united in the summer to realise that I had made a sound choice.

Everything is looking good but without wishing to be negative, you have to be constantly aware in this game that a nasty banana-skin is not far off.

It's absolutely essential that we don't get carried away by the events of one game, concentrate on doing what we know to be right and do not allow our standards to slip for one second.



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PROUD TO SUPPORT NOTTS COUNTY

Pie News

Operation kick-start

Since the success of Lifeline's 20th anniversary celebrations at our last home game, a new committee has been formed to make sure we don't lose any of our momentum in taking the scheme back to its former heights.

And the board's first step was to make sure that 12 volunteers from the Supporters' Club and the Supporters' Trust will be on turnstiles around the ground this afternoon to help sign up fans - with more than 25 new members registering in the last two weeks. The anniversary celebrations during our tie with Accrington saw

first team players warm-up in 'I'm in Lifeline' t-shirts, as well as a special Lifeline cake being cut at half-time by number 0001 holder Peter Howarth - and distributed to staff and supporters during the second half. Lifeline administrator Lynn Lawson was delighted by the response from fans, staff and players alike to help swell numbers, and said: "We had a fantastic response from everyone in the recent appeal to boost figures. "Although people have been signing up in dribs and drabs over the last week I expect this Saturday to see another leap forward." The new committee,

which also includes Lifeline director Roy Parker, our commercial manager Les Bradd, BBC Radio

Nottingham's Colin Slater and Joy Sharpe from Hillside Medical Supplies, will meet every other month to discuss ways in which to drive the initiative forward.

And Lynn added: "As well as arranging the Lifeline Gala night in October and getting the scheme advertised on the website, we are looking at ways to bring back benefits to members, such as re-introducing social events like golf days, quiz nights and the supporters versus players cricket match."

Pie-eyed

Chester City o
Notts County o

By Steve Westby

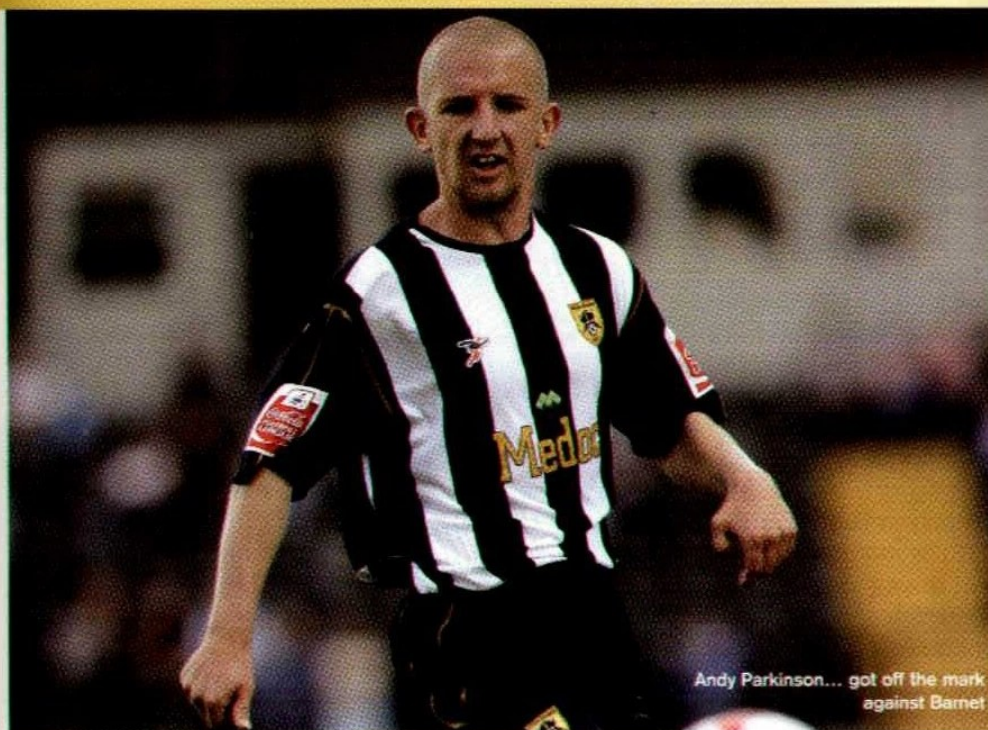
A trip to Chester is always a bit of the good, the bad and the ugly. The positive is certainly the picturesque old city, with its quaint streets and range of timeless pubs. Our tour of the local real ales saw us end up in a Telford's Warehouse, somewhere by the canal, which was handy as it's not just a decent inn but is also the closest one to the ground. This is where the bad bit kicks in because it may be geographically the nearest to the stadium, but it's still a mighty long walk.

The Deva Stadium, or whatever they're calling it this week, is conveniently close if you are a B&Q customer but is otherwise a soulless modern identikit ground - miles from anywhere. I don't like sounding old but in my day, football grounds were part of the community - not separated from it - and I'm afraid this place lacks any character or atmosphere. Sadly that's just how the game proved to be as well. The ugly bit? I'm not brave enough to say - but have you ever tried arriving home quietly at 2am after a day on the beer!



Getting Lifeline kick started...
(L-R) Keri Usherwood, Lynn Lawson, John Smalley, Peter Howarth, Iris Smith, Roy Parker

Pie News



Striking style

Andy Parkinson ended an eight-month goal drought at Barnet and having finally re-opened his account with us, he's confident that it will be the first of many this season.

The former Tranmere and Grimsby left winger last hit the target in January for the Mariners, but he believes our attacking style will lead to plenty of scoring opportunities coming his way.

He said: "I didn't score

as many as I would have liked at Grimsby because their style of play didn't cater for wingers and I was also out of action for three months with shin splints. "But under Steve Thompson we play attacking football and use the full width of the pitch and that allows me to get forward as much as possible.

"I was well overdue for another goal and I must admit that it was a bit of a relief when the ball found the net at Barnet."

The 27-year-old Scouser, who will celebrate his 200th League start if he plays this afternoon, scored three times in 14 appearances in our black and white stripes over two loan spells during the 2003-04 campaign. He added: "My scoring record is around one goal in every five games and now that I've finally re-discovered where the net is, I'm looking forward to cracking on and improving that 'stat' over the next few months."

Favourites return

Former Meadow Lane favourites will be reunited on Wednesday when the Ex-Notts County Players Association take part in their annual golf competition, which this year

takes place at Stanton-on-the-Wolds GC. Tommy Johnson will be back to defend the title he won last year and the line-up also includes the likes of David Needham, Don

Masson and Jon Nixon from the highly-successful '70s team, Iain McCulloch and Ian McParland from the '80s and Steve Cherry and Dean Yates from the 'Wembley Wonders'.

Behind the Scenes

Conference and banqueting operations manager, **Dean Eaves** is striving to make us a winning team off the pitch as well as on it. Dean is in charge of around 50 staff, overseeing all eight of our function suites, and it's crucial that he has sound lines of communication with his duty managers. He said: "I work very closely with Pat Worthington and our head chef Chris Millward to make sure everything runs smoothly. But it can be hectic at times when we have wedding, anniversary and birthday functions taking place - often at the same time." Based in Bingham with wife June and two sons, Carl and Thomas, Dean worked at Holme Pierrepont, then at various Nottingham hotels and restaurants for 14 years prior to joining us 18 months ago. A former amateur footballer for Burton Joyce, Dean is a lifelong Notts fan, so as he says, he's in his perfect job.



Pie News

First of many?

Tcham N'Toya's first goal in our colours in midweek will live long in the memory for the 22-year-old because he already rates his strike against Middlesbrough as the most important of his career. And it was no small achievement for us either because it secured our first triumph over a Premiership side since we beat Tottenham 3-0 on home soil in 1994. The DR Congo-born sharpshooters' strike on 26 minutes of the Carling Cup tie was his first ever goal in an English cup competition and it came in only his second start for us. Now he is relishing the prospect of figuring against another top flight team in the third round stage - where we have not appeared since meeting up with Chelsea in 2003. He said: "I was very

pleased to get my first goal in such circumstances because it meant we knocked out a team who were technically very good and well organised. Now I hope we can get a home tie against another top team for the fans. "I think it must be the most important goal I've ever scored - but I will be just as delighted when I score my first League goal for County." The youngster, who started out with French team Troyes before relocating to Chesterfield, spent time with Oxford and York on loan last season before joining us in the summer. And he added: "The goal has really boosted my confidence. I was feeling a bit down because I wasn't figuring in the first team - but it's always going to be difficult when we have four strikers playing well."



Matt Somner leads the congratulations after Tcham N'Toya's decisive goal at Middlesbrough

A certain spark

Dan Martin was in demand after our last home game against Accrington Stanley but still made sure he found time to catch up with Martin Kelk from Premier Electrical Services. The company sponsored our Matchday Magazine and Martin presented them with a signed copy post match.



Lifeline winners

One of our overseas supporters, Mr Grocock from Alicante, Spain, will be ordering that extra bottle of sangria this week after he scooped our top prize of £1,000. And our assistant manager John Gannon was on the winning team again after he joined Kenneth Richards from Bulwell and Robert Fell of Daybrook in collecting a £100 sum. H P Darwent of Gotham, Frank Robinson of Bestwood Park and Clive Lynch of Sutton Coldfield all won a £50 prize, while Charles Wilson of Stoke Bardolph was the 50/50 winner.

Pie News

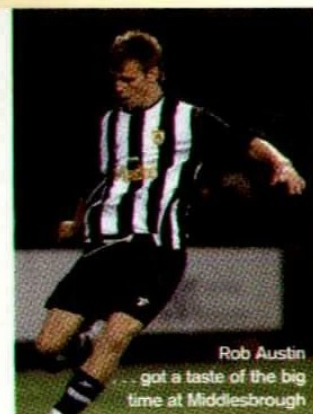
Gulls Trip

We're expecting a mass following for our visit to Torquay's Plainmoor Ground on September 30, and the Supporters' Club will be running a special coach for the occasion in addition to the usual away transport. An overnight stay will be included for the trip to the south coast and the coach will depart Meadow Lane at 8am and return Sunday evening. Seats costs £20 in addition to £23 for the half board hotel. To book your place please visit the Supporters' Club office at Meadow Lane or contact Matt at Premiere Coaches on 0115 985 1111.

Austin steps up

Cup-ties against Premiership opposition are always memorable for the players, but the experience of travelling to the Riverside Stadium midweek was appreciated more than most by one of our second year scholars. Promising right back Rob Austin went to Middlesbrough with the senior players for the first time last Wednesday and despite not featuring, it was hugely beneficial for the 17-year-old. Said coach Mike Whitlow: "I told him on Tuesday that he wouldn't be training with the other lads on Wednesday because he was off to the Riverside and he simply took it in his stride. "Rob has got his head down this season and worked really hard in

training and now he's getting his reward. It was a fantastic experience for him to see what the game is like at the highest level." In fact, Austin has already featured against Premiership opposition because he went on as a substitute against Neil Warnock's Sheffield United in pre-season. And Whitlow added: "The young lads have all been developing fantastically well since the summer and seeing one of them step up has provided an incentive to achieve the same. "I've been working hard in training to boost their confidence and communication skills and the lads have been taking their own training sessions in their particular



Rob Austin got a taste of the big time at Middlesbrough

positions. For example we've had Austin take one on one defending in the final third and the week before Ryan Molloy took one on crossing." The other scholars still with the club are joined by Tommy Hannigan, Bobby Wilson and Stef Frost - as well as four other footballers from local teams. They feature regularly in reserve matches and they have already performed creditably this season against Wolves, Forest and Sheffield United.

Toasting success

We didn't just entertain Accrington during our last home game but also one of our former goalscorers as well - in the form of Phil Stant. The Bolton-born striker, who represented 12 different League clubs and scored 188 goals in more than 400 starts throughout his career, was on hand to talk to guests dining in our 1862 Suite before kick-off.

And the former Cardiff, Brighton and Lincoln player also found time to present our current team captain Alan White with a bottle of wine after going top of the Magpie Manager table. To get up to date with the latest listings and to see if you've knocked White off the top, please turn to pages 34 and 35 of today's Matchday Magazine. Supporters can get another glimpse of one of our former greats this afternoon, because tough-tackling central defender Brian Stubbs will be joining us to relive some of his Meadow Lane days.



Phil Stant congratulates Alan White

Pie News



Albert Thresher
...celebrated his 80th birthday on our pitch

Octogenarian Magpie

Albert Thresher spent more than 70 years wondering what it must be like to emerge from the tunnel at Meadow Lane and wave to the crowd from the centre circle.

And now he knows because the 80-year-old lifelong fan finally had his ambition fulfilled at a recent home game.

Commercial sales and administration executive Fiona Doherty escorted Albert down the tunnel as a treat to celebrate his birthday.

And he said: "In all my years of coming to watch

County I've never once stepped onto the pitch, so it was a fantastic experience. I was just surprised that I wasn't nervous because I always thought I would be.

"My eldest son Dave asked the club if it might be possible for me to go on the pitch and I'm pleased he did because it was a great feeling walking in the footsteps of some of my all time heroes.

"When we won promotion with Neil Warnock it was my 60th birthday and he took me into the dressing room to meet

the team. But I never touched the pitch - so this was just as special." A season ticket holder in the Family Stand, Alfred was an errand lad before he joined the forces and spent two years in the army in Germany after the war.

When he returned he became a warehouse packer prior to spending 20 years driving heavy goods vehicles.

Married to June for the last 51 years, the Nottingham-based supporter ranks Tommy Lawton as our greatest ever player.

Special shirt

Our friends from Hickling & Squires sponsored the game against Accrington Stanley and managing director Richard Wells (left) and sales director Paul White received a signed shirt from our man of the moment Dan Martin, as a souvenir to mark the occasion.



Richard Wells (l), Paul White and Dan Martin



Face in the Crowd

Congratulations if the arrow is pointing in your direction because it means you're the winner of our Face in the Crowd prize from the game against Accrington.

Just call our Commercial Department on 0115 955 7244, make arrangements to identify yourself and claim either a signed football or two free tickets for a future home League match.

Please note that tickets must be claimed seven days before your selected game and are subject to availability.

Pie News

Fair play to FIFA

FIFA have designated this as Fair Play Day and we are delighted to join forces with other clubs and countries right across the world. It's the 10th time the day has been celebrated and the third occasion that it will be linked to the United Nations International Day of Peace. Supported by FIFA president Sepp Blatter, the initiative has been

held over the last week in order for children to develop strong values. He said: "Football, being a team sport, makes youngsters realise how essential discipline, respect, team spirit and fair play are for the game and for life. "FIFA's Fair Play campaign involves much more than simply promoting fair play on the pitch during a

competition. FIFA are committed to encouraging fair play in society too, beginning with our future - with children." Said FA chairman Geoff Thompson: "Fair play is essential to our sport and to everyone involved in it. We need to cherish and nurture the values of sporting spirit and work tirelessly to keep up the momentum."

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Today's mascot

Today's mascot, 11-year-old James Rich, admits to having a soft spot for our speedy sharpshooters. A pupil at Southwell Minster, he ranks our summer signings Tchami N'Toya and Junior Mendes alongside David Pipe as his favourite players. A keen golfer and tennis player, James is

hoping to help us maintain our unbeaten home record this season when he leads us up the tunnel this afternoon. Living in Caunton, James dreams of becoming a professional footballer and is already modelling himself on Brazilian and Barcelona playmaker Ronaldinho.



Lisette Maas and Dan Martin

Martin's moment

Set-piece specialist Dan Martin may have missed out on a hat-trick against Accrington but still had a third reason to celebrate when he collected the 'Man of the Match' award. Lisette Maas, sales manager for Hart's of Nottingham, presented the youngster with a voucher for two three-course meals.

Key Moments



Notts County 3

Edwards 11, Martin 29, 36

Accrington 2

Roberts (pen) 89, Mullin 90

Saturday, September 9, Football League 2

Attendance: 4,677

We extended our unbeaten home record to four games thanks to a dazzling first half display. Centre back Mike Edwards swept home Dan Martin's free kick after 11 minutes (pic1), before Martin himself came close with a thunderous volley from an Ian Ross corner (pic2).

Jason Lee then blazed over before picking out Junior Mendes for a golden opportunity on the line moments later, only for Mendes to scuff his shot (pic3).

Ian Dunbavin's day in the Accrington goal then got worse after Martin's 27th minute corner flew

Key Moments



Sumpter's Choice

Club photographer John Sumpter selects his favourite image from the victory over Accrington Stanley. He said: "We were in the perfect spot to capture the agony and the ecstasy after Dan Martin had

scored direct from a corner. Stephen Hunt has his arms raised, the Accrington players can't believe it and you can see all the fans celebrating in the background."



in at the near post. The visitors were restricted to long range efforts from Romauld Boco and Ian Craney - both comfortably saved by Kevin Pilkington (pic4).

Martin then helped himself to his fourth goal in four games when his 25-yard freekick curled inside the post on 35 minutes (pic5).

Mendes saw his shot well saved after turning smartly outside the box (pic6), before Accrington staged a late fight back with Gary Roberts converting a penalty and Paul Mullin tapping home in injury time.

Boardroom Chat

By Geoff Davey

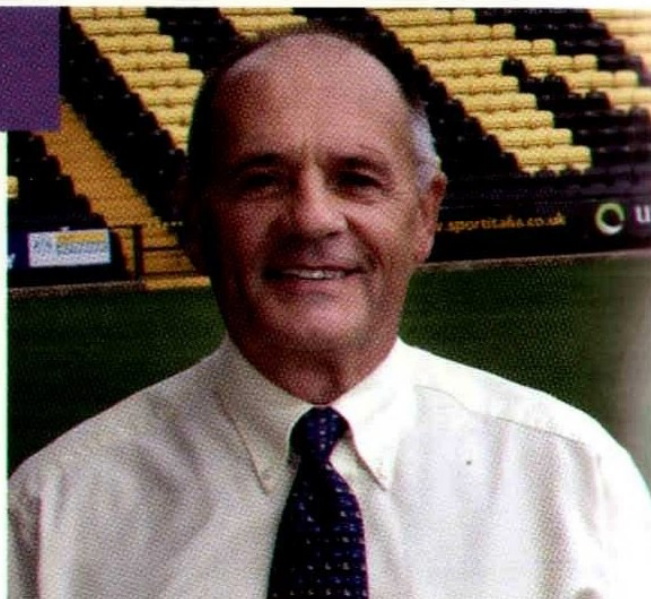
I'm sure that I'm not the only one who has noticed a massive change in the atmosphere at Meadow Lane and I'm delighted to say that applies not only within the football club but also across the wider community. People – supporters and commercial clients alike – are suddenly wanting to know us again because they can see that there really is a future for Notts County. The players and management obviously deserve tremendous credit for the change of mood because like it or not, results always have the biggest influence on the atmosphere.

But it is very heartening from my point of view to see that members of our backroom team have smiles on their faces when they arrive for work – in some cases for the first time in a very long time. When you think of what this club has been through in the past few years – plunging into Administration, narrowly avoiding going out of business and then coming within a few minutes of losing our League status – it's hardly surprising that people have struggled to keep their sense of humour intact. But I honestly believe we have now come through the other side and are starting to see the benefits of all the hard work put in by the previous chairman and his colleagues.

We couldn't have achieved 12 months ago what has been done this year because the club simply wasn't ready. It was still in the process of being re-built from the absolute grass-roots but now the first shoots have started to show and we are ready to move on. For example, when I had my regular update meeting this week with Les Bradd, he told me that out there in the marketplace, people are being extremely receptive to the proposals he's putting forward. They are starting to feel the buzz which is oozing out of Meadow Lane and are prepared to at least talk about the possibility of becoming a part of it. There has always been latent goodwill towards Notts County but people – especially those in business who have to justify their spending – need convincing that we are worth investing in. Hopefully we have now arrived at that point.

It's all very encouraging but please don't think I'm suggesting that all our problems are over because all we have done is to turn the corner.

To illustrate that point, let me share a couple of statistics with you. Our income through commercial activities last season was only 30 per cent of what this club was making when I left in 2002 and the



"There has always been latent goodwill towards Notts County but people – especially those in business who have to justify their spending – need convincing that we are worth investing in. Hopefully we have now arrived at that point."

comparable figure for conference and banqueting takings in the December/January period was just 25 per cent. In other words, there's still an awful lot of ground to make up, just to get back to where we were four years ago and on the same theme, we face a massive task to win back the missing fans.

I estimate that we lost 500 hard-core supporters in the final three months of last season and the attendances against Wycombe, Peterborough and Accrington suggests that we still haven't done enough to entice them back. From my experience in football, it only takes two or three months of poor performances and results to lose supporters but it can take years to win them back. The battle is on to win the hearts and minds of those who ran out of patience with us. Perhaps understandably, they could take it no more but it's an absolute priority to convince them that times have changed. We are trying all we know to regenerate confidence and make them see that not only do we care – we also have within our ranks the people of the right calibre to take this club back where it belongs.

Notts County F.C.

2006/07 Cutout 'n Keep



Photographer Mr J. Sumpter of Nottingham

J. Lee

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How to join – Application forms are available from main reception or at the lifeline desk situated in the club shop. For further information call Lynn Lawson, Lifeline Administrator on 0115 9557200.

Support the Magpies and join Lifeline now.

Know Swindon

The Town

The Museum of Computing in Swindon is committed to the preservation and display of working examples of early computers and is the only one of its kind in the UK. It serves as an information storehouse for historians, collectors and the media as well as a valuable educational resource. Sir Clive Sinclair, who created home computers and pocket calculators at affordable prices to bring technology to the masses, opened the current exhibition on display. The exhibition is called 'Calculator - from the abacus to the microchip' and aims to show the evolution of the calculator.

Noel Gallagher, the lead singer of legendary rock group Oasis chose the name of the band after visiting the Oasis Swimming Pool and Leisure Centre in Swindon. He was working as a roadie for the band Inspiral Carpets at the time, who themselves held a concert at the Leisure Centre in 1993.



The Curta Mechanical Calculator
Courtesy of The Museum of Computing
www.museum-of-computing.org.uk

Isambard Kingdom Brunel, who was probably more responsible than anyone for putting Swindon on the map, was voted the second 'Greatest Briton of All Time' in a BBC programme in November 2002. The world famous engineer's impressive achievements include building the London to Bristol Great Western Railway. The GWR transformed Swindon forever, attracting people to this small market town from hundreds of miles away, which was no mean feat in a time when the usual form of transport was by horse or cattle.



Isambard Kingdom Brunel in Havelock Square, Swindon.
Picture Courtesy of www.swindonweb.com

The Club

Uncertainty surrounds the precise date Swindon Town came into being. Some records suggest it may have been in 1879, but it's generally accepted that it was formed two years later after a 2-2 draw between the Spartans of Old Swindon - an offshoot of a cricket club - and St. Mark's Young Men's Friendly Society.

In 1894 they became founder members of the Southern League after turning professional. They joined the Football League in 1920 but life wasn't plain-sailing as they had to apply for re-election on three occasions and temporarily lost their home during World War II when the County Ground was used as a POW camp.

In 1969, Swindon pulled off one of the major shocks of all time when, inspired by two-goal Don Rogers, they lifted the League Cup by beating Arsenal 3-1 at Wembley while still plying their

trade in the old Third Division.

Paul Rideout was the youngest ever player to run-out for the Robins at 16 years 107 days, when he played against Hull City in 1980. Neil Warnock later bought him to Meadow Lane for £250,000, but he left just three months later - to join Glasgow Rangers for twice that amount.

Swindon won promotion twice in successive seasons. They clinched another one in 1990 with a Play-off victory but were then relegated for making irregular payments. A two-division drop was reduced to one by the FA, but it took three seasons to hit back and claim a Premiership place.

Dennis Wise is the latest in a long line of high-profile managers who have set up home at the County Ground. Others on the list include Lou Macari, Ossie Ardiles, Glenn Hoddle and Roy Evans.

Visitors



Swindon make a Wise choice

Not many teams in League 2 can line up with an all-star midfield of former internationals but the fact that Swindon's team sheet this season could feature Dennis Wise, Paul Ince and Gustavo Poyet shows why they're hot favourites for promotion. So far player-manager Wise and his assistant Poyet haven't even needed to pull on their boots as the team got off to a flyer with six straight wins. They lost their place at the top of the table this week to Wycombe, following their 1-0 loss at home to Peterborough, but the star quality of the former Chelsea team-mates will make them a tough prospect for everyone in the division.

The pair signed three-year contracts in May, shortly after Swindon had fallen to their lowest level in the Football League in 20 years - and became the first former Premiership side to be relegated to the basement division.

That led to the dismissal of fans' favourite Iffy Onuora, who turned down the offer of a different role at the County Ground.

But the swift appointment of Wise quickly had supporters looking upwards again and the 39-year-old insisted at his first press conference that he can handle the pressure.

He said: "I am well aware that the expectation levels will be rising but it doesn't bother me. I have been to a lot of Football League grounds so League Two will not phase me in the slightest.

"I want a fit and strong side because once you have that you have a mentally strong side and

that will help us no end.

"There are a lot of people I have worked under at all levels, who I can pick up the phone and ask for help if it needs be."

Wise had 18 months in charge at Millwall - including a run to the FA Cup final - before playing for both Southampton and Coventry in the Championship. The lure of a return to management saw him accept the drop of two divisions and after shipping out 10



"I am well aware that the expectation levels will be rising but it doesn't bother me." - Dennis Wise

players in the summer and bringing in nine - including Ince as player-coach on transfer deadline day - he landed the 'Manager of the Month' award for August.

Skipper Christian Roberts made it a double celebration as he was named 'Player of the Month', which represents a real personal triumph for the 26-year-old.

The Welshman was treated for an alcohol problem at the Sporting Chance clinic in January after admitting to Onuora that he needed help. Said Roberts: "Booze was controlling my life... everything was around alcohol. I can't thank Sporting Chance enough for giving me the

Visitors



FRONT ROW (left to right): Curtis Weston, Michael Pook, Royce Brownlie, Andy Williams, Dennis Wise (manager), Gustavo Poyet (assistant manager), Christian Roberts, Lee Peacock, Ben Wells, Aaron Brown. **MIDDLE ROW** (left to right): Andy Beasley (goalkeeping coach), Roger Jones (kitman), David Stroud, Dace Tuttle (head of youth scouting), Ricky Shakes, Jamie Vincent, Andy Gurney, Ashan Holgate, Lukas Jutkiewicz, Leigh Henry, Jack Smith, Paul Evans, David Lee (under-18 manager), Dick Mackey (physio), Jeremy Newton (centre of excellence co-ordinator). **BACK ROW** (left to right): Charlie Comyn-Platt, Andrew Nicholas, Peter Brezovan, Phil Smith, Andy Monkhouse, Jerel Ifil.

chance to be here today.

"I would go out on Saturday and not get home till Tuesday. I'd leave the County Ground feeling like I'd done my work and go to the boozer and drink 20 pints.

"I'd like to thank Iffy for standing by me, when others might have chosen to rid themselves of the problem."

Now the challenge for Roberts and Wise is to get back to their form of August, following two defeats in their last three matches.

Speaking to the official Swindon website after the Peterborough defeat, Wise was his honest self and said: "We deserved nothing in the first half - we weren't at the races. The second half saw us huff and puff but we couldn't break them down.

"I changed things at half-time because we needed a switch. There was a great atmosphere in the second half but we only created half-chances. Christian Roberts hit the post and we went close but couldn't get the ball in the net.

"The lads were quiet after the game but I have spoken to them and asked for their views. We will be working hard technically to make progress.

"We won't be pressing any panic buttons but we have to do the simple things right. We tried to be too clever - I don't like the 'flicky-flicky' approach. If you pass you pass, if you cross you cross.

"We didn't earn the right for anything. I will sit down with Gus and discuss what's right for the team before we head to Notts County."



Boss-man

Best known as a combative ball winner in the heart of Chelsea's midfield, Dennis Wise is now enjoying the kind of success in management he was accustomed to as a player at Stamford Bridge.

The Kensington-born boss guided Millwall to their first ever FA Cup final in 2004 and now has his sights firmly set on returning Swindon to League 1 at the first time of asking. As a player, Wise began with Southampton before becoming part of the old Crazy Gang at Wimbledon in 1985. After five successful seasons, which

included an FA Cup winner's medal, he switched to Chelsea and became an integral part of the Blues midfield. He lifted the FA Cup twice, in addition to the European Cup Winners' Cup, then went on to play for Leicester, Millwall, Southampton and Coventry. Turned down another year with the Sky Blues to take over from Iffy Onuora at the County Ground in June 2006, and with former teammate Gus Poyet signed-up as his right-hand man for the next three years, things are certainly on the up in Wiltshire.

Form Check

16.09.06	P'borough	(H)	0-1	
12.09.06	MK Dons	(H)	2-1	Smith (pen), Evans (pen)
09.09.06	Wrexham	(A)	1-2	Evans
01.09.06	Chester	(A)	2-0	Peacock 2
26.08.06	Stockport	(H)	2-0	Brown, Roberts
22.08.06	Brentford	(H)	2-2	Nicholas, Evans (lost 4-3 pens)

Swindon Town



Jerel Ifil



Andy Monkhouse (Right)

Peter Brezovan

(Goalkeeper)

Giant 6ft 7ins shot-stopper who immediately won over the fans on his debut by saving two penalties against Hartlepool on the opening day of the season. Joined on a season-long loan from Czech Republic side FC Brno, and quickly established himself as first choice between the posts by keeping four clean sheets.

Phil Smith

(Goalkeeper)

Reliable 'keeper who will be pushing Brezovan all the way for the first team spot. Joined Dennis Wise in late July this year but has only started once - in the Carling Cup penalty defeat to Brentford. Learned his trade in the non-league circuit with Margate prior to making 74 appearances for Crawley in a two-year stint.

Jack Smith

(Defender)

Can perform in a variety of positions but prefers to operate at right back. A former Watford trainee, he was thrust into the limelight when Paul Robinson departed for the Baggies but coped admirably, making 25 starts for the Hornets. Was a regular for previous coach Iffy Onuora last season.

Charlie Comyn-Platt

(Defender)

A product of Bolton's Academy, the 20-year-old grabbed his senior debut in a Carling Cup game when he replaced Bruno N'Gotty. Added a further two appearances while with the Trotters before joining Tony Adams at Wycombe in September 2004 on a month's loan. Released by Sam Allardyce in 2005 so he headed to Wiltshire and appeared 27 times for the Robins last term.

Jerel Ifil

(Defender)

Powerful centre-back who is now in his fourth spell at the club having previously been on loan there three times since 2003. Andy King eventually splashed out £70,000 on his services in July 2004 to take him permanently to Wiltshire and he's since amassed more than a century of appearances. The former Watford trainee is still waiting to celebrate his first senior goal.

Ady Williams

(Defender)

A Welsh international who boasts a wealth of experience and was named as Dennis Wise's "voice on the pitch" in August when he arrived from Coventry. Learned his trade with Reading and went on to pass 250 games for the Royals before joining Wolves

for £750,000. Never really made his mark with the Midlands club and returned to the Madejski Stadium under Steve Coppell to make another 120 appearances before spending time with both Coventry and Millwall.

Andy Nicholas

(Defender)

The 6ft zins Scouser joined in the close season of 2003 after deciding to leave Liverpool. A regular in the Reds under-19 side, he failed to break into the senior squad and joined Swindon to gain some valuable first team experience. The 22-year-old has certainly done that. He's approaching 100 appearances for the Robins, and even though he struggled with injury last season, he has begun to re-affirm his importance this year.



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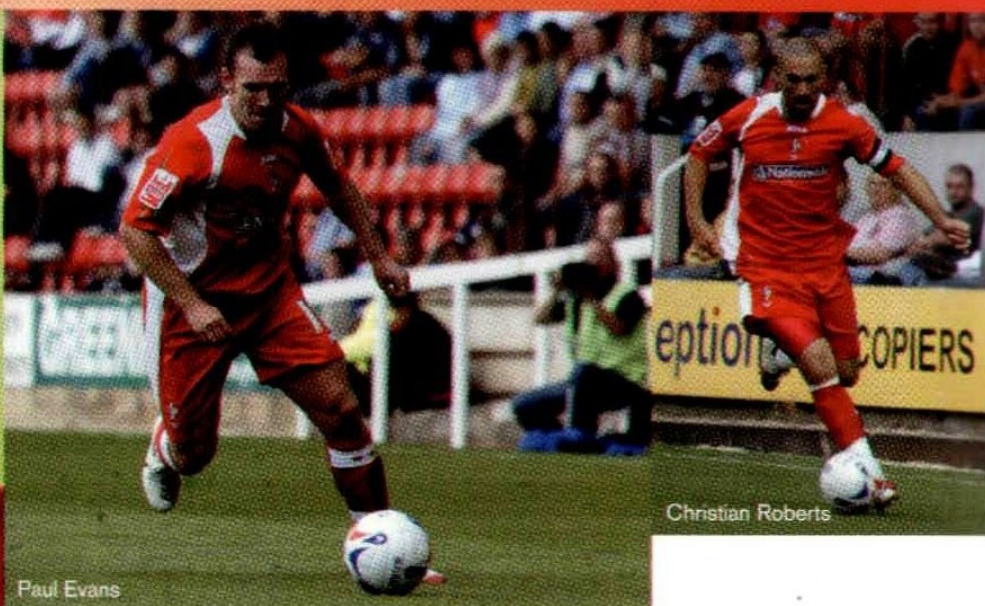
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Swindon Town



Curtis Weston



Paul Evans

Christian Roberts

Jamie Vincent

(Defender)

Experienced left back who played at the top level with Portsmouth. London-born, he was a trainee with Crystal Palace prior to switching to Bournemouth where he made more than 100 appearances in a three-year spell. His composure convinced Huddersfield to pay £500,000 for his signature in 1999, although another six-figure sum three years later took the 31-year-old back to the south coast with Portsmouth. Was part of Pompey's promotion success to the Premiership in 2003, but was then farmed out to Walsall and played for Derby, Millwall and Yeovil prior to arriving at the County Ground this summer.

Curtis Weston

(Midfielder)

Became the youngest FA finalist ever when he replaced Dennis Wise in the 2004 final for Millwall against Manchester United at 17 years 119 days.

Followed Wise from the Lions this summer and has impressed supporters with his aggression, awareness and combative displays.

Paul Ince

(Midfielder)

Now 38, but it was still regarded as a coup when the veteran midfielder was persuaded to sign a one-year deal this summer. The former England international, nicknamed 'The Guv'nor', has made more than 650 career appearances and won the European Cup Winners' Cup with Manchester United. Has also played for Inter Milan, Liverpool, Middlesbrough and Wolves.

Aaron Brown

(Midfielder)

The left sided midfielder's expected transfer away from the County Ground never materialised in the summer and he's been fighting to get back into the manager's plans this term. Started out with home-town team Bristol

City and spent six years at Ashton Gate before relocating to QPR. Has also played for Exeter, Torquay and Cheltenham and was on loan to the Robins before making the move permanent in January 2006. Scored past Stockport last month to force his way back into Dennis Wise's reckoning.

Andy Monkhouse

(Midfielder)

Swindon's 6ft 2ins No. 11, who can operate on either flank, ended an eight year association with Rotherham when he made the switch to the Robins this summer. A product of the Millers' youth scheme, he progressed through their ranks to make more than 150 appearances for the club, and adds an unpredictable flair to the promotion hopefuls.

Ricky Shakes

(Midfielder)

Tricky winger who has bags of pace. Arrived at the County Ground in a deal with Bolton that also

included Charlie Comyn-Platt. Spent time on loan with Bristol Rovers and Bury during the 2004-05 season and impressed former boss Andy King enough in a reserve game to earn a contract in July 2005. The Trinidad & Tobago player narrowly missed out on a place in the 'Soca Warriors' World Cup squad this summer but has established himself with Swindon.

Paul Evans

(Midfielder)

A Welsh international who is a familiar face in these parts after playing for Forest. An experienced campaigner with more than 400 League starts, he lists Shrewsbury, Brentford, Bradford, Blackpool and Rotherham as his former clubs. After being frozen out of the City Ground last term by Gary Megson, the 32-year-old has opened this season in fantastic form, scoring past Darlington and Wrexham as well as bagging the equaliser against Brentford

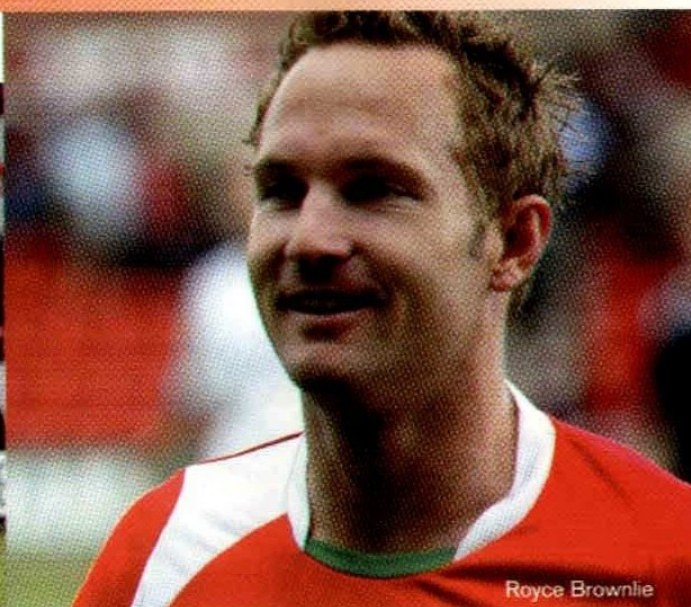
Swindon Town



Lee Peacock



Fola Onibuje



Royce Brownlie

in the Carling Cup to take it into extra time.

Michael Pook

(Midfielder)

A consistent performer in the Robin's youth and reserve teams, he earned a permanent deal at the start of this campaign. An energetic box-to-box player, his one and only senior goal came in the Carling Cup first round last season when his 25-year thunderbolt found the net against Wycombe.

Andy Caton

(Midfielder)

Prolific goalscorer with North Leigh in the GLS Hellenic Premier Division, he joined Swindon as a first year scholar in June 2004. The Oxford-born 18-year-old scored on the opening day of last season against Wrexham and has appeared a handful of times already this season.

Gareth Whalley

(Midfielder)

Experienced performer who was part of Wigan's

promotion to the Premiership in 2004-05 prior to joining Swindon in July that season. Made more than 200 starts for Crewe before signing for Bradford in 1998, where he enjoyed two seasons in the top flight, and then helped Cardiff achieve promotion via the play-offs. Will be an influential cog in Swindon's fight back into League 1 this term, but is currently sidelined due to an ankle operation in July.

Christian Roberts

(Striker)

Came close to missing out on this season altogether after being treated for an alcohol problem at the Sporting Chance Clinic in January - but recovered and scored two vital goals against Darlington and Stockport to earn himself the 'Player of the Month' award for August. The Cardiff-born frontman made a name for himself with Exeter, scoring 18 times in 67 League starts, before joining Bristol City. Hit the net on 27 occasions

for them over two seasons before completing the £50,000 switch to Swindon in October 2004. Was appointed vice-captain at the start of this campaign.

Lee Peacock

(Striker)

Experienced marksman who has already struck winning goals past Hartlepool and Chester this term. The 30-year-old developed at Carlisle but initially made his presence felt while with Mansfield. Produced 29 goals in 80 appearances for the Stags and that form attracted the attention of Manchester City in 1999, who paid £500,000 for his services. His time under Joe Royle lasted less than 12 months before he switched to Bristol City for another six-figure fee. Scored 54 times in 131 League starts in four years and then moved on to

Sheffield Wednesday prior to re-locating to Wiltshire in the summer of 2004.

Fola Onibuje

(Striker)

The former Great Britain sprinter was handed a three-month contract in July but has still failed to find the net. Lagos-born 6ft 6ins towering frontman who has featured for Preston, Barnsley, Huddersfield and Peterborough prior to Cambridge, where he finally managed to grab his first senior goal and went on to score another eight in 25 appearances.

Royce Brownlie

(Striker)

An Australian who signed from Queensland Roar in July and scored his first senior goal in English football with a last minute winner against Barnet in August. Spoiled that by getting sent-off in the League Cup game against Brentford last month.

Today's line up

Notts County fixtures 2006-07



August

Sat 5	Lincoln City	A	1-1	6,046	Hughes (own goal)
Tues 8	Shrewsbury	H	1-1	4,386	Edwards
Sat 12	Wycombe	H	1-0	4,053	Mendes
Sat 19	Rochdale	A	1-0	2,321	White
Tues 22	Crystal Pal (Carling C1)	A	2-1	4,481	Dudfield, Martin
Sat 26	Peterborough	H	0-0	6,353	

September

Sat 2	MK Dons	A	2-3	6,323	Lee, Martin
Sat 9	Accrington	H	3-2	4,677	Edwards, Martin 2
Tues 12	Chester City	A	0-0	1,818	
Sat 16	Barnet	A	3-2	2,317	White, Parkinson, Lee
Wed 20	Middlesbrough (Carling C2)	A	1-0	11,148	N'Toys
Sat 23	Swindon	H			
Tues 26	Stockport	H			
Sat 30	Torquay United	A			

October

Sat 7	Mansfield Town	A			
Sat 14	Bristol Rovers	H			
Sat 21	Grimsby Town	A			
Tues 24	Carlisle City	A			

November

Sat 4	Boston United	A			
Sat 11	FA Cup 1				
Sat 18	Wrexham	H			
Sat 25	Walsall	A			

December

Sat 2	FA Cup 2				
Tues 5	Hartlepool	H			
Sat 9	Macclesfield	H			
Sat 16	Darlington	A			
Sat 23	Hereford	H			
Tues 26	Stockport	A			
Sat 30	Swindon Town	A			

January

Mon 1	Chester City	H			
Sat 6	Barnet / FA Cup 3	H			
Sat 13	Accrington	A			
Sat 20	Torquay United	H			
Sat 27	Hereford / FA Cup 4	A			

February

Sat 3	Lincoln City	H			
Sat 10	Wycombe	A			
Sat 17	Rochdale	H			
Tues 20	Shrewsbury	A			
Sat 24	MK Dons	H			

March

Sat 3	Peterborough	A			
Sat 10	Mansfield Town	H			
Sat 17	Bristol Rovers	A			
Sat 24	Bury	A			
Sat 31	Grimsby	H			

April

Sat 7	Boston United	H			
Mon 9	Wrexham	A			
Sat 14	Walsall	H			
Fri 20	Hartlepool	A			
Sat 28	Darlington	H			

May

Sat 5	Macclesfield	A			
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Notts County



Kevin Pilkington	1	<input type="checkbox"/>
David Pipe	2	<input type="checkbox"/>
Austin McCann	3	<input type="checkbox"/>
Mike Edwards	4	<input type="checkbox"/>
Alan White	5	<input type="checkbox"/>
Matt Somner	6	<input type="checkbox"/>
Liam Needham	7	<input type="checkbox"/>
Dan Martin	8	<input type="checkbox"/>
Jason Lee	9	<input type="checkbox"/>
Lawrie Dudfield	10	<input type="checkbox"/>
Andy Parkinson	11	<input type="checkbox"/>
Gary Silk	12	<input type="checkbox"/>
Stef Frost	14	<input type="checkbox"/>
Tcham N'Toya	15	<input type="checkbox"/>
Jake Sheridan	16	<input type="checkbox"/>
Tommy Hannigan	17	<input type="checkbox"/>
Stephen Hunt	18	<input type="checkbox"/>
Bobby Wilson	19	<input type="checkbox"/>
Junior Mendes	20	<input type="checkbox"/>
Tom Curtis	21	<input type="checkbox"/>
Dan Gleeson	22	<input type="checkbox"/>
Saul Deeney	23	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ian Ross	24	<input type="checkbox"/>
Mike Whitlow	29	<input type="checkbox"/>

Today's referee:

Mark Haywood, West Yorkshire

Assistant referees:

Richard Smith, West Midlands (red & yellow flag),

Wayne McIntosh, Lincolnshire (yellow flag)

Fourth official:

Lee Hodgson, Warwickshire

Today's line up



Swindon Town

- ☐ 1 Peter Brezovan
- ☐ 2 Jack Smith
- ☐ 3 Jamie Vincent
- ☐ 4 Paul Ince
- ☐ 5 Jerel Ifil
- ☐ 6 Ady Williams
- ☐ 7 Gareth Whalley
- ☐ 8 Aaron Brown
- ☐ 9 Christian Roberts
- ☐ 10 Lee Peacock
- ☐ 11 Andy Monkhouse
- ☐ 12 Ricky Shakes
- ☐ 14 Andrew Gurney
- ☐ 15 Andy Nicholas
- ☐ 16 Fola Onibuje
- ☐ 17 Charlie Comyn-Platt
- ☐ 18 Paul Evans
- ☐ 19 Michael Pook
- ☐ 20 Royce Brownlie
- ☐ 21 Lucas Jutkiewicz
- ☐ 22 Gustavo Poyet
- ☐ 23 Curtis Weston
- ☐ 24 Ashan Holgate
- ☐ 25 Phil Smith
- ☐ 26 Dennis Wise
- ☐ 27 Ben Wells
- ☐ 28 Andy Caton

Result: _____

Attendance: _____

Man of
the Match: _____

Notts County appearances 2006-07 season

	League		Cups		Total	
	Apps	G	Apps	G	Apps	G
Kevin Pilkington	9	-	-	-	9	-
Austin McCann	9	-	1	-	10	-
Mike Edwards	9	2	2	-	11	2
Alan White	8	2	1	-	9	2
David Pipe	9	-	-	-	9	-
Matt Somner	8	-	1	-	9	-
Ian Ross	4(5)	-	2	-	6(5)	-
Gary Silk	2(1)	-	2	-	4(1)	-
Andy Parkinson	9	1	-	-	9	1
Jason Lee	7	2	-	-	7	2
Lawrie Dudfield	6(1)	-	2	1	8(1)	1
Tom Curtis	- (2)	-	2	-	2(2)	-
Tcham N'Toya	-(5)	-	2	1	2(5)	1
Junior Mendes	5(4)	1	-(2)	-	5(6)	1
Jake Sheridan	- (1)	-	2	-	2(1)	-
Dan Martin	6(1)	3	1	1	7(1)	4
Dan Gleeson	7	-	-(2)	-	7(2)	-
Stephen Hunt	1(4)	-	2	-	3(4)	-
Saul Deeney	-	-	2	-	2	-
Liam Needham	-(1)	-	-(2)	-	-(3)	-

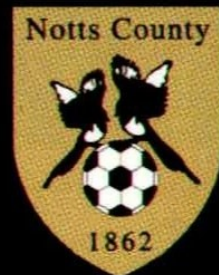
Coca Cola League2 table (22.09.06)



	P	W	D	L	F	A	W	D	L	F	A	PTS
Wycombe	9	3	1	0	6	1	4	0	1	8	3	22
Swindon	9	4	0	1	7	3	3	0	1	6	3	21
Walsall	9	5	0	0	12	0	1	2	1	5	5	20
Lincoln	9	2	2	1	10	8	4	0	0	9	4	20
MK Dons	9	3	1	0	7	3	3	0	2	8	7	19
Notts County	9	2	2	0	5	3	2	2	1	7	6	16
Torquay	9	2	2	1	5	4	2	2	0	4	2	16
Shrewsbury	8	1	1	1	7	3	3	1	1	9	3	14
Darlington	9	2	2	1	8	4	2	0	2	6	6	14
Peterborough	9	2	0	2	8	6	2	2	1	2	5	14
Hereford	9	3	0	2	8	5	1	1	2	4	8	13
Wrexham	8	2	2	0	6	2	1	1	2	5	12	12
Accrington	9	3	1	1	10	5	0	1	3	4	9	11
Grimsby	9	2	2	0	7	5	1	0	4	2	8	11
Barnet	9	1	2	2	9	8	1	1	2	6	7	9
Mansfield	9	2	1	1	9	7	0	2	3	3	7	9
Bristol Rovers	9	2	1	1	3	2	0	2	3	3	9	9
Hartlepool	9	2	1	2	5	6	0	2	2	1	5	9
Chester	9	1	1	3	3	6	1	1	2	5	6	8
Stockport	9	2	1	2	8	9	0	1	3	2	7	8
Boston	9	2	0	2	6	4	0	1	4	7	15	7
Rochdale	9	1	1	3	2	5	0	2	2	1	3	6
Bury	9	1	0	3	5	6	1	0	4	2	7	6
Macclesfield	9	0	1	3	3	7	0	1	4	3	12	2

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MANAGERIAL RECORDS

Steve Thompson

Played 9 Won 4 Drawn 4 Lost 1 For
12 Against 9
Av Pts/game 1.78
Biggest Win(s) Won 1-0 on 2 occasions
Biggest Loss(es) MK Dons 3
Notts County 2 (02/09/2006).

Dennis Wise

Played 9 Won 7 Drawn 0 Lost 2 For
13 Against 6
Av Pts/game 2.33
Biggest Win(s) Won 2-0 on 2 occasions
Biggest Loss(es) Wrexham 2
Swindon 1 (09/09/2006).

MANAGER HEAD TO HEAD RECORD

Played ..0 | Steve Thompson0 | Dennis Wise0
Goals ..0 | Goals 0 | Goals 0

Player with the most... shots

Jason Lee 15

shots on target

Jason Lee 7

shots off target

Jason Lee 8

assists

Jason Lee 2

crosses

Austin McCann
20

fouls

Jason Lee 32

free-kicks-won

Andy Parkinson
18



Player with the most... shots

Lee Peacock 17

shots on target

Lee Peacock 9

shots off target

Paul Evans 8

assists

Curtis Weston 1

crosses

Paul Evans 5

fouls

Curtis Weston

free-kicks-won

19
Ady Williams 13

GAMES SINCE

0	a win	1
0	a home win	1
0	an away win	1
3	a defeat	0
2	a home defeat	0
8	an away defeat	0
1	a score draw	5
1	a no score draw	12
0	conceding a goal	0
0	scoring a goal	1
0	conceding > 1	2
0	scoring > 1	1
1	keeping a clean sheet	3
1	failing to score	0
5	back to back wins	3
25	back to back defeats	16
0	gaining a point	1
1	losing a point	0
30	win by > one	3
12	loss by > one	14

SHARP SHOOTERS

Notts County	CCFL Cup	Tot	Swindon	CCFL Cup	Tot		
Daniel Martin	3	1	4	Paul Evans	3	1	4
Alan White	2	0	2	Lee Peacock	3	0	3
Jason Lee	2	0	2	Christian Roberts	2	0	2

TEAM HEAD TO HEAD RECORD

Played.....46 | Notts County wins17 | Swindon wins21
Goals 57 (1.2 per game) | Goals 70 (1.5 per game)
0-0's3 | Times failed to score 14 | Times failed to score 11

Biggest League win at Notts County for each team:
12/11/1949 & 28/08/1937 Notts County 3-0 Swindon
28/10/1995 Notts County 1-3 Swindon



2006/07 LEAGUE STATS



6	Position	2
9	Played	9
4	Won	7
4	Drawn	0
1	Lost	2
12	Goals For	13
9	Goals Against	6
16	Points	21



Record Against Top Half of Table

W	D	L	RANK	W	D	L	RANK
1	3	1	6	2	0	2	5

Record Against Bottom Half of Table

W	D	L	RANK	W	D	L	RANK
3	1	0	42	5	0	0	6

Record When Scoring First

W	D	L	RANK	W	D	L	RANK
3	0	0	35	5	0	1	8

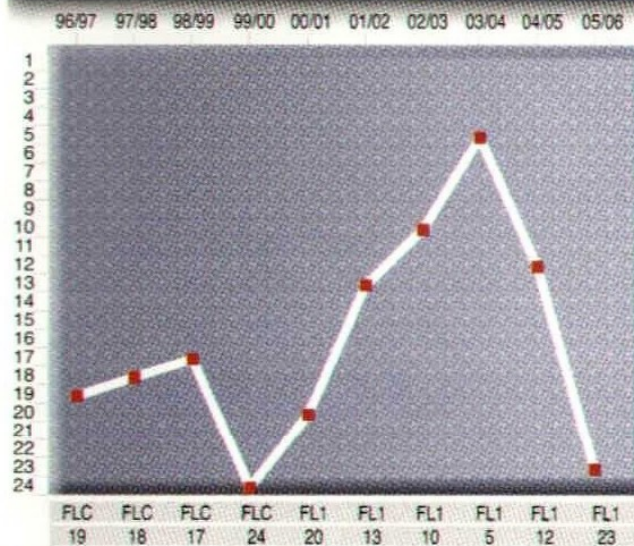
Record When Conceding First

W	D	L	RANK	W	D	L	RANK
1	2	1	11	2	0	1	5

Match Scores

Wins: 1-0[2], 3-2[2], Losses: 2-3[1], Wins: 1-0[2], 2-0[2], 2-1[3], Losses:
Draws: 0-0[2], 1-1[2] 0-1[1], 1-2[1], Draws: None

SWINDON - TEN SEASON RECORD



*up to and including 16/09/2006



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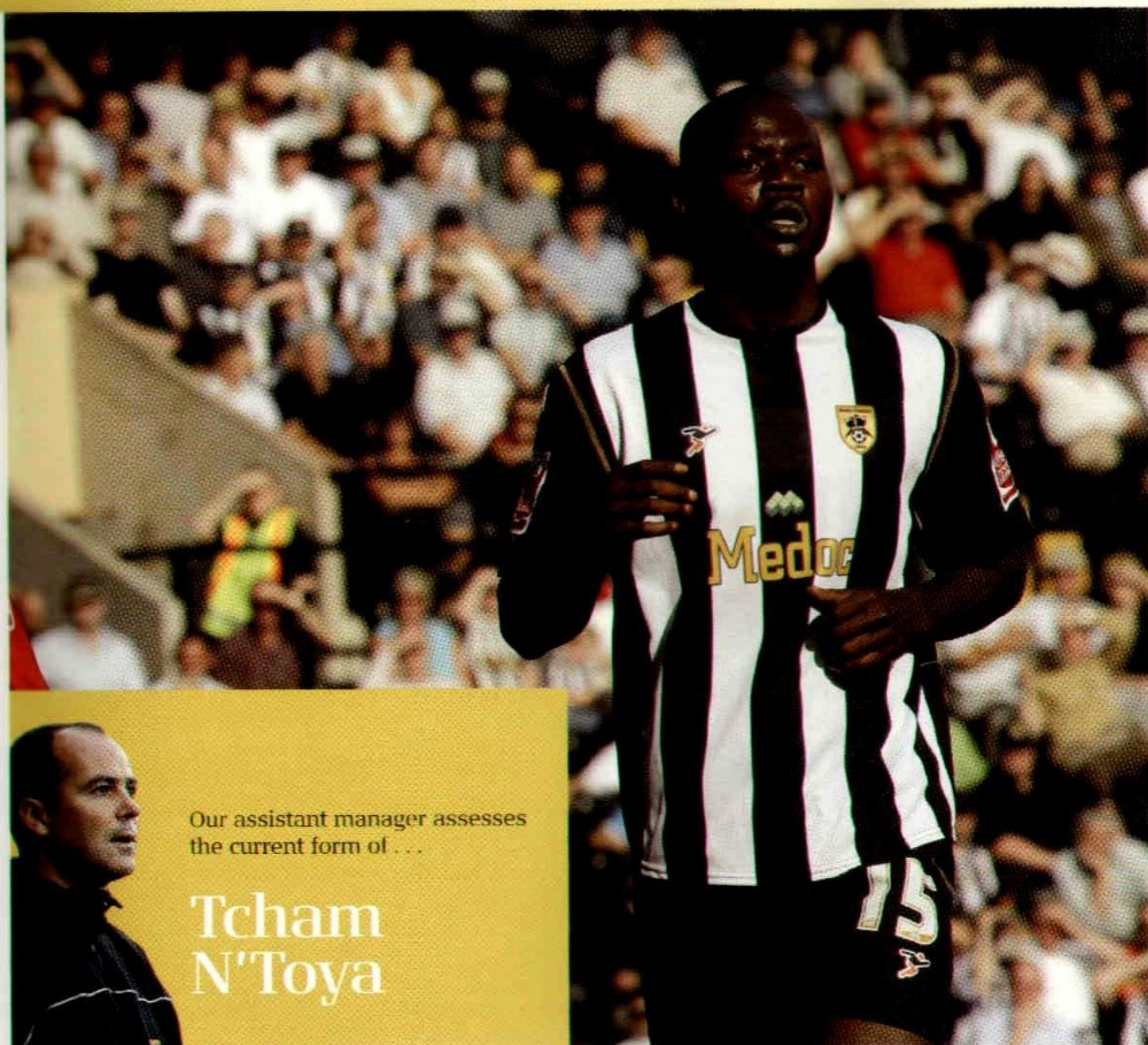
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John Gannon's Progress Check



Our assistant manager assesses
the current form of ...

Tcham N'Toya

"I first came across Tcham at Chesterfield and he struck me straight away as a good prospect. He got his career in England away to a flyer with some early goals but that was followed by a period where he was out of the reckoning at Saltergate. "The fact that he's scored goals in League 1 shows his talent and potential, which is why we invited him along in pre-season and eventually signed him. "He's got himself in better shape now than in the previous two summers, which can only help him over the course of the season, and he's at an age where he's still learning the game and has room to improve. "It's just unfortunate that he hasn't had the opportunity to fully show his ability out on the pitch. He showed a couple of flashes in pre-season of what he can do but so far he's had to be patient.

"We've been getting some decent results so far, which means we haven't looked to change the team too much, and there are people in possession of the shirts. "Tcham's generally been limited to short spells off the bench for 20 minutes or so, which can sometimes be difficult as you have to quickly adjust to the game. "But his pace is a real asset and he can always put tiring defenders on the back foot because of it. He has some good qualities, which means his chance will come if he keeps working hard. "I've seen Tcham hit a hell of a shot in training and we know he can finish. He's settled in well with the rest of the squad, so it's just a case of him getting an opportunity in matches - and making the most of it. Now he's scored his first, I'm sure he'll be up and running."

Getting Personal





Getting Personal

Kevin Pilkington Stranger in his own dressing room

Steve Thompson's 14 new signings were not the only ones striving to feel at home when they reported for duty in pre-season . . . Kevin Pilkington felt exactly the same way.

The experienced goalkeeper was a permanent fixture last season of course, following his move down the road from Mansfield, but as he explained, he felt almost like a stranger in his own dressing room when surrounded by so many new faces.

He said: "It was a weird feeling returning after the summer break because it felt like being back in the school playground with so many new faces. "Pre-season was certainly a strange experience adjusting to everyone. It was almost as if I'd joined a new club twice.

"Yet despite all the alterations in personnel I think everyone's got on brilliantly. We've already formed a close unit - both on and off the pitch - which is obviously one of the keys to success."

Born in Hitchin and brought up in Swanwick, the 32-year-old first began playing between the sticks for his school, Swanwick Hall, prior to taking the step up to county level with Derbyshire.

And soon his performances for Grantham-based semi-pro team Harrowby United earned him trials with Forest, Mansfield and us before Manchester

United came knocking on his door.

"It's every kid's dream to be playing for one of the biggest football clubs in Europe so when I was invited to join United, I jumped at the chance," he said.

"I remember going up to Manchester with my parents to have a look around and the first three people I met were Sir Alex Ferguson, Sir Matt Busby and Nobby Stiles - who was there as a coach at the time. It was a memorable experience and something I will always treasure."

An England Schoolboy international, Pilkington became part of the fabled squad which lifted the FA Youth Cup in 1992 - including the likes of David Beckham, Ryan Giggs, Paul Scholes and Gary Neville. A year later he made his debut in senior football, aged 19, against Crystal Palace, going on to replace Peter Schmeichel after seven minutes.

Despite making a further seven appearances and enjoying loan spells with Celtic, Rochdale and Rotherham, the 6ft 2ins shot-stopper was desperate for regular action and took the brave decision to walk out of Old Trafford in 1998.

He explained: "I'm the type of player who wants to be involved week-in, week-out. I wasn't getting that at United so I knew it was time to move on.

Getting Personal





Getting Personal

"It was a desperately hard decision to make but when John Rudge was interested in taking me to Port Vale I had no hesitation.

"In hindsight it proved not to be the best move for me and perhaps as a youngster I was a little bit naïve. I should have waited for the phone to ring a few more times before making my mind up."

It wasn't long into his Valiants contract that things started to turn sour. He broke his ankle in a routine training session five months after signing, then had to cope with his father being taken seriously ill. Yet despite a lengthy stint on the sidelines, he totalled 25 appearances at Vale Park before being left without a club for three months when his contract expired. It was one of our former bosses, Bill Dearden that ended his miserable run of luck when he brought him out of the cold and into Field Mill.

He said: "I owe a lot to Bill and will always be grateful to him for taking me to Mansfield where I had a brilliant five years. The last year at Port Vale was really low for me for various reasons but when you look back it's those times that make you stronger." Pilkington experienced it all during his time with the Stags, and chalked up more than 180 appearances. He earned promotion to the old Second Division after the 2001-02 campaign, only to suffer relegation a year later.

And his third year at the club proved no less traumatic when he suffered the heartbreak of losing in the Play-off Final on penalties to Hartlepool. Yet despite his rollercoaster career with our League 2 rivals, since opting for a change of scenery and joining Gudjon Thordarson last June, he has been nothing less than constant in our number one jersey. The amiable 'keeper missed only 180 minutes of football during the entire season last year and earlier

this month he capped off his 300th career appearance in all competitions with a clean sheet against Chester. It was his fourth in our opening eight League matches and he's certain there are many more to come this term.

He said: "Last year I kept 11 clean sheets in total and my aim is to surpass that figure this year. With the players I have in front of me I don't think that will be a problem.

"I always think that 15 clean sheets for the season - which is one goal every three games - is a good number to aim for. And with the defence being so organised and solid this year, at times I've had nothing to do.

"Last year I was pushed all the way by Shaun Marshall and this time it's no different with Saul Deeney hot on my heels. Both are quality 'keepers in their own right and it certainly keeps me on my toes.

"I cannot come to training and think that I'm an automatic choice for Saturday - that's for sure. There's no room for complacency at this club." Resting on his laurels is certainly not in the nature of the sport fanatic. Pilkington used to play rugby, tennis and cricket, as well as football when he was younger and wanted to join the armed forces as a PTI instructor if he didn't win a professional contract. Now he's more used to spending time with Rebecca, his wife of nine years, and their two girls, six-year-old Emilia and two-year-old Chloe. A keen cook and reader, Pilkington is also a handy golfer, and despite settling down three years ago near Newark, he's still got the travel bug.

"I enjoy seeing new things and places," he explained. "I've already visited the likes of Italy, Mexico and the Dominican Republic and would love to go to New Zealand if I ever get the chance."

Quickfire

Fifa or Pro-Evo?

Neither. I never play computer games.

Which team mate is the last to buy a round?

Mike Edwards.

Favourite band?

Oasis.

Best holiday you've had?

I went to the Dominican Republic when I was 21

and that was just amazing.

Worst subject at school?

English. I had a teacher with a beehive hair cut who was horrible.

Most intelligent team-mate?

Tom Curtis.

Biggest moaner?

Junior Mendes - on and off the pitch.

Quickest team-mate?

After myself it's got to be Junior or Tcham.

Sporting hero?

Darren Clarke or Jane Tomlinson. She's a real inspiration as she has terminal cancer but still runs marathons.

Toughest opponent you've faced?

Robbie Fowler

Favourite pie?

Lemon Meringue.

Best comedy programme?

Friends.

Worst club barnet?

Lawrie Dudfield. He's going bald and when he tried to cover it up by dying it, his hair turned ginger!



Poole Magpies... Lee Atkins with his two-year-old daughter Caitlin and 15-year-old son George

In the spotlight

We had hundreds of entries for the inaugural season of Magpie Manager last month - and not everyone is able to watch their players in action at Meadow Lane.

'Poole Magpies' manager Lee Atkins is keeping an eye on things from afar, as the 38-year-old lives all the way down in Dorset.

He said: "My dad, Jim, has been a County fan for 60 years and he got me hooked when I was young and although I can't go as frequently as I would like anymore, my dad still keeps me updated and I regularly tune into Magpie World. "That's how I picked my team this season, by listening to rather than watching the pre-season fixtures - although I'm starting to get the feeling that my dad's advice may have included a few red herrings."

Lee, who is a contracts compliance inspector for Bournemouth Borough Council, is currently languishing in 178th place after the first six matches.

Born in Long Eaton, the Poole-based Magpie began supporting us when he was eight and never missed a match, home or away, during Neil Warnock's spell in charge.

A keen striker himself for Poole Borough FC before retiring last season, Lee had another big reason to follow our fortunes after growing up playing football with Mark Draper.

He added: "Mark used to live down the end of my road and we were quite close friends, often playing football with each other after school. I've kept in touch with him as well and we've met up a few times since he left County."

Despite living more than 200 miles from Nottingham, he still managed to find time to watch our victory over Wycombe last month.

Brief Success for Bob VI but Bald Patch Utd on pole position...

The top two may look unchanged from the last matchday magazine, but in actual fact Robert Arnold's Bob's Super VI hit the top of the table after the Accrington Stanley game for two matches. However, the Magpies' fantastic win at Barnet pushed Alan White's Bald Patch Utd back in front.

The last three games saw successes in contrasting ways - three goals against Stanley and again at Barnet, and in-between a clean sheet at Chester.

Andy Parkinson's first strike of the season a week ago brought him three points, with the six bonus points he collected for playing in both of the games where the team scored three. That brings his personal tally to 17 points so far. Jason Lee's winner at Barnet takes him to 19, but the top-scoring player to date is Dan Martin, whose three goals with his three clean sheets in the six matches since the competition started have brought him 20 points.

After the Accrington match, England - not the national side, but the team managed by

Adam George Evans - moved up to third place and have kept that spot since. It was good to see one of Adam's substitutes, Liam Needham, get off the mark when he came off the bench to collect four points. Bonus points for our defenders keeping clean sheets were looking a distinct possibility for most of the match, but they were spoiled by Accrington's late penalty. The second Stanley goal didn't affect Magpie Manager scores at all, but it did fray a few nerves for about a minute.

Alan White's absence through suspension allowed Robert Arnold's Bob's Super VI to take the lead by a point. They, along with England, were two of the four teams who achieved the highest score of 24 points. Andrew Bolton's Tram City and Neil Pritchard's Sale Magpies 2 both climbed into the top ten, but have since dropped just out of the top 50.

Tuesday evening's goalless draw at Chester produced much lower scores, with 34 teams earning

Magpie Manager

o's Super ted back



Geoff Kemm reports
on the latest goings-on
in Magpie Manager...

a dozen points. Scores were back up again last Saturday with 21 teams achieving the top score of 24.

There have been some big climbers over the last three games: Neil Jackson's Ormskirk Magpies rose 50 places to 75th, Gary Silk's Ginga Ninja XI moved up 54 places to 78th, while Andy Parkinson's Parky's Posse were up 56 places only one slot behind. The star team though was Bicknell Town managed by Jordan Bicknell, who climbed 58 places to 80th spot. Poor Alex Levy continued his drastic slide. After starting on top and dropping 79 places after match three, Dingo Hounds plummeted another 62 places, the biggest faller over the last two weeks.

Magpie Manager League Table

Position	Manager	Team	Points	Subs	09/09	12/09	16/09
1	Alan White	Bald Patch Utd	100	29	23	11	24
2	Robert Arnold	Bob's Super VI	98	16	24	11	21
3	Adam George Evans	England	97	16	24	11	21
4	Dan Martin	Danny's Magpies	96	33	23	12	21
5	M Milner	Pie in the Sky	96	11	23	12	21
6	Barbara Andrews	Ladies Choice	96	8	23	12	21
7	Jose McFergadice	Who R Ya	94	11	23	11	21
8	Colleen Mulvaney	Oneforsorrow	92	46	17	11	24
8	Richard Tomlinson	Yoop Eyes	92	46	17	11	24
10	Simon Elliott	Croydon Magpie	92	33	17	11	24
10	David Middleton	Mid's Men	92	33	17	11	24
10	Jason Lee	Leg Ends	92	33	17	11	24
13	Philip Hall	Phil's Black and White Army	92	30	17	11	24
14	David Drew	Gotham Magpies	92	25	17	11	24
15	Rob Jackson	Come On Geoffrey Pike	91	47	17	11	24
16	Joe Miller	Joe's Pies	91	35	17	11	24
17	Jacob Gunton	Flying High!	91	34	17	11	24
17	Jurgen Halligan	Jurgen's Pies	91	34	17	11	24
19	Magpie '64	Exiles XI	91	29	17	11	24
20	Malcolm Truman	Mighty Magpies	90	29	17	11	21
21	Neil Pritchard	Sale Magpies1	90	27	19	10	21
22	Kelly Jarman, Malcolm Golland, Natalie Golland-Wileman	Gollands Re-United	90	25	17	11	21
23	Bill Bottomley	Notts So Good	90	24	19	10	21
23	Jonathan Pickering	JP	90	24	17	11	21
25	Mark Shaw	U Pies FC	89	27	17	11	21
26	Brenda Hyde	Hyde Hotspurs	89	22	17	11	21
27	Simon Cleaves	Cricket's My Game	88	46	19	11	21
28	Sue Codrington	Dewdrops	88	40	17	12	21
29	Paul Chance	Poppapies	88	37	17	12	21
30	Mr R Hufton	Urban 6	88	35	17	12	21
31	Steven Hyde	Sheikh's Selection	88	34	16	11	24
31	Chloe Naylor	Sutton Pies	88	34	16	11	24
31	Lee Sigona	General Lee's Army	88	34	17	12	21
31	The Pipester	Meat Heads	88	34	17	12	21
35	Mike Gyles	Exceedingly Good Pies	88	33	17	12	21
36	Kevin Pilkington	Doofers	88	29	14	11	24
36	Matt Somner	Smashers	88	29	16	11	24
38	Mick Hyde	Mickpies	88	27	17	12	21
38	Richard Hyde	Hyde Seeks Goals	88	27	17	12	21
38	Ralph Shepherd	Shepherd Pies	88	27	17	12	21
41	Albert Chapman	Mugs	88	26	17	12	21
41	Julian Tyers	Poppy's Pies	88	26	17	12	21
43	Edward Lee	MancMagpies	88	25	17	12	21
44	Fiona Doherty	Goldilocks	88	22	17	12	21
45	Wendy Lewis	Ice Pie	88	20	17	12	21
46	Mick Chappell	Docopies	88	15	17	12	21
46	Steve Shepherd	Upies	88	15	17	12	21
48	Mr Glyn Price	Rampant Magpies	88	8	17	12	21
49	John Wilmott	Wigwam Warriors	88	7	17	12	21
50	A Bullin	Matty's Masters	87	19	17	12	21
50	Lisa Marie Marshall	The Fittest	87	19	17	12	21

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S Matthew Bolton

2 David Pipe

Hm Hillside Medical
Aw Hillside Medical
Tr Hillside Medical
B Jordan Straw
S Hannah Etherington

3 Austin McCann

Hm
Aw
Tr
B Joe Briddon Palmer
S

4 Mike Edwards

Hm Nicholas & James Oldroyd
Aw Nicholas & James Oldroyd
Tr Nicholas & James Oldroyd
B Nicholas & James Oldroyd
S Nicholas & James Oldroyd

5 Alan White

Hm
Aw
Tr Kerstin Fletcher
B Harry Mace
S Ethan Etherington

6 Matt Somner

Hm
Aw
Tr
B Damian Taylor
S Thomas Waplington

Steve Thompson

Hm
Aw
Tr
B
S

7 Liam Needham

Hm Premier Electrical
Aw Premier Electrical
Tr Premier Electrical
B Alice & Sophie Kelk
S Alice & Sophie Kelk

8 Dan Martin

Hm Jean Webster
Aw
Tr Jennifer Etherington
B Ross Bolton
S Matthew Bolton

9 Jason Lee

Hm
Aw
Tr
B Steve Le Motte
S Steve Le Motte

10 Lawrie Dudfield

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B Supporters' Club
S Max Etherington

11 Andy Parkinson

Hm
Aw
Tr
B Jessica Kerry
S Richard Kerry

12 Gary Silk

Hm
Aw
Tr
B
S

John Gannon

Hm
Aw
Tr
B
S

14 Stef Frost

Hm The Pie
Aw
Tr
B Brandon Chambers
S Joseph Waplington

15 Tcham N'Toya

Hm
Aw
Tr
B
S

16 Jake Sheridan

Hm Dean Kirk
Aw
Tr David Richmond
B Jamie Davies
S Jamie Davies

17 Tommy Hannigan

Hm
Aw
Tr
B
S

18 Stephen Hunt

Hm
Aw
Tr
B
S

19 Bobby Wilson

Hm
Aw
Tr
B
S

John Haseldon

Hm
Aw
Tr
B
S

20 Junior Mendes

Hm
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S George Harbey

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Hm FI Tagg Coaches
Aw FI Tagg Coaches
Tr FI Tagg Coaches
B FI Tagg Coaches
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S Teagan Golland-Wileman

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Hm
Aw
Tr
B
S

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Colin Slater's Greatest Games



August 25, 1973
Crystal Palace 1,
Notts County 4

Whenever a team achieves promotion there are always nagging doubts about how they will fare at the higher level, which was certainly the case when Notts reached the Second Division - now the Championship - in 1973.

This was, after all, the second promotion in three years and Notts were now back at the much more demanding second tier for the first time since 1958, 15 long years.

As usual, manager Jimmy Sirrel kept his thoughts largely to himself, while recognising the tougher challenges Notts faced - never more so, it seemed, than on the opening day of the 1973-74 campaign. The fixture planners not only gave Notts an away start but against a side just relegated from the old First Division. Crystal Palace's last match at the end of the previous term was a 3-2 away win over Manchester City, while - as recorded on this page last time - Notts had beaten Tranmere 4-1 to guarantee promotion.

It seemed the odds favoured Palace, especially as Notts were without three of their key players either through suspension or injury.

David Needham, a rock at the heart of defence, Willie Carlin, midfield maestro, and Les Bradd, record goalscorer, were all missing so the side looked a bit patched up.

David McVay partnered Brian Stubbs at centre-half, Eric Probert, a club record £30,000 summer signing from Burnley, linked with Don Masson in midfield and Jon Nixon moved from the right wing to join Kevin Randall as the main strike force.

In fact, it was local boy McVay's Football League debut and if he found it a daunting one he has always kept it to himself. His *Diary of a Football Nobody* contains not a single reference to the day at Selhurst Park, though few players can have started their League careers in such an auspicious match. A crowd of over 20,000 included a strong contingent of Notts fans on a perfect late summer afternoon.

What happened was that Notts turned the form book upside down and proved the pundits wrong. By half-time, though Notts had played well, the score was 1-1 and there was little hint about the



Brian Stubbs ...
figured among the scorers

overwhelming victory they were to secure, more a sense of relief that they were still well in the game. Notts really turned on the style in the second half, running in three goals without reply to finish 4-1 winners.

Randall got two goals and Stubbs and substitute Mick Vinter one apiece. Don Rogers, who had earlier made his name with Swindon Town, scored for Palace.

A strong personal memory is of the arrival at the post-match Press conference of a distinctly sheepish Malcolm Allison, who already sensed that Palace were going to find life tougher than anticipated. In fact, at the end of the season they were relegated for the second year running, though they turned the tables on Notts by winning 3-1 at Meadow Lane in January.

Nor was there any over-the-top reaction by Jimmy Sirrel, which turned out to be wise. Appearing at home the following Saturday, Notts crashed to Sunderland by the same 4-1 scoreline and it was to be the fifth League match before they won again - even though, in the interim, they were supposedly back to full strength.

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Trust Matters

Trust Shareholding Acquisition

Since the announcement of the Trust's proposed acquisition of a majority shareholding in the club, the Trust Board have been asked many questions about details of the deal.

In an attempt to help clarify the situation, we would like to provide answers to some of those specific questions.

Q. - What is the basis of the acquisition?

A. - The Trust Board has agreed to acquire part of the shareholding currently held by another minority shareholder, Haydn Green. An interest-free loan will be made available to facilitate this. Under this arrangement, the Trust would be taking up sufficient shares to increase our holding to 51 per cent. The balance of Haydn Green's holding would be offered to the other three existing shareholders.

Q. - How much will this cost?

A. - The shares would be purchased at 50 pence each so the total cost will be in the region of £50,000.

Q. - Who is the interest free loan from?

A. - It is from Haydn Green. The Trust has loans into the club totalling £166,500 and therefore could have used some of this to purchase the shares. However, this would have meant money coming out of the club. This alternative arrangement was felt to be a better option.

Q. - How long would the Trust have to repay it?

A. - The loan (interest-free) is only repayable under two circumstances. Firstly, if the Trust ever sells the shares. Secondly, when the Trust feels it is in the position to be able to make the repayments so this is at an indeterminate time.

Q. - What happens if the Trust membership decides not to proceed with the proposal?

A. - Mr Green has made it clear that he wishes to dispose of his shareholding. If the Trust does not take up its shares and become the majority shareholder then it is likely that another individual or group would eventually have the opportunity to take control of the Club.



Q. - What would the acquisition mean for the current chairman and directors?

A. - The Trust Board has met with club chairman Jeff Moore to discuss the implications of the potential acquisition. The meeting was both convivial and constructive with both parties keen to provide continuity and stability. The Trust confirmed that they wish the current Board to continue to deal with the day to day running of the club and see little change in the current situation.

Q. - How will the shares be protected?

A. - It is very important to put arrangements in place that seek to protect the shares from any future dealing in the shares which may be against the wishes of the majority of Trust members. The Trust Board has already moved to pass a resolution that prevents the Trust Board alone from any sale or disposal of shareholding in the club. The next step is to enshrine this in the Trust's rules to ensure that any sale or disposal would have to have the approval of the Trust membership.

Q. - What would this mean for the relationship between the club and the Trust?

A. - It is important to emphasise that it is the club's Board of Directors who run Notts County. We see the Trust's role as maintaining a 'watching brief' over the happenings at the club. The existing directors will continue to receive our support. A memorandum of understanding is to be drafted which will formalise the relationship between the club and the Trust.

Q. Why is this so important?

A. - This is not an exercise in control or power broking. The club desperately needs a prolonged period of stability in order to continue building on the firm foundations that have been put in place. This is an opportunity to help achieve that aim. The ratification meeting will be held in the County Suite at Meadow Lane on Sunday September 24 at 7:30 pm.

Notts County A-Z

Renowned football historian Leigh Edwards continues his series of profiles of every player who has ever turned out for us in a League fixture during the 60 post-war years.

Reg Beresford

The versatile forward featured in our first post-war League match at home to Bournemouth in August 1946. Initially with Hardwick Colliery, he signed for us in September 1945 and was a regular goalscorer during the transitional season 1945-46. His only goal in nine League games came in our 2-1 defeat at Northampton in September 1946 and he joined South Normanton in August 1949, then played for Parkhouse Colliery and Creswell Colliery, featuring in their 1954-55 FA Cup run. Reg became a central stores manager for the National Coal Board and now lives in Mansfield in retirement.

Tyrone Berry

A young winger who had a loan spell with us last season. A former Crystal Palace trainee, he went on as a substitute in their Carling Cup wins over Walsall and Coventry last season. Was loaned to us in September last year and made his League debut in the 0-0 draw at home to Rushden & Diamonds. Unsettling defences with his electrifying pace, he played five successive League Two games at Meadow Lane. Joined Rushden & Diamonds in January - initially on loan - but was unable to prevent them from being relegated to the Conference.

Jon Bewers

The England Youth defender briefly played for us during the closing weeks of the 2003-04 relegation campaign. Signed professional forms for Aston Villa in September 1999 and his solitary Premiership appearance was in their 4-2 victory at Spurs shortly before the 2000 FA Cup Final. He had trials with Macclesfield and Bournemouth before joining in March 2004 and made three substitute appearances while at Meadow Lane. Moved to Walsall in September 2004, then played for Kettering and Aylesbury and is now studying accountancy at the University of Northampton.



Garry Birtles

The former England international striker starred as we qualified for the Third Division play-offs in 1987-88. He impressed with Long Eaton United prior to joining Nottingham Forest for £2,000 in December 1976 and featured in two European Cup final triumphs. Sold to Manchester United for £1,250,000 in October 1980, he rejoined Forest for £250,000 in September 1982 and became the first signing of the Derek Pavis era in June 1987. He scored nine times in 63 League outings before joining Grimsby in August 1989, twice helping them win promotion. Now works in the media.

Notts County A-Z



Clayton Blackmore

The versatile Welsh international was one of Sam Allardyce's last signings for us. He signed as a professional for Manchester United in September 1982 and appeared in every outfield position, helping them win the FA Cup in 1990, the Cup Winners' Cup in 1991 and their first Premiership title. Followed Bryan Robson to Middlesbrough in May 1994, where he was a promotion winner in 1994-95 and was an FA Cup and Coca-Cola Cup finalist in 1996-97. Joined us via Barnsley in July 1999, scoring twice in 21 League games prior to joining Leigh RMI in June 2000 and is now Bangor City's player-manager.

Brian Billington

A teenage striker who appeared for us during the 1969-70 season. The former Leicester amateur moved to Meadow Lane in October 1969 and made his League debut in place of Johnny Ryan in a 2-0 defeat at Wrexham the following month. He failed to secure a regular first-team slot under new manager Jimmy Sirrel and played seven Fourth Division games prior to joining Enderby Town in July 1970, then had spells with Lockheed Leamington, Kidderminster and Oswestry before reuniting with Geoff Hall at Ilkeston. He settled back in his native Leicester.

Chris Billy

Sam Allardyce brought the utility player here at the start of the 1998-99 campaign but he didn't stay for long. He signed professional forms for Huddersfield in July 1991 and was an Autoglass Trophy finalist in 1994 before following Neil Warnock to Plymouth in August 1995. He helped them win promotion in 1995-96 and moved here in July 1998, making six League appearances before reuniting with Warnock at Bury two months later. Was an influential figure as they qualified for the Third Division play-offs in 2002-03, then joined Carlisle in August 2003 and has helped them win promotion for the past two seasons.

Alan Birchenall

The former England U-23 international figured in our run to the fifth round of the FA Cup during the 1977-78 season. Nottingham-born, he signed professional terms for Sheffield United in June 1963, then joined Chelsea for £100,000 in November 1967 and moved via Crystal Palace to Leicester City in

September 1971. He initially joined us on loan in March 1976 and returned from San Jose Earthquakes in September 1977, playing 33 Second Division games overall prior to joining Memphis Rogues in April 1978. Later served Blackburn, Luton, Hereford and Trowbridge and is now Leicester's public relations officer.

Peter Bircumshaw

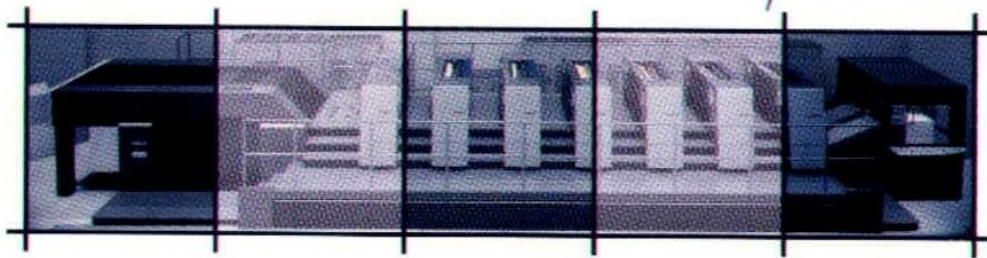
The goalscoring winger made a significant contribution when we won promotion in 1959-60. Turned professional with us in July 1956, he made his League debut in a 0-0 draw at Middlesbrough six months later and scored 40 goals in 72 League games overall before moving to Bradford City in June 1962. Joined Stockport County in June 1963 and later played for Cambridge City and Burton Albion. He was a quality audit manager for Plessey in Sunderland, then a licensee and ran his own fruit and veg business. Later caretaker of Sawley Infants School, he is now a park-keeper in Breaston.

Tony Bircumshaw

Became our youngest League player at 16 years 54 days when he figured in the 3-0 defeat at Brentford in April 1961. The young full back went on to score once in 152 League games, and helped us reach the League Cup fifth round in 1963-64, before Brian Clough signed him for Hartlepool United in July 1966. Featured in their 1967-68 promotion success, and later played for Nuneaton Borough before becoming a maintenance engineer for the National Coal Board. Later worked for his brother Peter in his fruit and veg business, and became branch manager for the Wesleyan Insurance Society in Nottingham and Derby until retirement.

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Community



Girls' Centre of Excellence makes a comeback

The girls' Centre of Excellence, which is run by Football in the Community, is ready to launch a new season with squads at under-12, 14 and 16 levels poised to enter a seven-month development programme. They have matches planned against other centres in the east and eastern region - which will include Rushden & Diamonds, Norwich, Northampton, MK Dons, Lincoln, Ipswich, Chesterfield and Cambridge. We have focused on quality player recruitment in the run-up to the season and apart from introducing 10 newcomers to the under-12s following successful trials earlier this year, the under 14 and 16 squads have also increased.

The development programme covers all tactical and technical aspects of the game.

Another priority area for the Community scheme is the continued delivery of quality coaching and the work carried out to develop new coaches.

Training sessions have been switched this year to

Southglade Leisure Centre, from 5.30 until 7.30pm on Monday evenings, with matches taking place on Saturdays. If you would like further information about the girls' Centre of Excellence, contact Emma Trent on 0115 955 7215 or at et@nottscountyfc.org.uk



Viewpoint

More and more emphasis is being placed on developing young players within professional football. Despite the influx of overseas stars - including West Ham's new Argentinean signings - clubs are still being pressed to utilise their youth systems and academies to develop their first team players of the future. In many respects our operation at Football in the Community is conducted on a similar basis. Of our nine full-time coaches, eight began with us as youth trainees and the odd man out - Ian Richardson - can also be classed as working his way through the ranks.

As the Community scheme grows, with the number and scale of the projects we work on, so the need for more staff becomes apparent. Work experience students who visit the scheme are

always scrutinised during their time with us with a view to potential employment - full-time or otherwise. For example, Luke Abel from Toot Hill School currently 'works' with us for two days a week and on two other days, he attends our Pathfinder project as a student.

He has already demonstrated excellent enthusiasm and has volunteered to assist in our Community activities on matchdays.

A former Pathfinder student is also currently on trial with a view to becoming an apprentice with us - confirming the point that our 'home-grown' system is stronger than ever.

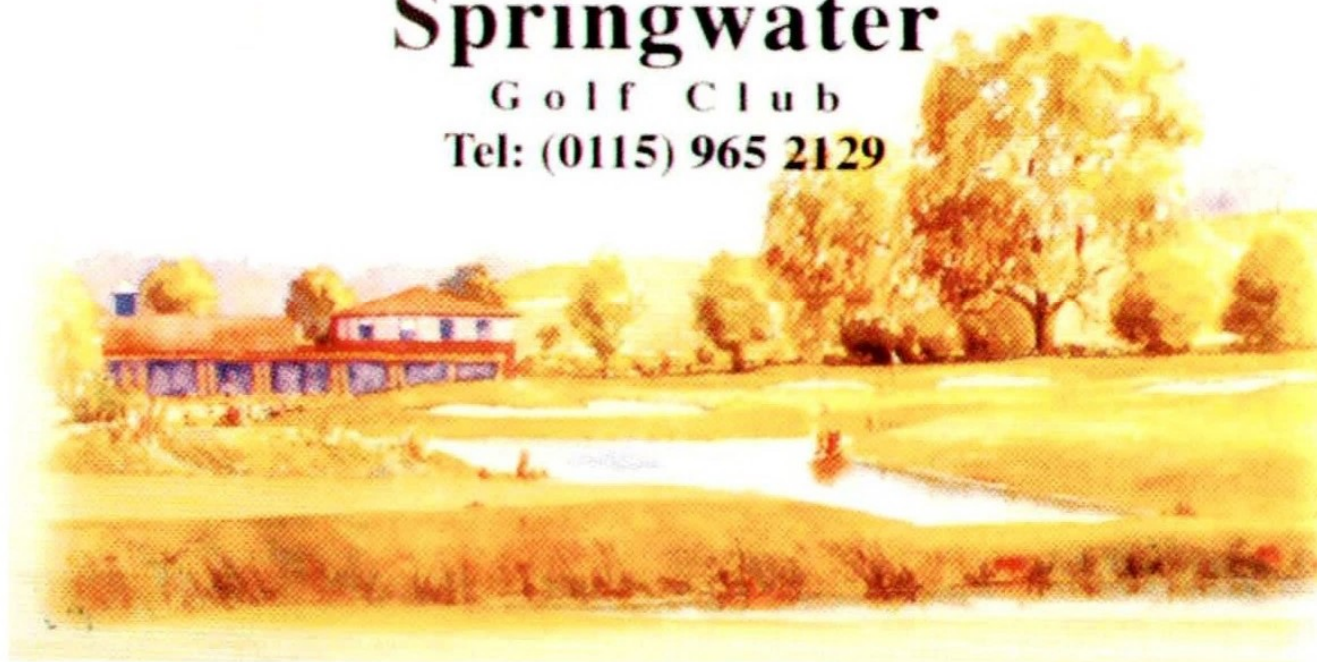
Graham Moran,
Community Director



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Community

New Students join HFG

In partnership with Nottinghamshire County Council, the 'Heading for Goal' scheme has now reached its first birthday. The scheme involves working with excluded secondary school students and aims to assist them to return to mainstream education. Morning sessions take

place in our classroom, which is situated beneath the Family Stand at Meadow Lane, where brand new computers and other facilities were recently installed.

The 10 students, who are in the Years 8 and 9 age groups, are taught by qualified teachers with

the assistance of Community staff.

During the afternoon sessions, students are given the opportunity to improve their skills at a number of sports. For example, they will be receiving coaching from Nottingham Rugby Club and Nottingham Wildcats Basketball Club during

next half-term and other activities will include football coaching from our staff and tenpin bowling.

The new students have settled in well over the past two weeks and it is hoped that a couple of them will have new schools lined up before half-term.



A previous group of HFG students who completed the Duke of Edinburgh Award

Mapping out a staff programme

We work with a wide range of people on a number of different projects and occasionally, they can become aggressive towards each other and even towards our staff.

Consequently, this week marked the start of a training programme designed for members of our staff working with participants who present challenging, aggressive or violent behaviour. The MAPA Course (managing actual or potential aggression) lasts for three days and will ensure our staff understand the concepts of positive behaviour management and how to use a range of theoretical and practical approaches.

Puma become kit sponsors

Following months of speculation within our Football in the Community office, it has now been confirmed that Puma are our new kit sponsors. They take over from adidas, who had supplied our kit, balls and other equipment for almost 10 years. Puma UK are the first technical partner of the Football League and the deal is regarded as a great opportunity for them to communicate with players at all levels and to achieve their aim of supporting community football.

As part of their agreement with the League, Puma are supplying equipment to all Community schemes around the country.

Whitey's whispers

**Skipper
Alan White
reveals all
from inside
the forbidden
territory**



Now cap that

I cannot keep revealing all about my colleagues and not have a laugh at myself when the time arises, so how's this for balancing the books?

Young Stephen Hunt recently moved into his own place in Nottingham and when he told me that he didn't have any furniture, I said that maybe I could help.

My stuff was going into storage anyway, because I've just sold my house in Colchester, so we organised to hire a van and drive down to pick up enough essential bits and pieces to get him started. What I hadn't bargained for was a little technical hitch when we were only a couple of miles down the A52. I decided that we ought to fill up with juice and when we pulled into the petrol station, I told 'Hunty' to hang out of his window and check which side the petrol cap was.

He said it must be on my side of the van but when I got out and started to look for it, I couldn't see it for love nor money. We were fiddling about for an embarrassingly long time and at one stage, I even got flat on my back beneath the van to try and find it. Eventually we stumbled upon it but blow me, when I reversed out and re-positioned the van beside the

pump - I went and lost the cap again. Laugh if you like but it tested my sense of humour to the limit. I'm renowned as a man who always keeps his temper in check but I must admit that just for a few minutes, my language was not the best.

Good sauce of fun

Four of the lads - Jason Lee, Junior Mendes, Stephen Hunt and Ian Ross - did a great job at keeping the rest of us entertained last week when we had an hour to kill in the hotel before we took on Chester.

They were watching *The Weakest Link* on TV and each of them picked one of the contestants - then had to answer that person's questions before they did so themselves.

At the end of each round, they voted for the weakest link and because they didn't have a pen to use for casting their votes, they did it on a napkin with tomato sauce.

The person voted off then had to make the walk of shame and also do the interview, just as they do on the TV programme, and it was a really good laugh. Perfect for getting us in the right frame of mind for the challenge ahead.



From Junior to Senior

Junior Mendes was feeling distinctly unloved last Friday when he arrived for training and no one bothered to wish him a happy birthday. But what he didn't know was that some of us had already devised a way of marking his 30th in a special way.

We knew that we would be training on the pitch at Meadow Lane to complete our final preparations for the trip to Barnet so we organised with Tony Cuthbert to set up our ageing cool dude. As the lads all went out to start our warm-up, the scoreboard began flashing away with a simple message... "Happy Birthday Senior Mendes".

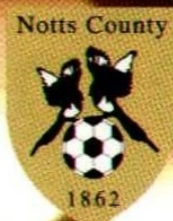
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Buffet Menu £14.95 per Person

Price includes Disco, Party Poppers, Hats & Crackers

Assorted Sandwiches, Vol au Vents, Mini Chicken Kiev's

Turkey & Cranberry Pie, Chicken Satay

Vegetable Samosa's (served with mango chutney)

Warm Mince Pies

Dinner Menu £27.95 per Person

Price includes Disco, Party Poppers, Hats & Crackers

Homemade Soup of the Day

Or

Fan of Honeydew Melon served with Fruits of the Forest

Roast Norfolk Turkey with Sage & Onion Stuffing,
Sausage, Bacon and Cranberry Sauce

Or

Beef Bordelaise

Succulent Sirloin Beef Cooked in a Red wine, Mushroom and
Thyme sauce

Or

Broccoli, Mushroom & Cranberry Pancake Served on a bed of
Tomato, Basil & White wine sauce

All Served with Seasonal Vegetables

Christmas pudding served with Rum sauce

Or

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