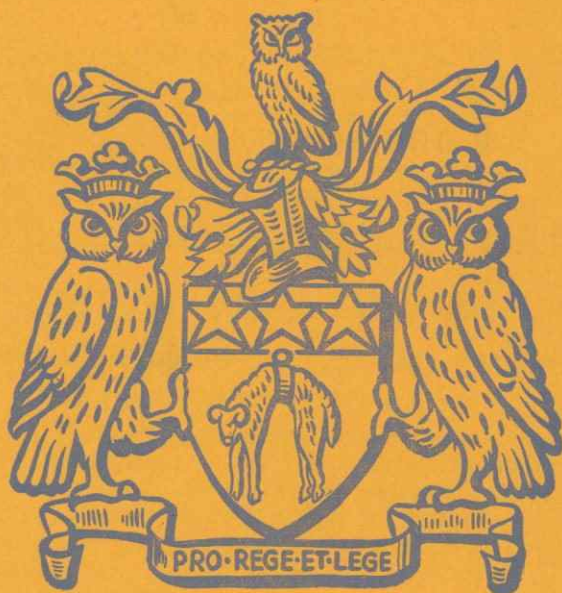


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1956-1957**

OFFICIAL PROGRAMME 3d.

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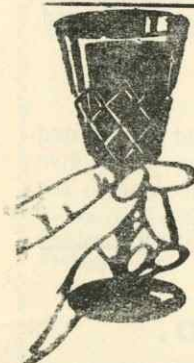
Saturday, 9th February, 1957

NEWS AND VIEWS

REVOLUTIONARY SOCCER MOVE

Widespread speculation—much of it well wide of the mark—has followed the Football League Management Committee's decision to ask the Football Association to invite to a meeting next April, leading officials of football associations of seven other countries to discuss the possibility of arranging a competition for selected clubs.

No sooner was this decision announced than many people began to envisage a super-league of leading British and Continental clubs, who, according to popular belief, would divorce themselves



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entirely from commitments in their own national leagues and operate purely within the framework of a new international competition.

While it will be interesting to have some elucidation of the matter from the League, it cannot be seriously believed that the outstanding clubs, whose visits to other grounds have such a big bearing on the attendance figures in this country, will be allowed to drift off into a new form of competition that will leave the Football League all the poorer for their loss.

On serious reflection, one is forced to accept the more feasible possibility of an attractive new competition, with an international flavour, that would be dovetailed into the existing home programme. It would seem to be the idea of the League officials that many clubs would, through the advent of such a competition, be able to dispense with the recently fashionable floodlit friendly games, and play instead, a series of competitive fixtures with the outstanding teams from the Continent.

It is a firm belief in some quarters that a set number of say 64 European clubs, representing eight countries (England, Scotland, Ireland, Wales, Italy, France, Belgium and Spain, should participate in this competition. First of all, it is suggested the entrants would be split into groups so that the clubs in each group could play each other, at home and away, as in the present European Cup knock-out competition, which has proved to be a tremendous financial success for the present English champions, Manchester United.

The championship of each group would be decided on a points basis, as in League Soccer. Then the champions of each division would play off on a knock-out basis, as in normal Cup Soccer. The idea of the group system is to prevent half the entrants from losing direct interest in the competition after their first game, as is the case in the F.A. Cup tournament.

It is also assumed that all the matches would be played in mid-week to avoid any interference with the League programme, and it seems reasonable to assume that all the games concerned would be big crowd-pulling attractions.

SCOPE COULD BE WIDENED.

The international orbit of such a competition could be widened well beyond eight countries, and the games involved would give English supporters greater opportunities than at present to see Continental sides in serious competitive Soccer.

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It would also provide a splendid opportunity for comparisons of our own club standard with the Soccer at club level overseas.

One snag that is bound to cause misgivings in some circles is that of the commitments thrown on clubs and their players, for the strain of such a competition, run in conjunction with normal League Soccer, Cup football (with all its possibilities of replays), and international obligations, might well be very heavy. Yet it will be interesting to note what the reaction will be when representatives of League clubs get together to discuss the matter. One thing appears quite certain, that the League and the F.A. will not embark upon such a scheme without the full agreement of the majority. Thus, it can be taken for granted that any scheme on these lines that may be adopted will be a scheme regarded as one for the general good of English football.

Even at this early stage, however, many club sides will be keen to fight their way into it, if such a tournament is to become a reality. Perhaps that will serve as added incentive for our own United side to go all out to maintain its high place in the First Division table. And, come to think of it, when one notes the fact that the lowest position it has occupied all season has been the eighth, it is a highly satisfactory state of affairs after the doubts that many people may have entertained when the team stepped out in its new sphere of League competition this season.

A WELL-WON POINT.

Wherever United go these days, some people appear to be intent on labelling them as 'lucky Leeds'. That was the reaction of some of the critics to our well-won point at Villa Park last Saturday, and it was pleasing to note that some gave our side credit for some ability as well as good fortune.

While it is customary, in this programme, to review our previous game, several supporters have drawn our attention to the report which appeared this week in 'The Times'. As many supporters may not have had the opportunity to read it, we have pleasure in reproducing this, with the permission of 'The Times'.

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BRITISH RAILWAYS

Here is the way their Football Correspondent saw the game:

"It is nine years since Leeds United last went to Villa Park in the League Championship. In the interval the Yorkshiremen have nurtured a powerful and popular figure, the revered John Charles. Just what a figure he is on a football field these days was shown on this occasion. One has not seen the like happen even to Matthews. Before the kick-off the ancient field of Villa Park was invaded by a converging army of young boys insistent upon the great man's autograph. They refused to take 'no' for an answer. It was tantamount to blackmail until finally officialdom had its way.

Such was the start of an afternoon of close struggle. At the end certain facts stood out. Charles, who all through had a workmanlike, busy game, did three things that fully explained why he can be set apart from the common rut; Leeds are by no means a one-man side; and Aston Villa are now perhaps one of the fittest combinations playing.

It was this fitness that finally saved and almost won the match for them over the last stages, after the opening half had disclosed Leeds as the more imaginative attackers. Here was contrast even for a football tyro to pin-point. Aston Villa, forthright and well organised in defence—especially in their half backs Crowther, Dugdale and Seward—used nothing but a frontal challenge of little variety. Leeds, directed by Charles in midfield, mixed their approach with a subtlety that was always causing problems. Here—amongst the lesser figures—one constantly noticed the easy, gliding figure of Overfield on the left flank, supported by a 17-year-old partner, Crowe, a fair headed youth with a touch that proclaimed the brush work of a budding artist.

PERFECT PASS.

The way Crowe and Forrest at the twenty-third minute between them engineered the goal that sent Leeds in with their lead at the interval alone justified their journey from the broad vales of Yorkshire. First Crowe beat two men on a sixpenny piece as easily as winking; Forrest took the perfect pass and caught the rhythm of the move with a couple of 'dummies' sold to Dugdale and Aldis. His final flick past Sims into the Villa net was as conclusive as a coroner's signature.

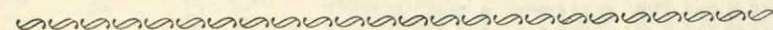
Villa spent most of that opening half filling in the gaps at full stretch against thoughtful planners angling for position. In that phase Charles achieved two things for Leeds that stamped his ability and instinct. On one occasion he pulled down a pass chest high as if the ball were tied to his foot, beat a close tackle, and proceeded to sweep past three players as though they were mere straws in the wind. His finishing shot missed the target by no more than inches almost to cut a swath through the crowd behind the goal. Later when Sewell in a sudden Villa reply, flicked his lob past Wood there was Charles, the inside-right, to clear off his own goal line. What brought him to that precise spot at that precise moment?

MAGICAL EFFECT

Aston Villa's revival in the Cup has suddenly raised echoes of a dead past. The populace at Villa Park has now taken a song to its breast, sung to the strains of Tipperary. The general theme is that 'It's a long way to go to Wembley.' The final implication is that they will get there. The strains of it all, repeated again and again throughout the interval, certainly seemed to produce a magical effect. In that second half Villa took control almost completely, growing stronger in the blackening mud. Only some astute and fiery covering by Dunn and Hair, supported by their half backs—especially Marsden—kept the Villa forwards from snatching the victory.

Here were Sewell, Smith, McParland and company really turning the screw with 10 corners and some near misses. Eight minutes after the change of ends Pace rammed in Smith's swift low centre to make it 1-1. Later Wood achieved two saves born from some instinctive reflex action to keep out a shot from Smith and a point blank header from McParland. The Villa forwards still lacked subtlety. But they had caught the scent of an enemy at bay.

Yet the last memory of a hard match was Charles. Taking a pass from Forrest almost in mid-field he left everyone standing in an electric dash past man after man. He was like a great ship which neither wind nor waves could challenge. Again his shot missed by a hair line. But a draw was honest."



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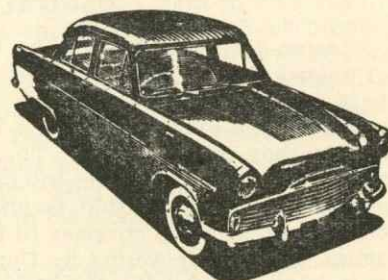
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8—CHARLES

9—FORREST

5—MARSDEN

3—HAIR

6—KERFOOT

10—CROWE

11—OVERFIELD

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Mr. J. E. BENNISON (Yellow)

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6—PEARCE

3—AHERNE

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SOME GOAL-BLASTING MEMORIES

After the brief gap in which they had a season's First Division campaigning before we followed them into that sphere, it is a pleasure to welcome former adversaries in Luton Town to Elland Road once again. The previous clash between the clubs at Kenilworth Road this season ended in a 2-2 draw, Turner scoring the two goals for the 'Hatters' and Charles equalising in both instances.

Luton were the pioneers of Soccer in the South of England and theirs was the first all-professional side in that region. They joined the Football League way back in 1897, but failed to regain election in 1900. Re-entering the League as members of Division Three in 1920, they won their first honours in 1936-37, as champions of that division, after being runners up the previous year. In that championship year Joe Payne established a record that stands to this day—55 goals for that particular division. Yet Payne is best remembered for his greatest feat of all—10 goals in one game.

SOME LUTON PLAYERS.

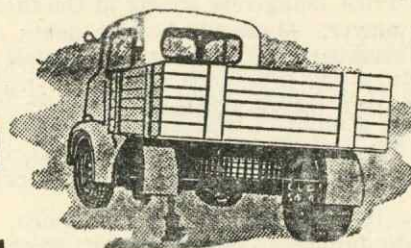
R. BAYNHAM (Goal). Birmingham born. Signed from Worcester City. Made first team debut in 1952-53, and last season developed into one of the best goalkeepers in the country. Played for England against Denmark, Spain and Ireland in 1955-56.

S. DUNNE (Right-back). Born in Wicklow, Eire. Signed from Shelbourne F.C. in May, 1950. Has represented his country on several occasions, and was further honoured when he was chosen to captain the Eire team against Denmark in October last year. Is a very strong defender with a liking for going through with the ball.

T. AHERNE (Left-back). Signed from Belfast Celtic in March, 1949. Played in 22 International matches for his country, Eire, including the World Cup games in 1949/50. He is a stylish back and a favourite of the crowd.

R. MORTON (Right-half). Local born. Has been with the Club since 1946. Played for England 'B' team versus the Switzerland 'B' team, the Football Combination versus the Dutch XI and for the Football Association versus the Army. Was chosen as

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Reserve for England versus Ireland at Wembley in November, 1955. Usually wing half, but has made several appearances at centre-forward again this season, where he has been so successful in the past.

S. OWEN (Centre-half). Signed from Birmingham for a modest fee, and from wing-half developed into one of the strongest stopper centre-halves in the First Division. Won many representative honours including full internationals against Hungary, Jugoslavia and Belgium in 1954.

R. PEARCE (Left-half). Signed from Winsford United in November, 1954, has proved himself a very useful utility player in both the forward and half-back lines. Made several appearances in Luton's first team last season and also this season.

R. DAVIES (Outside-right). A South African signed by Clyde during their tour of South Africa in 1948, and later transferred to Luton in May, 1951. Played in the Anglo-South African side versus Scotland in March, 1956.

G. TURNER (Inside-right). Went to Luton as a wing half upon his demobilisation from the Navy in 1950, but found his true position at inside right. In season 1954-55 he broke the Club's individual goal scoring record since their promotion to the Second Division with 37 goals. Is again the club's leading marksman this season. Represented the English League versus the Scottish League in October, 1955.

A. BROWN (Inside-left). Luton acquired Allan from Blackpool only this week. Had been with Blackpool since 1950 when he joined them from East Fife for £25,000. One of Soccer's unluckiest players, he missed two Cup finals owing to injury. Strong dribbler and a dangerous marksman, is a Scottish international.

G. McLEOD (Outside-left). Born in Inverness, Scotland, where he played for Clachnacuddin. Following a recommendation Luton sent their North Eastern Scout to watch him, and as a result he was signed for Luton in January, 1955.

R. SMITH (Left-half). Born Quarrington Hill, Durham. Signed from Evenwood Town in February, 1950. Has given the Reserve team valuable service, being very strong in the tackle and a whole ninety minutes player. Made his League debut against Preston North End in November last.

W. SHANKS (Left-half). Born in Malta of Scottish parents. Went to Luton on a month's trial and is now in his tenth season with the club. Was signed as an outside right, but was successfully converted to a wing-half. A very hard working player.

M. CULLEN (Outside-right). Scottish born. Joined Luton from Douglasdale Juniors in August, 1949. Took the eye of the Scottish selectors and was chosen to play in Scotland 'B' team versus England 'B' team in March, 1956, and gained his first full cap versus Austria in May last.

J. ADAM (Outside-left). Recommended by Luton's North Eastern Scout, and signed from the Northern Club Spennymoor United, in June, 1953. Can get quickly off the mark and is always a potential danger. Has been watched by the Scottish Selectors.

B. McNALLY (Left-back). Signed from Shelbourne F.C., the same club from which Luton secured Seamus Dunne. Signed by Luton in May, 1956, he made his debut in the first team against the Rumania Team C.C.A. in October, confirming all the good opinions about him.

FIRST DIVISION NOTEBOOK.

A visitor to our dressing room at Villa Park last week was former United manager, Major Frank Buckley, who, now in retirement in the Midlands, had a lengthy chat with the players. The Major recalled United's last visit to Villa Park when it was the end of the Cup trail after the marathon tussle with Chelsea.

* * * *

Revenge will be sweet next week if our side can erase the memory of the recent Cup defeat when Cardiff City are due again at Elland Road. Since their third round success against United on January 5th, Cardiff have won at Chelsea and beaten Bolton Wanderers at home, but, in their last two games they were knocked off the Cup trail by Barnsley, and lost to Birmingham City, 1-2, at Ninian Park.

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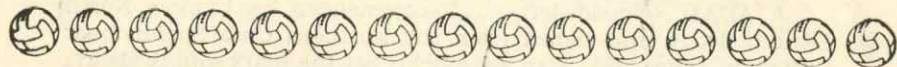
Memories of old-time First Division battles at Elland Road would be revived by the unhappy news this week that former Middlesbrough and England centre-forward George Camsell is in hospital following an operation. George, one-time holder of the record for the highest number of goals scored in an English League season, was a popular, crowd-pulling personality when he came to Leeds. United fans will join in good wishes for his speedy recovery.

* * * *

Tottenham Hotspur are to make a close-season tour of Canada. It is a return visit after their successful trip to that country five years ago. Their stay will last five weeks, and they will play 10 matches. They are to pay a 'flying visit' to New York to play one game there, possibly against Glasgow Celtic.

* * * *

Chelsea are to be the first football club to have a platform and rooms specially built for T.V. cameras and commentators. These are to be built into the floodlighting pylon now being erected on the main mound of Stamford Bridge. The pylon is one of six and Chelsea's floodlighting system will cost £36,000.



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