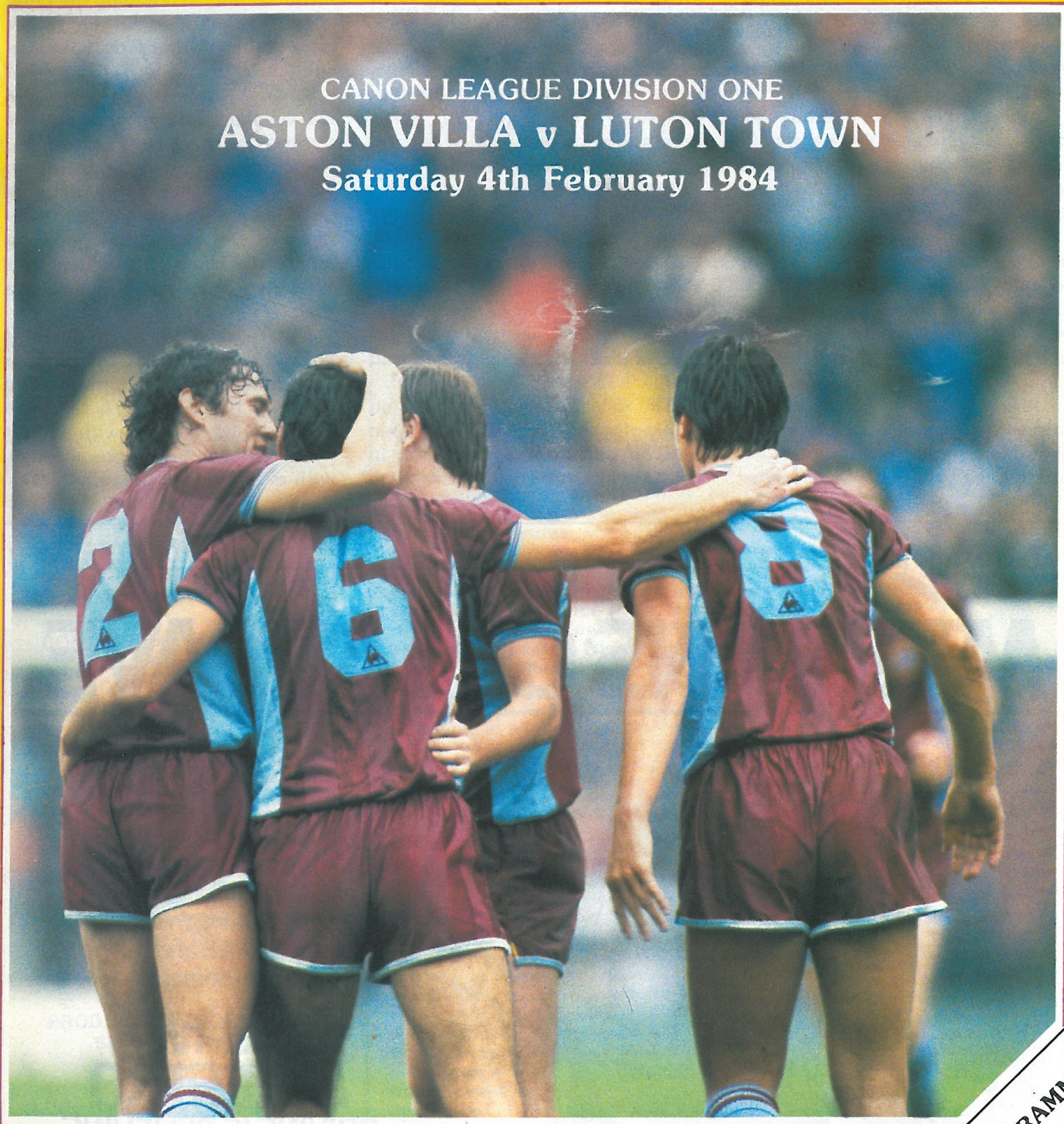


ASTON VILLA

CANON LEAGUE DIVISION ONE
ASTON VILLA v LUTON TOWN
Saturday 4th February 1984



NEWS & RECORD – OFFICIAL PROGRAMME 40p

IN TODAY'S PROGRAMME
**MEET
MITA**

UP FRONT ...with The Villan

Knocking our own football, has, for years, seemed to be a national pastime with the blemishes too often allowed to obscure the beauty spots.

Unlike some other nations the British do appear to have a mania for self-criticism when we could and should be waving the flag more often.

This rush of pro-English football feeling arises from a set of figures recently issued by the Canon League which show that in the first-half of the season between August and the end of December gates actually increased.

During this period, virtually the mid-way stage of the fixture programme, there was an aggregate attendance in all League matches

of 9,473,449 — 68,418 more than in the same spell the previous year.

The situation in the First Division was an aggregate attendance of 4,572,676 from 231 matches and an average of 19,795.

In an era when almost every conceivable business has to report a decline and so many sports struggle for a meaningful following the attraction of soccer remains a phenomenon despite all the soul-searching we encounter.

When First Division matches continue to attract average attendances of nearly 20,000 the game must still be acknowledged as a top spectator sporting attraction judged in the very widest world terms.

At Villa Park our average attendance is well above that of the First Division as a whole. As League secretary Graham Kelly put it. 'Attendance figures in League soccer are a remarkable achievement. They reflect the excitement and quality still provided.'

The fact that the First Division Championship is still wide open and not a one-horse race as in previous seasons is obviously a fac-

tor. Also there have been some huge gates in the Second Division attracted by such as Sheffield Wednesday, Chelsea, Manchester City and Newcastle United.

Spreading the picture outside of the League to the Cup competitions the picture is just as healthy. We at Villa Park look forward to the Milk Cup semi-finals and not only the possibility of reaching the Final ourselves but also of the rather remarkable thought that Walsall could be there, too.

The FA Cup is also proving a marvellous vintage year in the removal of the likes of Liverpool, Manchester United and Forest. Although it is something of a sore point in our own case also there is a renewed air of anticipation among an array of clubs who suddenly see Wembley Way more open than they can ever recall.

If you add up Cup attendances so far and look ahead to the bumper attractions ahead it is natural to conclude that if soccer is regarded as an invalid, it is one with a heart which is beating more strongly with every click of the turnstiles.

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TEAM TALK

Good afternoon, ladies and gentlemen, and welcome back to Villa Park after our break of a fortnight from League football. It's certainly nice to get back into the fray against Luton Town today. After the last home match, we had a very important mid-season break in Devon at the Saunton Sands Hotel, where the facilities and treatment were second to none. We were really well looked after and had all the relaxation the players needed, with golf, squash, tennis, snooker, swimming etc.

I would like to thank the Saunton Sands Hotel for their hospitality and kindness during our stay, which we linked with a game at Bideford. That match kept up our fitness at what is a crucial stage in our season, but we were disappointed when a friendly at Cardiff was called off last Saturday.

Our last two competitive games fluctuated tremendously. Going back to Norwich for the Milk Cup quarter-final after our FA Cup defeat there the previous week was, indeed, a big test for us. Many people had probably written us off, but our performance and attitude on the night carried us to victory with goals by Gary Shaw and Paul Rideout.

It would not have been an injustice if we had gone in at half-time, leading by four goals on the chances we created. We were well worth a win which put us through to the semi-final against Everton this month.

The Friday after the Norwich match saw us involved in our second live televised match on a pitch which, I feel, might not have been passed fit had the game not been scheduled for TV.

The conditions were treacherous, but the game, as a whole, turned out to be good entertainment. After holding the initiative for the first 20-25 minutes, when Dennis Mortimer scored an excellent goal and we might have added another, we went in at half-time with our 1-0 lead intact.

Unfortunately, we conceded a goal in the first 30 seconds of the second half, and, once again, it was solely down to a lack of concentration in allowing Ian Rush to run half the length of the pitch before beating Nigel Spink.

That gave Liverpool the lift they needed and, from then on, they were a very difficult side to play against. They finished as 3-1 winners, with Rush's hat-trick the highlight for the TV viewers. His second goal was really something special.

Today, we welcome David Pleat and Luton Town to Villa Park. Once again, they are proving that with the right management and hard work, the smaller clubs can make an impact on the First Division. They have done this with good, attacking football and particularly their ability to score goals at home and away. We certainly need a victory today to get back on the rails, and we are looking for a performance similar to last year when we beat Luton 4-1 in a very entertaining game.

This month will see us at Everton in the first leg of the Milk Cup semi-final. The players, management and staff are desperate for us to get through to Wembley, and we hope that all the people who travel to Goodison Park will give us the tremendous backing which we enjoyed at Norwich in the last round.

I'm sure that would go a long way towards helping us achieve our target of coming back home for the second leg with a good result behind us.

By MANAGER TONY BARTON



SIDELINES



VILLA SUPPORT IN CANADA

The never-ending serial concerning Aston Villa far and wide has now produced news of Lozells-born Robert Rogers who emigrated to Canada in 1964 and wants to form a branch of the Supporters Club there.

Robert, of 167 Braemar Road, Kingston, Ontario K7 4 B7, is connected with the Kingston and District Minor Soccer Association which has 47 teams of players from aged seven to 18.

Robert was at Villa Park with some of his 'tribe' for the Norwich game when, unfortunately he was not able to see the result he would have liked. However, Villa wish him well in his efforts to spread the Villa 'gospel' in Canada.

THE PERFECT MATCH

Villa's Alan Curbishley and Norwich's Keith Bertschin recently took time off from football to pop along to Dormie Menswear in Birmingham. The visit to Dormie coincided with Norwich's match at St Andrews and the former teammates took the opportunity to be kitted out in toppers and tails for Keith's forthcoming wedding. While Keith was 'Man of the Match' Alan played the best man role and the two players are pictured here being measured for their suits by branch manager Graham Wright.



SMILE PLEASE . . .

Don't anyone DARE suggest this is Beauty and the Beast . . .

Miss Aston Villa, Caz Carrington, has found a willing partner for a cheerful picture. But who on earth is it?

He looks a shade like Eric Morecambe but his headgear has a touch of the Norman Wisdoms.

We'll give you a clue or two. He's usually the other side of the lens, he's spent around a quarter of a century on and off sitting behind the goals at Villa Park and other soccer grounds and his pictures appear regularly in the 'Birmingham Post' and 'Mail' series of newspapers.

He's Gerry Armes . . . and we'll give a couple of complimentary tickets for the best caption. As long as it is not too UNcomplimentary, of course.

WELSH SUPPORT

Sir. I was interested to read your feature on a 'Long Range Supporter' who travels to Villa matches from Chesterfield.

However, I think I can beat his distance.

Since moving to Wales 18 months ago I have travelled to Villa Park regularly all the way from Pontypridd in mid-Glamorgan.

This involves getting up at 6 am to catch a bus followed by a coach from Cardiff.

Can any other Villa fan better this?
Hugh Thomas, The Common, Pontypridd

SEASON 1970-71

	H	A
Division Three	0-0	1-1
Barnsley	1-0	0-1
Bradford City	0-0	0-1
Brighton	1-1	2-1
Bristol Rovers	1-0	1-3
Bury	0-0	3-2
Chesterfield	3-2	1-2
Doncaster	1-0	2-0
Fulham	2-1	0-0
Gillingham	1-1	1-2
Halfax Town	0-1	0-2
Mansfield Town	1-1	1-1
Plymouth Argyle	1-0	0-2
Port Vale	2-0	0-0
Preston NE	2-1	5-3
Reading	1-0	1-1
Rochdale	1-0	1-1
Rotherham United	2-0	1-2
Shrewsbury Town	3-0	2-1
Swansea	0-1	1-1
Torquay United	1-0	1-1
Tranmere Rovers	0-0	0-3
Walsall	3-4	3-2
Wrexham		

League appearances:
Aitken 45, Godfrey 44, Dunn 43, Hamilton 43, Anderson 42, Lochhead 41, Tiler 41, Turnbull 41, McMahon 36, Bradley 29, Wright 17, B. Riach 17, Gibson 13, Vowden 13, Gregory 10, Brown 9, Curtis 9, Chatterley 8, Crugden 3, Simmons 1, Martin 1. Subs: 18. **Total: 506 + 18.**

League scorers:
Hamilton 9, Lochhead 9, McMahon 8, Riach 5, Vowden 5, Anderson 4, Turnbull 3, Gregory 2, Godfrey 2, Gibson 1, Simmons 1, Tiler 1, opponents 4 (Butler, Reading; Allen, Bury; Parsons, Bristol Rovers; Bell, Reading). **Total: 54.**

Villa's first-ever game in Division Three resulted in a win at Chesterfield (3-2) with McMahon and Riach (2) the scorers. After that Villa played pretty well but just failed to in their attempt to climb straight back into the Second Division. They finished fourth with this record:

P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts	
Home	23	13	7	3	27	13	33
Away	23	6	8	9	27	33	20
Total	46	19	15	12	54	46	53

Villa's average home attendance for the season was 26,123 (aggregate 600,842) . . . which bettered nine First Division clubs and all 22 in Division Two. Villa made an early exit from the FA Cup but they again reached the Final of the League Cup, only to lose 2-0 to Tottenham Hotspur at Wembley.

League appearances:
Lochhead 19, Graydon 13, Anderson 10, Vowden 10, B. Riach 9, Hamilton 7, McMahon 5, Aitken 4, N. Riach 2, Little 1, Nicholl 1, Ross 1, opponents 3 (May, Wrexham; Cross, Port Vale; Jackson, Torquay United). **Total: 85.**

Champions — and a honour well deserved, as Villa powered their way through the season, chalking up 70 points from 32 wins and six draws. Highlights were that at Oldham where Lochhead hit a fine hat-trick, and 5-1 at home to Torquay.

Villa won the title with five points to spare, registering these set of figures:

P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts	
Home	23	20	1	2	45	10	41
Away	23	12	5	6	40	22	29
Total	46	32	6	8	85	32	70

Their average home League gate was almost 32,000 — bettered by only 11 other teams in the entire Football League. A record Third Division crowd saw Villa's home win over Bournemouth — 48,110.

P Home 21 12 5 4 27 17 29
W Away 21 6 9 6 24 30 21
D Total 42 18 14 10 51 47 50

FOR THE RECORD

SEASON 1971-72

	H	A
Division Three	2-0	4-0
Barnsley	4-1	1-1
Blackburn Rovers	3-2	0-2
Bolton Wanderers	2-1	0-3
Bournemouth	3-0	1-0
Bradford City	2-0	1-2
Brighton	2-1	1-0
Bristol Rovers	1-0	4-0
Chesterfield	1-0	1-0
Halifax Town	0-1	1-1
Mansfield Town	1-0	3-0
Notts County	1-0	3-0
Oldham Athletic	1-0	6-0
Plymouth Argyle	3-1	2-3
Port Vale	2-0	4-4
Rochdale	2-0	0-1
Rotherham United	1-2	2-0
Shrewsbury Town	3-0	1-1
Swansea	2-0	2-1
Torquay United	5-1	1-2
Tranmere Rovers	2-0	1-0
Walsall	0-0	1-1
Wrexham	2-0	2-0
York City	1-0	1-0

League appearances:
Graydon 45, Lochhead 45, Aitken 43, Anderson 40, B. Riach 40, Turnbull 37, Wright 31, Vowden 30, Cubbes 29, Hamilton 25, Curtis 24, Ross 17, Bradley 16, Hughes 16, McMahon 15, Nicholl 13, Tiler 13, Gregory 8, Brown 8, Beard 4, Gibson 3, N. Riach 2, Crugden 1, B. Little 1. Subs: 11. **Total: 506 + 11.**

League scorers:
Lochhead 19, Graydon 13, Anderson 10, Vowden 10, B. Riach 9, Hamilton 7, McMahon 5, Aitken 4, N. Riach 2, Little 1, Nicholl 1, Ross 1, opponents 3 (May, Wrexham; Cross, Port Vale; Jackson, Torquay United). **Total: 85.**

Villa started this campaign off by going seven League games without defeat, and immediately there was talk of promotion and Cup success. It was not to be. Villa struggled in the League and ended up in 14th position — seven points clear of the relegation zone! Their record was:

P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts	
Home	21	8	9	4	33	21	55
Away	21	5	6	10	15	24	61
Total	42	13	15	14	48	45	116

*Villa failed to score in 11 of their 21 away games this season.

SEASON 1972-73

	H	A
Division Two	0-0	1-1
Blackpool	1-1	2-1
Bolton Wanderers	1-0	3-0
Bristol City	2-2	1-0
Cardiff City	5-0	1-0
Carlisle United	2-1	0-2
Crystal Palace	2-1	0-0
Fulham	1-1	0-1
Hull City	1-1	1-1
Luton Town	0-1	0-1
Middlesbrough	1-1	0-0
Millwall	3-1	2-1
Nottingham Forest	1-1	0-2
Notts County	1-1	0-2
Orient	2-2	1-1
Oxford United	2-0	1-2
Portsmouth	4-1	0-2
Preston NE	2-0	0-0
Sheffield Wednesday	1-0	4-2
Sunderland	1-2	0-2
Swindon Town	1-1	0-1
WBA	1-3	0-2

League appearances:
Ross 42, Cubbes 41, Nicholl 40, Aitken 38, B. Little 36, Hamilton 30, Gidman 30, Brown 24, Evans 24, Hockey 24, Morgan 21, McMahon 20, Graydon 19, B. Riach 18, Vowden 15, Robson 12, Turnbull 10, Leonard 7, McDonald 4, N. Riach 3, Stark 2, Campbell 1, Findlay 1. Subs: 18. **Total: 462 + 18.**

League scorers:
Graydon 8, Little 8, B. Riach 7, Morgan 5, McMahon 5, Evans 3, Hamilton 3, Aitken 2, Vowden 2, Hockey 1, Campbell 1, Leonard 1, opponents 2 (Woodruff, Cardif, Deere, Hull City). **Total: 48.**

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Total	42	13	15	14	48	45	116

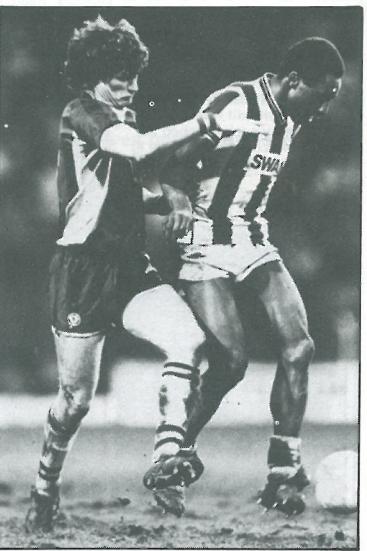
A fine performance from Villa as they just failed to jump from the Third to the First Division in successive seasons. They were a long way behind the Champions Burnley (62pts) and the runners-up QPR (61pts) but this record was certainly a creditable one for the Villa who finished in third spot:

P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts	
Home	21	12	5	4	27	17	29
Away	21	6	9	6	24	30	21
Total	42	18	14	10	51	47	50



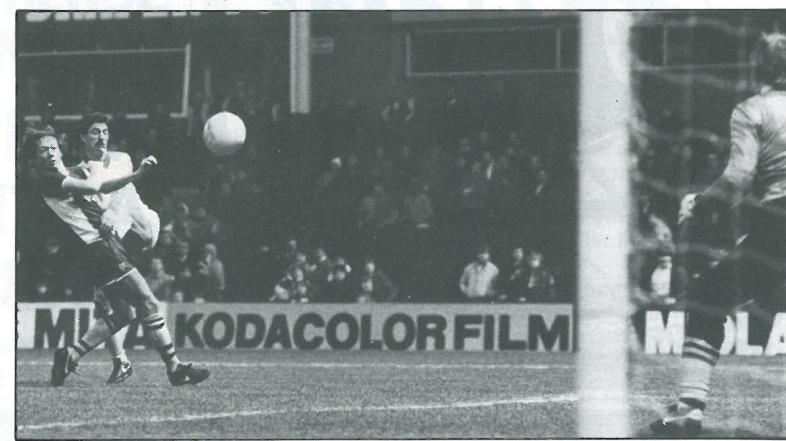
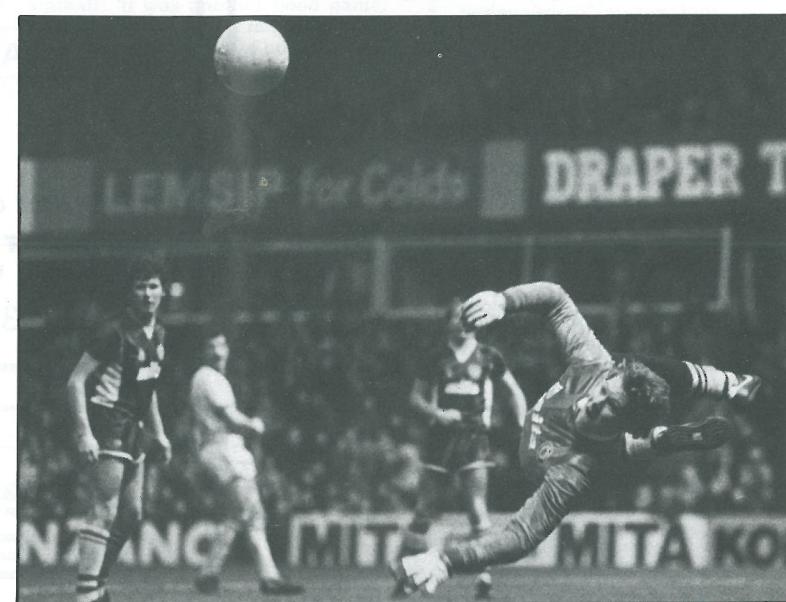
VILLA'S LEAGUE RECORD — COMPILED BY TONY MATTHEWS

ACTION



Action highlights from two of Villa's recent matches . . . At the Hawthorns Villa took the lead against Albion through Gary Shaw (far left) but Albion snatched the points with three very late goals. Our other pictures from that game show (above) former teammate Ken McNaught and Peter Withe in aerial battle and (left) Allan Evans closing in on Gary Thompson.

Against Liverpool it was Villa that took the lead with a goal from Dennis Mortimer (top right) but a hat-trick by Ian Rush took the points to Anfield. Rush's second goal — a superb volley — is pictured right and our centre right picture shows Nigel Spink making a spectacular save from Graeme Souness' curling shot.



LATE BURST BY ALBION STEALS POINTS FROM VILLA

VILLA TAKE LEAD BUT LIVERPOOL WIN

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COACH REPORT

The postponement of last week's home fixture against Sheffield Wednesday robbed the Central League team of an opportunity to go to the top of the table for the first time this season.

An unbeaten run of five games — four wins and a draw — had taken us level with pre-Christmas pacemakers, Everton, but Liverpool then took their chance to grab the lead by two points above Villa and their Merseyside neighbours.

The top three opened up a gap over the rest of the field and Everton were pulled back when they lost four games out of five after starting the season with 10 consecutive wins. Today, we are due at Liverpool in a match which could have a vital bearing on the Championship.

In our last away game, we went to Old Trafford and repeated the first team's success there by winning 2-1. Andy Greenhalgh got the first goal when he flicked in a cross from Paul Birch at the near post and Tony Dorigo put us two up by following up a shot from Andy Blair which rebounded from the goalkeeper.

'We won there last year, so it seems to becoming a good ground for us', said coach Bill Shorthouse. 'Although the conditions were difficult in a strong wind, we played very well and I don't think United could complain about the result.'

'They had a penalty which seemed an injustice, but Mervyn Day saved it. Unfortunately, he hurt himself in the back during the first-half and but for the injury, I'm sure he would have stopped the goal that United did score.'

Saturday 14th January 1984
Central League
MANCHESTER UTD RES 1
ASTON VILLA RES 2
Scorers: Greenhalgh, Dorigo.
Villa: Day, Jones, Dorigo, Norton,
Bradley, Glover, Blair, Birch,
Greenhalgh, Kerr, Palin. Sub:
Hutchings.

Forty-eight hours later, we were back at Villa Park for a game against Nottingham Forest. With Mervyn Day

ruled out by his knock at Old Trafford, Kevin Poole made his first Central League appearance of the season.

For a long time, it seemed that we would make it five wins in a row, but despite two good goals by Paul Kerr, Forest equalised twice, snatching their point with a goal in the last minute.

But Bill Shorthouse was again delighted with the standard of Villa's football. 'It was another good game,' he said. 'Forest had a fair side on the night and we had one of our youngest, but we just didn't have the luck going for us when they scored.'



PAUL KERR
Two goals against Forest

'Dean Glover was trying to put a centre out for a corner when he put the first into his own net and their last-kick equaliser was tough on Kevin Poole.'

'It followed a lot of pressure from a corner. We got the ball out two or three times, but next time, their right-back shot from just outside the box. Kevin had the ball covered, but it struck a divot and bounced over his body.'

Monday 16th January 1984
Central League
ASTON VILLA RES 2
NOTTINGHAM FOREST RES 2
Scorer: Kerr (2).
Villa: Poole, Jones, Dorigo,
Norton, Bradley, Glover, Blair,
Birch, Greenhalgh (sub: Walker),
Kerr, Palin.

CHALLENGING THE LEADERS

DIARY

Saturday 7th January

• A 1-1 FA Cup draw with Norwich, Peter Withe equalising an opening goal by ex-Villa man John Deehan.

Monday 9th January

• Fourth round Cup draw pairs winner of replay at Norwich with either Fulham or Spurs. Ormsby and Deacy out of Carrow Road replay through suspensions. Williams and Gibson are still unfit.

Tuesday 10th January

• Birmingham-born Dean Glover lined up for first team debut as centre-half replacement for Ormsby.

Wednesday 11th January

• Catastrophe in the Cup — a 3-0 defeat at Norwich with depleted team.

Thursday 12th January

• Manager Tony Barton contemplates changes for local derby at The Hawthorns on Saturday.

Friday 13th January

• Williams and Gibson back in squad for The Hawthorns as Birch, Glover and Walker stand down. Alan Curbishley and Deacy also back in contention.

Saturday 14th January

• A 3-1 defeat at The Hawthorns after Gary Shaw had set up 1-0 lead.

Monday 16th January

• Manager and players look forward eagerly to the Milk Cup quarter-final against Norwich at Carrow Road with opportunity to gain revenge for FA Cup defeat.

Tuesday 17th January

• Stirring 2-0 win at Norwich to earn place in Milk Cup semi-final. Shaw and Paul Rideout score first half goals which keep Villa on course for honours.

Thursday 19th January

• Drawn against either Oxford United or Everton in Milk Cup semi-final. Shaw, Williams and Dennis Mortimer offered new contracts. Morty agrees to resign.

LUTON TOWN

BRIAN STEIN



Luton Town climbed a 25-year peak when they reached third place on Boxing Day. It was their most promising First Division position since 1957-58 — until four successive defeats dampeden their challenge to Liverpool and Manchester United.

But the apparent slump should be accompanied by a word of warning. Luton are rivaled only by Liverpool in terms of the best away record in the country.

They are the equal of the Champions with seven wins, and the only difference is that the Kenilworth Road club have not matched Liverpool's facility to draw three games. Luton have yet to draw on their travels and

have lost five times.

They have maintained a win-or-lose situation, ranging from the extremes of crashing 6-0 at Anfield in October to their current sequence of winning five of their last six engagements on opposition territory.

That would be the record of potential Champions but for Luton's more recent fallibility before their own supporters. Their home form is exactly the opposite since mid-November — five defeats and only one win.

The inconsistent pattern is said by some critics to be a reflection on Luton's open style. But manager David Pleat resisted the charge when defending his team's progressive style at Christmas-time.

In a programme article, he wrote: 'It was suggested to me in a local paper report that, "the naked truth is that the Hatters will never compete with the best while they stick out their chin and invite sucker punches." Well, provided we score more than the opposition, we will continue to stick our chins out. Sorry!'

The buccaneering spirit was evident when Luton stormed into the First Division last season. Only four clubs beat their total of 65 goals, but they had the worst defensive record while conceding 84 goals — an average of exactly two per game.

The outcome was a relegation struggle that had to be partly linked with the loss of England forward candidate Brian Stein, who played in only two matches because of injury after hitting 14 goals in 18 games.

Luton eventually survived in an emotion-charged atmosphere at Maine Road. They had to beat Manchester City — and did just that with a late goal from their Yugoslav substitute, Raddy Antic.

Mr Pleat, among the most highly-rated of the younger managers after six years with Luton, acknowledged that it was up to the club to show that they had learned the lessons of an arduous season.

With the exception of signing goalkeeper Les Sealey from Coventry City, he stuck with the squad which finished last season and was rewarded with a bright start which immediately put Luton among the front runners.

The side stayed together for the first nine League games, but Luton then ran into injury problems. Birmingham-born midfield man Frank Bunn was out for five weeks with a facial injury and David Moss, the goal-scoring left-winger, became a long-term absentee from mid-October onwards.

Consequently, Luton spent a long period when their line-up included only half of the players who clinched the Second Division Championship 20 months ago.

Former Villa goalkeeper Jake Findlay was replaced by Sealey and then went out on loan spells with Barnsley and Derby. Left-back Mark Aizlewood moved to Charlton and his successor, Richard Money, joined Portsmouth, leaving the position to Youth-team product Wayne Turner.

Clive Goodyear, who replaced the injured Mick Saxby during the promotion campaign, lost the No. 5 shirt last March when Paul Elliott arrived from Charlton for a six-figure fee. Elliott, still only 19, is rated among the best prospects in the country and was voted Young Player of the Month for last November.

Changes in midfield involved the advance of 21-year-old Bunn and the departure of Lil Fuccillo to Southend. Then, with Moss and Bunn injured, there were opportunities for two

teenagers — Ray Daniel, who was on loan at Gillingham earlier this season, and Gary Parker, who scored his first League goal at Wolverhampton a fortnight ago.

Up front, Mr Pleat adjusted the formula by bringing in the talented Paul Walsh from Charlton in time for Luton's return to the First Division. The young Londoner made a marvellous start with three hat-tricks in the League and signposted his international future by winning three full caps in Australia last summer.

Walsh, only just past his 21st birthday when he registered another hat-trick at Stoke this season, has carried his club partnership with Stein into the England Under-21 squad's qualification for the quarter-finals of the European Championship. They scored two goals each against Denmark last September and one each against Hungary a month later.

Mr Pleat's spending has topped £1m since he took over a modestly-placed Second Division team in January 1975. Two of his earliest signings remain as key figures in the back four.

Full-back Kirk Stephens cost only £5,000 from Nuneaton Borough and centre-back Mal Donaghy, who came from Larne for £20,000, has reached 25 full caps for Northern Ireland this season.

Brian Horton, the promotion-winning skipper who is 35 today (4th February), has given outstanding service since leaving Brighton, but as much as Luton have enjoyed success in the transfer market, they have been equally successful in developing their own players.

Ricky Hill, the London-born midfield man, probably represents the peak of their scouting success, having played for England last season, and other young players continue to come forward.

Mitchell Thomas has been displaying promise at full-back and Rob Johnson, who recovered from a serious knee injury, has edged his way into the first-team reckoning since an early-season loan spell at Lincoln.

The youngsters are giving Luton increasing cover against injuries, but there is also experience in the squad. Antic, at 34, is the most regular substitute and Trevor Aylott, a £55,000 signing from Millwall last season, has covered for the strikers and Moss.

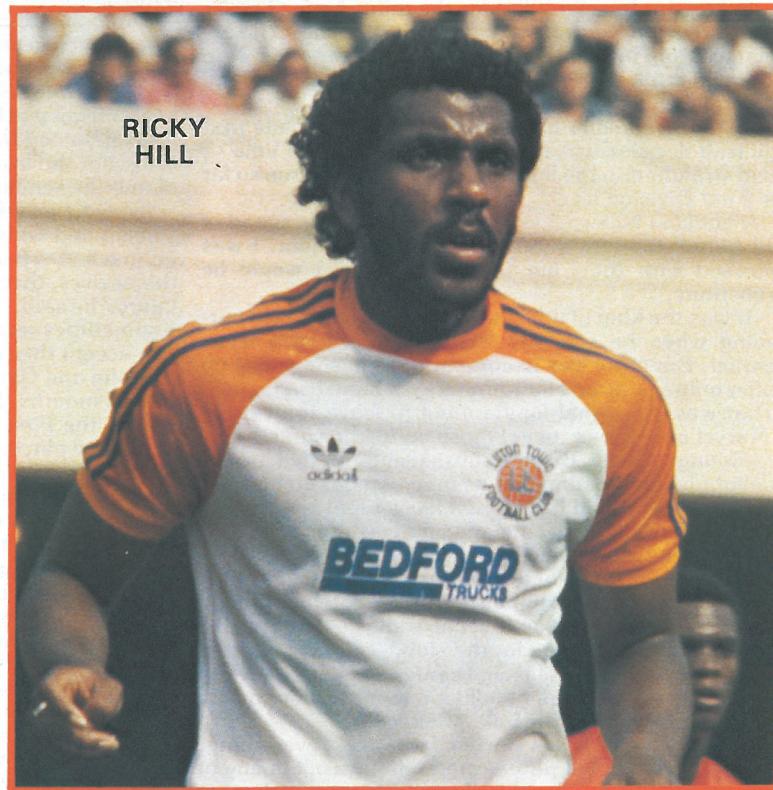
Now there is a new name — and a real tongue-twister, too — in the bidding for attacking places. Chukwuemeka Nwajiobi, a 24-year-old pharmacy graduate, was bought from Dulwich Hamlet for £5,000 in December and scored on his debut against Nottingham Forest in January.

Journalists might be pleased to know that the former University of Wales student is happy to abbreviate his first name to Emeka!

LUTON TOWN ROLL CALL

Player	Birthplace	Previous Clubs	Internationals	Signed
Raddy Antic	Yugoslavia	Sioboda, Partizan, Fenerbahce, Zaragoza	Yugoslavia	July 80
Trevor Aylott	Bermondsey	Chelsea, Barnsley, Millwall	—	Mar 83
Frank Bunn	Birmingham	—	—	* May 80
Ray Daniel	Luton	—	—	* Sept 82
Mal Donaghy	Belfast	Larne	Northern Ireland	June 78
Paul Elliott	Lewisham	Charlton	—	Mar 83
Clive Goodyear	Lincoln	—	—	* Oct 78
Ricky Hill	Paddington	—	England	* May 76
Brian Horton	Hednesford	Walsall, Hednesford, Port Vale, Brighton	—	Aug 81
Rob Johnson	Bedford	—	—	* Aug 79
David Moss	Witney	Witney, Swindon	—	May 78
Emeka Nwajiobi	Nigeria	Dulwich	—	Dec 83
Gary Parker	Oxford	—	—	* May 83
Les Sealey	Bethnal Green	Coventry	—	Aug 83
Brian Stein	Cape Town	Edgware	—	* Oct 77
Kirk Stephens	Coventry	Nuneaton	—	June 78
Mitchell Thomas	Luton	—	—	* Aug 82
Wayne Turner	Luton	—	—	* April 78
Paul Walsh	Plumstead	Charlton	England	July 82

* Date signed full professional



Pictures by Gareth Owen

LUTON TOWN

FOCUS...

● EAMONN DEACY

Eamonn Deacy sacrificed a regular first team place when he rejected Derby County's bid to renew his loan at the Baseball Ground in December.

He knew the alternative was probably a return to reserve duty at Villa Park, yet he was prepared to gamble for what he described as 'one last bash at getting First Division football.'

The genial Irishman admits his reasoning was not based on any particular logic. He couldn't really see the door opening for him at Villa — but there was just a chance that something would turn up.

In fact, his love for Villa was the ruling force. 'I could have stayed at Derby, but I didn't see the point,' he explained. 'My heart and soul wouldn't have been in the job while time was running out on the last year of my contract with Villa.'

What he couldn't have guessed when he made that difficult decision was that he would go back to Villa — and straight into the first team for his longest run so far at First Division level.

'I couldn't believe it when I was named in a squad of 14 before the home game against West Ham. I was pleased with that, but I didn't imagine I would be substitute.'

It was the kind of opportunity that Eamonn was pursuing when he said his farewells to Derby a week earlier. But more was to come. Colin Gibson pulled up after only a quarter-of-an-hour with a hamstring strain. That was the signal for Eamonn to leave the bench. 'Marvellous, it was, to get on so early,' he smiled.

Manager Tony Barton subsequently added to his delight by nominating him as man of the match. 'That was nice, too,' said Eamonn. 'I knew I had played only because the club had so many injuries, but it meant so much to me after being out of things for so long.'

It was his first senior appearance since last year's FA Cup quarter-final at Highbury. And for a long time, he feared that the defeat by Arsenal would go in the record books as his last game for the club.

'At the start of the season, I came back determined to make one last attempt at fulfilling my ambition to play in the First Division for Villa,' he recalled.

'But when the season started, I was out of everything. I wasn't on the club photograph and I wasn't in any of the senior squads. Then I had a groin injury which stopped me playing even for the Reserves.'

'After that, I heard that I was up for sale. Maybe if Derby or another club could have put the money down, I would have been somewhere else by now.'

'But the loan move to Derby suited me. I would have listened to any offer of a full transfer, but I didn't go there thinking of a permanent move. I still wanted to play for Villa and going to Derby was a way of getting fit.'

'The games in the Second Division did me a power of

good. My confidence came on and I sharpened up better than if I had been playing a couple of matches in a month in the Reserves.'

Eamonn seemed to be something of a lucky mascot for The Rams. They were bottom but one with only eight points from 11 games when he went there, but they were out of the relegation zone after doubling their points total by the time he headed back to Birmingham.

'I guess I went there at the right time,' he added, with genuine regret that Derby have since slipped back into deeper trouble in a five-match losing run.

'I had a very good time there. Peter Taylor and Roy McFarland were great to me and I found it to be a smashing club, considering all the talk about the place. The fans were great, too, and I was amazed that the atmosphere was so good.'

Linking the games that Eamonn played at Derby with the six that followed immediately for Villa, they totalled up to more than two months' regular League action.

'That was very pleasing,' he said. 'I regarded each one as a bonus and I enjoyed them all.'

Perhaps the highlight was the televised fight-back against QPR. He played a vital part in both goals and was singled out by Jimmy Hill for praise for the way he battled for the ball in one of the play-backs showing a goal.

Eamonn promptly saw the other side of the coin when a recurrence of his groin problem ruled him out of the match at Southampton on the following Monday.

By the time he was fit, a one-game suspension closed in as a legacy of his dismissal for two bookings at Watford on Boxing Day. 'I suppose I felt I was unlucky at the time, but the last one was a clumsy tackle and I don't blame the sending-off for losing my place,' he said.

Indeed, he prefers to acknowledge the ability of Colin Gibson and Gary Williams for keeping him out of the full-back berths. 'Once players have established themselves, they tend to come back straightforward after injury,' he said. 'That happens at every club, and while it sometimes seems hard if the reserve has played well, I can accept the reasons.'

'Colin and Gary are two very good players. Over the last 12 months, I would rate them as consistent as any pair in the First Division and it's only right that they should be playing when they are available.'

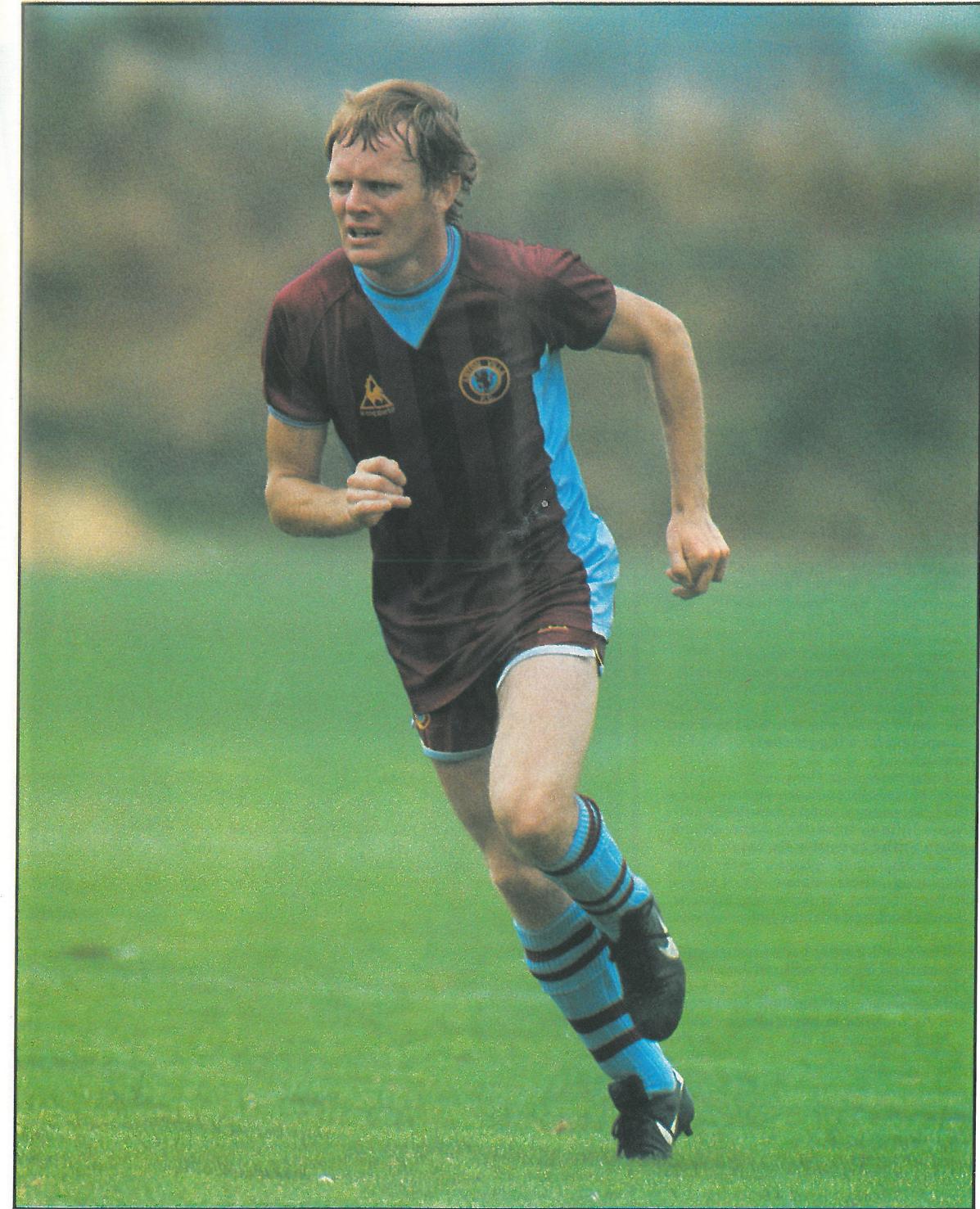
'If I go in the side, I regard my role as doing my job until one or the other is fit. Obviously, it doesn't do much for my ambition of playing in the First Division, but I've got my fingers crossed, even if my chances of a regular spot don't look great.'

But, whatever happens when his contract is up for renewal, Eamonn will treasure the happy memories of the five years since he joined Villa from Galway Rovers.

'I was very lucky in the championship year,' he says. 'It was only my second season, and considering we had virtually no injuries, I was fortunate to be always in the 12 or 13. I've enjoyed the European trips as well. The only match I actually played in was as substitute against Juventus. That was a great experience to play against all those stars just after they had won the World Cup.'

● **FACT FAULT . . .** Most of the soccer record books registered Eamonn for four substitute appearances in the championship year. They missed out a game at Middlesbrough in December 1980, so Eamonn's League record to date with Villa is 20 full matches and seven as substitute.

MIKE BEDDOW



EAMONN DEACY — 'EVERY GAME IS A BONUS FOR ME'

MEET MITA

• Aston Villa's place in the Big League of commercial activities was confirmed and strengthened two weeks ago by a message which flashed constantly into millions of homes.

That message, seen by spectators at the ground and by the massive 'Match of the Day' viewing audience when we played Liverpool, was just one word:

MITA.

No shirt sponsorship has ever been launched in such dramatic fashion. And it's doubtful if any company involving itself in this kind of promotion has ever been blessed with such instant recognition.

Mita (pronounced Meeta) are, as you now know, a Japanese based company specialising in the production of photocopiers. They are among the world leaders in this field and are competing for a bigger share of the UK market.

To achieve this they need what the market calls 'brand awareness', hence the agreement now reached with Aston Villa to have their name on our shirts at the cost of a six-figure sum.

By May our players will have displayed their name in London (several times), in Norwich, Ipswich, Sunderland and various points around the country.

There will hardly be a businessman left in the UK who will not know that Mita means photocopiers. That's the pulling power for football in general and Aston Villa in particular.

Mita discovered this earlier in the season when they involved themselves in some trackside advertising and other minor affairs. This led to their realising not merely that they wanted football but that they wanted Aston Villa. The club is happy to welcome them aboard.

Mita truly ARRIVED at Villa Park on the afternoon of the Liverpool game, when the stadium was buzzing with the excitement and anticipation of a big televised game.

Camera crews and technicians hustled around in company with Villa staff and part-times plus caterers, police and the rest when Mr Ishikawa (Managing Director of Mita Copystar UK Ltd) and Mr Dick Reitsma (Mita Europe) checked in.



• Opinions will vary slightly as to who looks best modelling a Villa shirt carrying the name of the new shirt sponsor, Mita. England international Gordon Cowans displays the change strip as Miss Aston Villa, Caz Carrington, demonstrates the normal claret and blue version. One thing is beyond argument, though Mita, who are among the world leaders in the business of photocopiers have found a way of getting their message across loud and clear.

Before, during and after the game they sampled the addictive flavour of football at one of the world's greatest club venues.

They toured the new stand, the smart offices, the executive boxes, the McGregor Suite, the directors guest room and the impressive boardroom itself.

Even when empty Villa Park has charisma. On big match days and nights the atmosphere is hypnotic. By the time Mr Ishikawa met the Press he was virtually one of us.

'I've been impressed with all we have seen,' he said. 'I'm just sorry we lost...' Note the 'we'. Said his colleague: 'Mita's policy is to support football internationally. We sponsor Haarlem in Holland and Como in Italy. Who knows, one day we might stage a Mita European Cup featuring only our own clubs.'

If they do they can stage the Final at Villa Park!

Villa Chairman Mr Doug Ellis, a front runner in the commercial soccer stakes, welcomed the link-up with equal enthusiasm.

'The value which business and football can derive from joint ventures has been a subject I have encouraged over a period of many years.'

'It is rewarding to know that a company of Mita's standing recognise that

their product can achieve greater awareness with Aston Villa as a vehicle.

'I have no doubt that our relationship will be a mutually fruitful one.'

There has been some suggestion that linking up in this way with a company of photocopiers causes conflict with the League's major sponsors, Canon.

This situation did, in fact, lead to the rather precise moment when, on the day of the Liverpool game, representatives of Canon were just leaving the boardroom as Mita's party walked in.

Aston Villa takes an entirely open-

minded view of all this. Our doors are known to be open to business and commercial interests. Sometimes those businesses will be in competition.

We regard that as healthy and if both Canon and Mita are a little better known as a result of the discussions then everyone wins. It demonstrates the pulling power of football and the supreme publicity value of soccer as a platform.

Consequently, we said welcome to 'Canon' when the League sponsorship was introduced. Now we say welcome to 'Mita'. That, perhaps, makes us copy-cats!



• Here's a toast to Aston Villa... And here's a toast to Mita... That's what business link-ups are all about, arrangements that suits all concerned. Villa Chairman Mr Doug Ellis joins with Mita representatives Mr Dick Reitsma (left) and Mr H. Ishikawa in a glass of bubbly to celebrate the launching of the shirt sponsorship deal.

PRESS VIEW

• Every Aston Villa supporter will have found a positive joy in reading the newspapers the day after the 2-0 win at Norwich had brought progress to the semi-finals of the Milk Cup.

Arriving as it did in the middle of a period of less enjoyable results and match reports the win at Carrow Road produced a rush of relief all round.

A sudden epidemic of Press discussion about the manager's future was effectively put to sleep by a team display which proved that little, if anything, is wrong at Villa Park.

Ex-Sports Argus writer and Villa News contributor Peter White enthused about the Milk Cup triumph in the Wolverhampton Express and Star the following day. He wrote:

'It was vintage Villa, as they ran, tackled and battled for every ball, never allowing Norwich to set into the dominant pattern they achieved during last week's FA Cup-tie.'

'Villa stuck to their task, rode their luck a little and the reward of a place in the semi-final was no more than they deserved.'

White also spotlighted an interesting situation regarding Paul Rideout when he appeared to be sent off early in the game as the referee pointed to the touchline.

As it transpired the referee Treford Mills (who always sounds as though he weaves curtain fabric) was merely sending Rideout to have a ring removed from his finger as a result of a recent directive from the League relating to the wearing of such trinkets.

In the *Guardian* David Lacey took a very light hearted view of the whole affair, injecting a welcome chuckle into the proceedings.

'Carrow Road began to chirrup optimistically at the thought that Villa might be reduced to 10 men. Rideout, having been cautioned for arguing at a free-kick, was then ordered off by the referee — but only to remove a ring from his finger.'

'There were signs of panic on the Villa bench when the offending item refused

to budge and amputation seemed to be the only answer. A length of protective plaster solved the problem.'

I shudder to think what David might have recommended had it been a stubborn necklace . . .

Villa's arrival in the semi-final prompted a rather sentimental reaction from John Pearson in the *Sunday Mercury*. He took the view that if Villa and Morty should arrive at Wembley together again it would be one of 'sport's lovely little fairy tales' in view of the fact that not too long ago his Villa days seemed numbered.

Pearson added that Mortimer had: ' . . . survived an ABC — or at least a BCD — of rival midfield players men in Bremner, Bullivant, Blair, . . . Craig, Cropley, Carrodus . . . Donovan.'

The Pearson column also took strong exception to recent criticisms of the manager and the club.

'Nothing short of disgraceful' was how it was described. 'They have played 35 matches in five months in pursuance of four trophies. They have crossed swords with some of the best teams in Europe and they still have a real chance of adding another honour to their impressive list.'

'Should Tony Barton succeed in capturing the Milk Cup it will be his third pot in just over two years.'

'There's many a manager could live with that sort of failure.'

As always in football (or nearly always), however, there is a banana skin around the next bend or in Villa's case a slippery pitch.

Here's how the *Daily Mail's* Ray Matts put it after the defeat by Liverpool, screened live by BBC on a special Friday night 'Match of the Day'.

'Torvill and Dean may be more practised in the art of performing on the sort of surface nature provided at Villa Park but even they would have had to admire the way Liverpool striker Ian Rush adapted to the ice.'

That's all we wish to say on the subject. It hurts too much already when you fall on your backside. Who wants to read about it?

JUST THE TICKET!

EVERTON

v

ASTON VILLA

Milk Cup
Semi-Final, First Leg
Goodison Park
15th February 1984
Kick-off 7.30 pm

Seats: £4.20, £4
Standing: £2

This match is all ticket. At the time of going to print we still have a number of seats and standing tickets still available. The ticket office will remain open after today's match until 5.15 pm and then on Monday and Tuesday of next week from 9.15 am until 4.45 pm and on Wednesday from 9.15 am until 1 pm after which time any unsold tickets will have to be returned to Everton FC.

ASTON VILLA

v

EVERTON
Milk Cup
Semi-Final, Second Leg
Villa Park
22nd February 1984
Kick-off 7.30 pm

Seats: £4.50, £4, £3.50
Standing: Adults £2,
Juveniles & OAPs £1

This match is not all ticket although Everton have been allocated to the Witton End doors R & S for their standing supporters. Our seating Season Ticket Holders are reminded that they should present Voucher D from the rear of their Season Ticket Books at their normal turnstile on the evening of the match. Seats not held by Season Ticket Holders will be on sale after today's match and throughout next week.

SIDELINES



THANKS MEMOREX

Memorex, producers of the 'World's most memorable Flexible Disc' achieved for themselves a most memorable soccer night when they sponsored the televised match against Liverpool.

The range of facilities at Villa Park afforded them the opportunity to involve company representatives in rather more than viewing the match itself.

An enjoyable meal with quality catering and service, a look around behind the scenes, a 'thank-you' presentation from the club out on the pitch, and finally the handing over of a souvenir autographed ball to the raffle winner.

All Villa can say now is 'Thanks for the Memorex . . .'

Pictures show • Villa director Mr Harry Kartz presenting gift and pendant to managing director Mr John Clarke and colleague Richard Watson, their national sales manager; • and the pre-match dinner party.



McGREGOR SUITE . . . CATERING FOR YOU!

In naming a restaurant the 'McGregor Suite' Aston Villa were well aware of the responsibilities entailed.

Romantics could well claim that the legendary figure of yesteryear, an influential power behind both Villa Park and the Football League, looks down to ensure that all is well under the banner of his name.

William McGregor, would it is hoped, approve of the McGregor Suite, taken over recently by the club from private caterers, to run on a day-to-day basis in conjunction with professional help and guidance.

The very air of the McGregor Suite is laden with the history of football with its photographs, memorabilia, panelled walls, beams and traditional comforts. To this is added a tasteful and varied menu at realistic prices, cordon bleu standard cuisine, fast and efficient service and a touch of quality to suit all tastes. It has been said that, for Villa fans, a meal in the McGregor Suite is like eating in a museum but with five-star catering. Certainly it is the flagship of Villa's entire catering operation and thus standards are protected in every way.

The McGregor Suite is not a private club or exclusive relic, available only to the minority. Indeed, from noon until 2 pm each day it is open to the general public simply for an enjoyable lunch or for private or business entertaining.

This means that YOU are welcome. And you . . . and you. There are still thousands of Aston Villa fans who have never sampled the pleasure of a drink and a meal in the McGregor Suite whilst absorbing the atmosphere of their club. There is no time like the present to correct this gap in one's Aston Villa education.

ATTENDANCES AND DIVISION ONE TABLE 1983-84

Home League Games		Home						Away					
Highest	Average	P	W	D	L	F	A	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
45,122	30,847	Liverpool	24	7	3	2	23	7	7	3	2	17	12
56,121	43,118	Manchester United	24	9	1	3	29	14	4	6	1	15	13
29,692	18,000	Nottingham Forest	24	9	2	2	29	11	5	1	5	16	18
32,555	22,976	West Ham United	24	8	2	2	27	11	5	2	5	11	13
27,140	15,550	QPR	23	8	2	2	22	7	4	1	6	18	15
26,750	17,811	Southampton	24	8	2	2	17	9	3	4	5	11	13
17,275	12,791	Coventry City	24	5	3	3	16	11	5	5	3	17	17
21,453	13,789	Luton Town	24	5	2	5	24	19	7	0	5	16	17
39,318	22,986	Aston Villa	24	9	2	2	22	15	1	4	6	15	23
25,679	17,631	Norwich City	25	6	4	3	20	13	3	4	5	10	16
42,704	27,897	Arsenal	25	5	3	5	21	17	5	1	6	20	18
45,032	33,948	Tottenham	24	4	3	4	16	17	5	3	5	22	23
21,056	15,525	Watford	24	5	3	4	23	21	4	1	7	17	20
22,658	16,628	Everton	24	4	5	3	7	7	4	2	6	9	18
26,826	16,539	Sunderland	23	5	4	3	17	11	3	2	6	8	21
25,139	15,832	WBA	24	6	1	4	16	12	3	2	8	12	24
26,185	17,945	Ipswich Town	24	6	2	4	21	13	2	3	7	12	20
24,409	14,724	Leicester City	25	5	4	3	19	18	2	4	7	19	25
19,016	13,259	Birmingham City	24	5	0	6	11	10	2	4	7	11	19
11,031	9,010	Notts County	24	3	3	5	19	22	2	2	9	13	25
23,704	13,459	Stoke City	25	4	3	5	15	18	0	5	8	7	26
26,249	13,618	Wolverhampton	24	2	5	6	12	22	2	0	9	9	30

RESERVE FIXTURES

Date	V	Opposition	F	A
Aug 31	H	Stoke City	2	-1
Sept 8	A	Burnley	0	-1
Sept 17	H	Manchester United	1	-1
Sept 20	A	Sheffield Wednesday	4	-2
Oct 1	H	Liverpool	1	-3
Oct 5	H	Leeds United	2	-0
Oct 12	A	Blackburn Rovers	1	-1
Nov 9	A	Bolton Wanderers	4	-0
Nov 16	A	Sunderland	4	-1
Nov 23	H	Sheffield United	2	-1
Dec 7	H	Everton	0	-1
Dec 14	A	Newcastle United	2	-3
Dec 21	H	Burnley	3	-0
Jan 7	A	West Bromwich Albion	2	-0
Jan 11	H	Derby County	1	-0
Jan 14	A	Manchester United	2	-1
Jan 16	H	Nottingham Forest	2	-2
Feb 4	A	Liverpool		
Feb 8	H	Blackburn Rovers		
Feb 22	A	Nottingham Forest		
Feb 29	H	Bolton Wanderers		
Mar 6	A	Derby County		
Mar 13	A	Leeds United		
Mar 21	A	Stoke City		
Mar 28	H	Sunderland		
April 4	A	Sheffield United		
April 11	H	West Bromwich Albion		
April 17	A	Everton		
April 25	H	Newcastle United		
TBA		Sheffield Wed (H)		

RESERVE APPEARANCES 83-84

	A	G		A	G
Belford	1	—	Kennedy	2	1
Birch	5	1	Kerr	14	7
Blair	10	3	McMahon S.	1	—
Bradley	12	—	Morley	6	1
Bremner	6	—	Norton	14	5
Curbishley	3	—	Obi	8	1
Day	15	—	Palin	9	1
Deacy	4	—	Poole	1	—
Dorigo	11	1	Rideout	6	3
Geddis	4	2	Robinson	1	—
Gibson	1	—	Shaw	2	1
Glover	16	1	Shipley	4	—
Greenhalgh	5	2	Walker	11	2
Jones	14	—	Williams	1	1

MID. INTERMEDIATE 1983-84

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Nott'm Forest	16	9	5	2	29	13	23
Leicester	18	8	7	3	38	28	23
Shrewsbury	16	9	4	3	40	18	22
Notts County	16	8	6	2	26	16	22
Coventry	18	9	3	6	33	21	21
Wolves	18	6	6	6	27	21	18
Derby County	15	6	4	5	31	25	16
Birmingham	16	6	3	7	41	36	15
Aston Villa	18	3	9	6	27	33	15
Stoke	16	6	3	7	25	34	15
WBA	15	3	6	6	21	30	12
Mansfield	15	5	1	9	19	26	11
Walsall	15	2	4	9	16	48	8
Port Vale	16	3	1	12	19	43	7

FIRST TEAM RECORD

Date	V	Opposition	F	A	Att.	Pos.
Aug 27	H	West Bromwich Albion	4	3	29,522	—
Aug 29	H	Sunderland	1	0	20,390	—
Sep 3	A	Queens Park Rangers	1	2	16,922	8
Sep 7	A	Nottingham Forest	2	2	16,363	—
Sep 10	H	Norwich City	1	0	18,887	6
Sep 14	A	V. Guimaraes (UEFA 1-1L)	0	1	30,000	—
Sep 17	A	Liverpool	1	2	34,246	8
Sep 24	H	Southampton	1	0	21,209	6
Sep 28	H	V. Guimaraes (UEFA 1-2L)	5	0	23,732	—
Oct 1	A	Luton Town	0	1	12,747	11
Oct 4	A	Portsmouth (MC 2-1L)	2	2	18,484	—
Oct 15	H	Birmingham City	1	0	39,318	8
Oct 19	A	Moscow Spartak (UEFA 2-1L)	2	2	50,000	—
Oct 23	A	Wolverhampton Wanderers	1	1	13,202	9
Oct 26	H	Portsmouth (MC 2-2L)	3	2	20,898	—
Oct 29	H	Arsenal	2	6	23,678	14
Nov 2	H	Moscow Spartak (UEFA 2-2L)	1	2	29,511	—
Nov 5	A	Manchester United	2	1	45,077	11
Nov 9	H	Manchester City (MC 3)	3	0	23,922	—
Nov 12	H	Stoke City	1	1	19,272	8
Nov 19	H	Leicester City	3	1	19,024	6
Nov 26	A	Notts County	2	5	8,960	9
Nov 30	A	West Bromwich A. (MC 4)	2	1	31,114	—
Dec 3	H	West Ham United	1	0	21,297	7
Dec 10	A	Everton	1	1	15,810	10
Dec 17	H	Ipswich Town	4	0	16,548	7
Dec 26	A	Watford	2	3	18,226	9
Dec 27	H	Tottenham Hotspur	0	0	30,125	9
Dec 31	H	Queens Park Rangers	2	1	19,978	7
Jan 2	A	Southampton	2	2	18,963	7
Jan 7	H	Norwich City (FAC 3)	1	1	21,454	—
Jan 11	A	Norwich City (FAC 3R)	0	3	16,420	—
Jan 19	A	Port Vale	2	1	20,399	8
Jan 26	A	Leicester City (MC5)	2	0	21,568	—
Jan 20	H	Liverpool	1	3	19,566	8
Feb 4	H	Luton Town				
Feb 8	A	Everton (MC SF 1L)				
Feb 11	A	Norwich City				
Feb 15	A	Everton (MC SF 1L)				
Feb 18	A	Arsenal				
Feb 22	H	Everton (MC SF 2L)				
Feb 25	H	Wolverhampton W.				
Feb 28	H	Notts County				
Mar 5	A	West Ham United				
May 7	H	Everton				
May 12	A	Ipswich Town				

RESULTS · ATTENDANCES · APPEARANCES · GOALSCORERS

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Spink	Williams	Gibson	Evans ¹	Ormsby ¹	Mortimer	Curbishley	Shaw ¹	Withe	McMahon	Walters ¹ </td	

Big on making it small.



CANOFILER 900

Canon MICROGRAPHICS

Airport House, Purley Way, Croydon CR0 0XZ

YOUTH REPORT

The January freeze-up put the Youth team's fixtures into cold storage for a fortnight after they had played their previous Midland Intermediate League fixture in a gale at Bodmoor Heath.

Conditions were so bad for the visit of Port Vale that coach Brian Little even raised the possibility of calling off the game during a pre-match chat with the referee.

'It was obvious that it was going to be a farce,' he said. 'It was really desperate at the training ground that morning, but once the referee had started, there was no way he could stop.'

Port Vale, with a bigger, stronger and more experienced side, were probably better equipped to withstand the buffeting from the wind and they eventually took the points with a 3-1 win.

'Occasionally, there was a little lull in the wind and, in those spells, there was no doubt that we played the superior football,' said Brian. 'But, at the end of the day, they had that extra strength which counted. They had two or three players of recent first-team experience, but we had a fairly young side.'

'Our lads couldn't control the ball against the wind, but it was good experience for them. The way the League is, with most sides including Reserve players, we cannot hope to be consistently successful, but the main thing is that we are giving our young players a good grounding.'

'There was an example of what I mean when I went to watch Derby playing in the FA Youth Cup. To be honest, they looked a poor side, yet whenever we play them in the League, it's always against most of their Reserves.'

'We prefer to use Saturday morning games for our apprentices and some schoolboys. We think we are going about things in the right way because results are not as important as the

value of the kids learning their trade. 'If a team wants to play older players against us, we feel we are going to give our lads experience in those games. Obviously, no-one likes to lose and it can upset the young lads, but we still feel our policy is the right one.'

Saturday 14th January 1984
Midland Intermediate League
ASTON VILLA 1
PORT VALE 3
Scorer: Howell.
Villa: Poole, Giles, Gallacher,
Hellin (sub: Vacanti), English,
McKenzie, O'Connell, Mitchell,
McMahon, Howell, Daley.

Andy Greenhalgh, the 18-year-old Youth team striker, is now on a full professional contract. 'He has done well and because of his performances, he has got a contract,' says Brian.

'He is still finding it a little difficult when he steps up to Reserve level, but he has the right build and he heads the ball well. Basically, he has everything to do well.'

Central defender Matt Hellin was with the Welsh Youth squad last week. 'It was good experience for him and nice that he was recognised,' added Brian. 'If he gets his feet under the door this year, he will be available again for Youth internationals next season.'

Mark Burke, our young forward from Birmingham who is on a Schoolboy registration, has been selected for the England Schools Under-15 squad. He was due to play in a trial at Lilleshall today and hopefully, he will win his first caps in next month's games against Scotland and Northern Ireland.

• The Southern Junior Floodlit Cup-tie against Norwich City was again postponed last week because of snow at Villa Park. We now hope to play that game here on Monday 20th February (7 pm).

EXPERIENCE IS WHAT MATTERS

TRAVELLERS CLUB . . .

MILK CUP
Semi-Final, First Leg

Wednesday 15th February

Kick-off 7.30 pm

EVERTON

v ASTON VILLA

Fare £4.10 members
Fare £4.60 non-members

Depart Aston Villa Leisure Centre 4 pm

Saturday 11th February

NORWICH CITY
v ASTON VILLA

Fare £5.50

Depart Aston Villa Leisure Centre 9.30 am

Bookings now being taken at the Villa Pools Office between the hours of 9.30 am to 4.45 pm

Seats cannot be guaranteed less than 48 hours prior to each away game.

For further information please phone 021-328-2246.

ROAD ROUTE TO EVERTON

Supplied by the RAC
M6 North to Junction 21a.
M62 towards Liverpool.
Leave M62 at Junction 6.
Follow M57 to Junction 2.
Follow A580 towards Liverpool.
Continue to Walton Hall Avenue.

Continue to Walton's Lane.
Everton on right.

SIDELINES



Eric Houghton, one of the greatest names in the history of Aston Villa receives a commemorative plaque to mark the opening of the suite which now bears his name in the North Stand.

And the ever cheerful Eric is keeping distinguished company as the award is made by club chairman Mr Doug Ellis. Mr Houghton was one of the fiercest strikers of a ball in the game until just after the War.

Afterwards that role was taken over by the genial fellow on his left Bobby Charlton who was at the Liverpool game to give his comments before the BBC Match of the Day cameras.

Seventy-three-year-old Eric, now a senior vice-president has served Villa as a player, manager and director and is still always on hand to assist as required. The 'Eric Houghton Suite' is a 14-seater Executive Box in the North Stand.

Houghton's stock-in-trade was a left-foot that hammered unstoppable penalties and free-kicks plus power and speed down the wings. These were rather different skills to those displayed by Robert Walters who gave such a spellbinding exhibition of ball juggling on the pitch before the game and at half-time.

Eric, who can give Robert more than half a century in age, was clearly delighted to make a presentation to the talented young man as a momento of the evening his skills 'went public'.

Since his exhibition at Villa Park, Robert has been sponsored by Sports Projects, the Birmingham-based company that produce Villa's match programme, and with their help he is preparing to make an attempt on the World record for ball juggling of 12 hours. Last Monday at the Aston Villa Leisure Centre Robert achieved a personal best of seven hours during practice!



VILLA 60's CLUB

Candlelight, sparkling wine, good conversation . . . and an Xmas dinner with turkey, pud and mince pies.

Fifty members of the Villa 60's Club enjoyed just that at the Sports and Leisure Centre to confirm what a worthwhile organisation it has become.

After the meal, cooked by Dot Bennett and Pat Hart, the guests were entertained by children from Fenton Junior school Erdington. Volunteers to assist with the washing up included centre manager Mike Smith.



BOARDROOM SPONSOR

No door is locked at Villa Park in answering the needs of sponsors . . . no, not even the Boardroom.

Mr Roger Gambarini and his colleagues and guests of Abacus Office Equipment, are seen preparing to enjoy their pre-match feast at the Boardroom table before the Liverpool game.

Abacus are distributors of equipment supplied by Canon the League sponsors. Among their guests was Len Ashurst the Cardiff City manager.

GRAND WINNER

Certainly not a rip-off . . .

It's a rub-off and a darned good flutter, too.

Mr M. Phipps was a winner of a cheque for £1,000 in the Villa lottery. To prove it here he is out on the pitch receiving a rather large version from Gordon Cowans. Not bad for a 25p stake!

Also on the picture is Liverpool's ex-Coventry defender Gary Gillespie handing over the agent's commission to Villa lottery manager Trevor McGuffog who passed it on to the agency who sold the winning ticket, Golden Hind.

They were more than happy to receive the 10 per cent, a most useful sum of £100. It just goes to prove that not only does it pay to buy Villa lottery tickets.

It pays to SELL them, too.



PLAY GOLD STRIKE
in tonight's Evening Mail and Sports Argus

LINE-UP

ASTON VILLA 0:0 LUTON TOWN

NIGEL SPINK	1	LES SEALEY
GARY WILLIAMS	2	KIRK STEPHENS
COLIN GIBSON	3	MICHAEL THOMAS
ALLAN EVANS	4	BRIAN HORTON
<i>BREMNER</i> BRENDAN ORMSBY	5	PAUL ELLIOTT
DENNIS MORTIMER	6	MAL DONAGHY
<i>WALTERS</i> DES BREMNER	7	GARY PARKER
GARY SHAW	8	BRIAN STEIN
<i>RIDEOUT</i> PETER WITHE	9	PAUL WALSH
STEVE McMAHON	10	TREVOR AYLOTT
ALAN CURBISHLEY	11	FRANK BUNN
<i>WALKER</i>		GOODYEARS

REFEREE: Mr ROGER DILKES – Mossley
 Linesmen: Mr W. K. Burge, Mid Glamorgan (Red Flag)
 Mr J. Ball (Yellow Flag)



Today's matchball has been sponsored by:

CHEQUERS
The Health Centre
 189 HAGLEY ROAD, EDGBASTON
 Telephone: 454 4226

mitre Gives you an unfair advantage

**ASTON VILLA
 VOUCHER 83-4**

v Luton Town
 4th February 1984

VILLA VOUCHERS
 ARE VALUABLE

19

VILLA CUB MATCH MASCOT

Barry Gibson is today's match mascot. Barry lives in Sutton Coldfield and attends Wylde Green First and Middle School. Just nine-years-old, Barry doesn't have time for any hobbies, other than football.

SCORECHECK

CANON LEAGUE

DIVISION ONE

Arsenal v QPR

Everton v Notts County

Ipswich v Coventry

Leicester v Birmingham

Manchester Utd v Norwich

Nott'm Forest v Tottenham

Sunderland v Liverpool

Watford v WBA

West Ham v Stoke

Wolves v Southampton

DIVISION TWO

Barnsley v Cardiff

Blackburn v Sheffield Wed.

Carlisle v Derby

Charlton v Brighton

Chelsea v Huddersfield

C. Palace v Middlesbrough

Grimsby v Manchester City

Leeds v Shrewsbury

Oldham v Cambridge

Portsmouth v Newcastle

DIVISION THREE

Bournemouth v Lincoln

Bolton v Bristol Rovers

Brentford v Gillingham

Hull v Wigan

Newport v Rotherham

Orient v Wimbledon

Oxford v Preston

Plymouth v Burnley

Port Vale v Walsall

Sheffield Utd v Millwall

DIVISION FOUR

Aldershot v Mansfield

Blackpool v York

Bristol City v Hereford

Chester v Colchester

Chesterfield v Northampton

Darlington v Reading

Doncaster v Torquay

Halifax v Wrexham

Peterborough v Bury

Rochdale v Swindon

