

ASTON VILLA

NEWS &
RECORD
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BARCLAYS



Saturday 9th March 1991
BARCLAYS LEAGUE DIVISION ONE
ASTON VILLA v LUTON TOWN

ASTON VILLA F.C.

mita



WELCOME BACK

It's been so long since we last had a home game that it's almost like the start of a new season, so what better time to have a new team group picture taken?

The line-up for 1991 includes a couple of new faces on the left of the back row in Peter Withe and Neil Cox and of course is minus Paul Birch who moved to Wolves in January.



Back row (left to right): Peter Withe (Coach), Neil Cox, Andy Comyn, Lee Butler, Kent Nielsen, Nigel Spink, Ian Ormondroyd, Paul McGrath and Dave Richardson (Assistant Manager).

Middle row: Dennis Booth, Derek Mountfield, Gareth Williams, Dwight Yorke, Tony Cascarino, Mark Blake, Ivo Stas, Gordon Cowans and Jim Walker (Physiotherapist).

Front row: Tony Daley, Nigel Callaghan, Bernie Gallacher, David Platt, Dr Jozef Venglos (Manager), Stuart Gray, Chris Price and Kevin Gage.

There has been quite a considerable gap since our last home game and in that time I have found myself involved in newspaper controversies not of my choosing.

This does not bother me very much because I understand that the press have to find topics to write about each day. The only thing that does concern me slightly is that our supporters should always understand the true situation.

In the case of Graham Taylor and his comments on BRMB I am quite sure that he was intending to make only constructive observations.

Graham has, himself, explained that he merely pointed out in answer to a question that, because of the uncertainty of his own future at the end of last season followed by a period when John Ward was in temporary charge and then by the arrival of a manager from overseas requiring a period of adjustment, there had been some delay in planning.

He has nothing but friendly feelings towards Aston Villa but if asked a question he is free to give an honest answer.

As for my giving an 'angry' reaction this was simply not the case. Those who deal with me will know it is not my style at all. As a matter of fact I did not hear the broadcast so could hardly have been upset by it!

I believe that all things should be dealt with in a friendly, sporting manner and I do feel it is a little unfair when I am reported as saying things that I have not said.

There has also been a good deal of publicity given to those players who are due to renew contracts this summer. This situation is quite normal and common to all clubs where individual negotiations with players have to take place.

These negotiations are underway and it is far too early yet for anyone to say exactly how they are likely to be concluded.

However, I have no arguments with the press. We maintain a very good relationship despite some of their unfavourable headlines.

A far more important subject is that of our achieving the necessary results up to the end of the season to finish as high as possible in the League. This is my one major objective at all times, supporters can be assured of that. Losing to Sheffield United last week was obviously a setback after achieving a draw at Nottingham Forest.



UP FRONT

WITH
JOZEF VENGLOS

This has made it very important for us to get things right today. We have been very conscious of this in our build-up to the visit of Luton.

There is a collection of clubs in a similar situation near the bottom of the table and we firmly believe that, with eight home games to be played out of the final 13 fixtures, we have the capacity to give a far brighter look to our situation by May 11.

We certainly hope so because Aston Villa and its supporters needs and deserves better than a struggle to stay in Division 1. Everything possible will continue to be done to ensure that we finish the season on a high note.



Dwight Yorke scored his first League goal by beating Derby's Peter Shilton in our last home game.

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NEWS + RECORD

SHOCK MOVE FOR NEIL

New signing Neil Cox had still to taste Football League action when he watched Aston Villa beat Inter Milan in the UEFA Cup at Villa Park earlier in the season.

So it was hardly surprising that he described his move to alongside David Platt, Gordon Cowans, Paul McGrath and Co as "a bit of a shock" after completing just 25 games for Scunthorpe United.

Twenty-four-year-old Cox said: "It came right out of the blue. I kept thinking to myself 'I've got to stay in the first team' at Scunthorpe over and over again. Then the next minute I am in bed one evening when the boss rings to say Aston Villa are interested in signing me."

"I travelled down the following morning to complete all the contracts and the next day I was off on the Hong Kong tour! It's all happened so quick."

"I needed no persuading to come to Villa. I saw all their players on television against Milan and it's nice to be here with them. They have helped me to settle in quickly and feel at home."

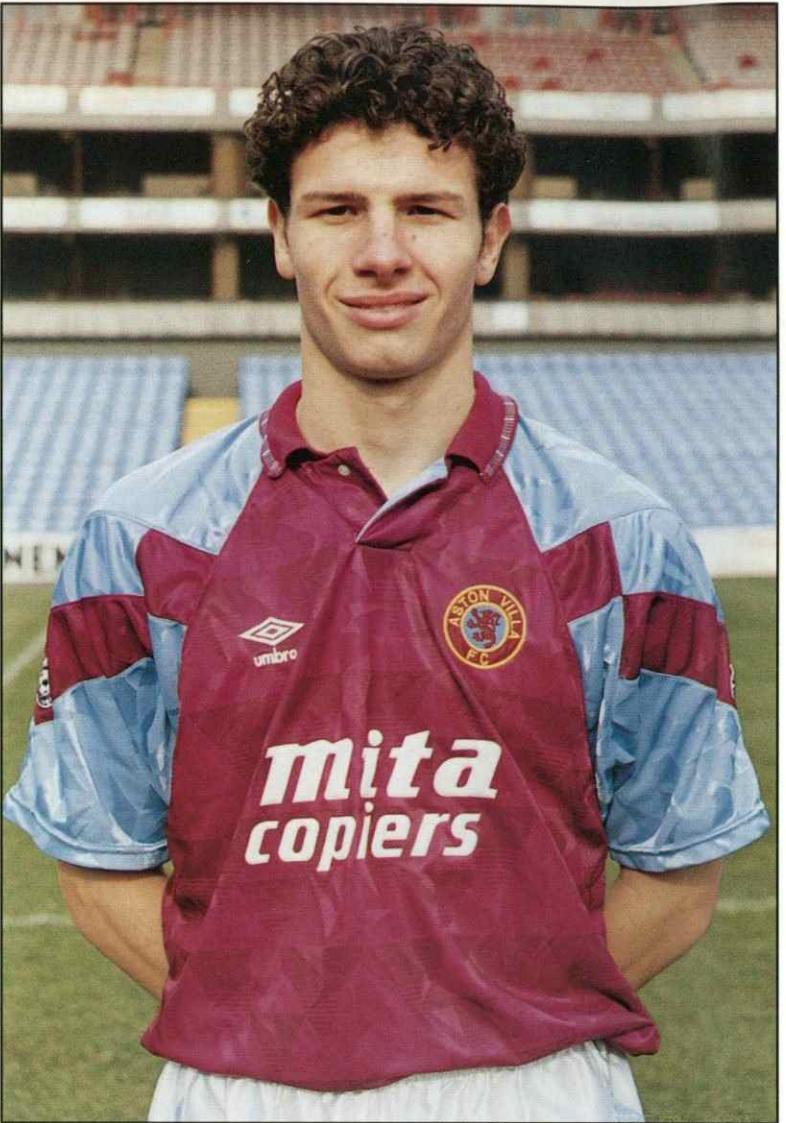
Cox added: "It was another bit of a shock to be substitute against Nottingham Forest and I didn't even realise I would be travelling with the squad. I didn't feel nervous - although it might have been different had I gone on."

However, Cox is not getting carried away with matters. "I have come here to learn my trade. I have had a bit of luck in coming to Villa, a First Division club, and maybe if there are injuries etc I might get a bit more luck and have a chance to show what I can do."

"But realistically I am looking at 12 months before even considering the possibility of a regular place. It might be even longer - you never can tell."

Cox paid tribute to the help he received at Scunthorpe from Richard Money before his move to Villa in the early part of last season. He took a lot of time to be with the players and was always there if you wanted help any time of the day. I never thought we would both end up at the same club again."

Money recalled: "Neil came to Scunthorpe as a 14-year-old when I first



Neil Cox, Villa's recent signing from Scunthorpe.

went back there. I went round with Bill Green, who is now the manager there, to sign him on schoolboy forms.

"He trained with the first team when he was 15 and I took him on as a YTS apprentice when I was youth development officer there."

"I coached him for nearly two years and he has suddenly broke through into the first team this season and has done extremely well."

"I didn't recommend him initially for Villa. His name came up via our scouting system and then I started to get a little involved and said I thought he was worth pursuing."

"We had him under the microscope for about a dozen games and almost all of the staff including the manager took a look at him and liked what they saw."

"He's a good passer, has two good feet,

has an excellent attitude and wants to learn. He can play in various positions including central defence and midfield but I think right back will end up as his best position."

FROSTED OUT

England Under-21 midfielder Mark Blake's over-riding feeling was of frustration during his recent month on loan with Wolverhampton Wanderers.

Blake said: "I needed a bite of first team football and said back in September it would be better for me and the club that I went on loan if I wasn't in the team."

"But because of the snow and bad weather I was only able to play two games for Wolves - against Bristol Rovers and West Ham United - which was a big disappointment to me."

"Wolves play the long ball and try to pick up the bits and pieces whereas at Villa

the accent is on ball to feet but I didn't take long to adjust and got a couple of good games in."

"The Second Division is a bit more physical but you have more time on the ball than in the First Division as I discovered when I came straight back in for Villa against Nottingham Forest two weeks ago."

Twenty-year-old Blake, who retained his place against Sheffield United last Saturday, also linked up again at Wolves in the West Ham game with Paul Birch following his transfer to Wolves. "When I left Villa to go to Wolves Paul said 'keep my place warm for me!'" said Blake.

NEW DEAL FOR ANDY

Central defender Andy Comyn, 22, has signed a new three-and-a-half-year contract. He said: "It's very pleasing. We have been talking about it for some time and both parties are satisfied."

"It gives me a lot of security and shows the club has confidence and faith in me. I'm happy with the way it has gone in my first two years with Villa and couldn't have wished for anything better."

RISKY BUSINESS

"Some of the worst conditions I have played in at international level" was Villa central defender Paul McGrath's description after helping the Republic of Ireland to a 3-0 win over Wales at Wrexham last month.

McGrath echoed the sentiments of rival

managers Terry Yorath and Jack Charlton that the match should not have gone ahead on the Racecourse pitch.

"It was too much of a risk and if you had fallen awkwardly or been tackled hard then you could have been in real trouble."

"The last thing Ireland would have wanted was a serious injury before the European Championship match with England this month."

"Luckily both sets of players were sensible and there was no sharp tackling. You couldn't play good football and both teams spent most of the time trying to stay on their feet."

"But I still felt in the conditions we coped better although if Jack Charlton was using the match to look at the team and players I don't think he would have been able to learn much."

YOUTH TRIP

Villa turned in a creditable performance in the recent Under-20 tournament in Italy despite having to field a younger squad than had been initially anticipated.

Villa went out at the first hurdle in the 20 team competition, losing 1-0 on aggregate over two hard fought matches with Bologna.

Villa youth coach Richard Money said: "We went with a squad which wasn't quite as strong as we would have liked. Dwight Yorke and Mark Blake were in the first team and on loan respectively, Lee Williams was still recovering from a broken leg and people like Richard Crisp and one or two others were not available."

"Nevertheless we went with a good attitude and did well. It was a very close affair against Bologna and we felt that we deserved to win the second game."

"It was good experience for the lads playing against a different type of football and we also took the opportunity to watch four or five games while we were out there."

"There were eight teams from overseas - all of whom were knocked out at the first hurdle - and 12 Italian clubs. That tells you how strong the Italians are at that level."

Mooney was particularly pleased with the performances of Darrell Duffy - in the sweeper's role - and in the second game of Bryan Small.

It was a hectic time for Small for 24 hours after flying back from Italy he collected another England Under-19 cap in the 5-1 reversal by Denmark at Oxford.

Villa goalkeeper Glen Livingstone was also involved as one of the substitutes but was not called into action in the bitterly cold conditions.

A WELCOME VISITOR

Former Villa favourite Brian Little couldn't resist calling in at the Bodymoor Heath training ground when taking a rare day off from his duties with Fourth Division promotion chasers Darlington.

Little was in the Midlands to visit his mother-in-law but also ended up watching our youth team in afternoon action against Walsall and having a chat with his old pal Peter Withe.

And just for good measure he made sure that his son will know where his future allegiances will lie by purchasing a claret and blue shirt for him from the club shop.

HUNT FUND

The Football Association have given their approval for a Testimonial to be organised in appreciation of Steve Hunt's services to football.

The Witton-born winger made his League debut in our promotion-winning season in 1974-75 and closed his playing career through injury in another Second Division promotion campaign in 1987-88.

Testimonial Committee chairman Dean Brookes, of 61 Boden Road, Hall Green, tells us that the first event is a Gala Boxing Evening at the Grand Hotel on 15th April.

Apart from top-class boxing, there will be a three-course meal and gentlemen's entertainment. Tickets are £25 per head and the best locations will be reserved for those booking a table of ten.

To reserve a table, call 021-778 1742 or the Villa Commercial Department on 021-327 5399. If you can't make it to the Grand Hotel, you are invited to sponsor one of the bouts, donate a trophy or give a prize to the raffle.

Hunt left Villa in February to join New York Cosmos for £50,000 and returned to the Midlands with Coventry City for £40,000 in September 1978.

On moving to Albion in March 1984 for £80,000, he won two full caps for England. Two years later he re-joined Villa in exchange for Darren Bradley plus £90,000, but a knee injury forced him to retire in November 1987.

FOR THE RECORD

Saturday 19th January 1991 (Continued)
Graham Fenton scores the Villa goal as the youth team draw 1-1 with Birmingham City in a Purity Youth League 'derby'.

Wednesday 23rd January 1991

The reserves win 4-3 at Derby with goals from Nigel Callaghan (10 mins), Martin Carruthers (13) and Ian Ormondroyd (27 & 62). Kevin Francis, Mark Pattison and Jason White score for the home side.

In a re-arranged Purity Youth League fixture at Bodymoor Heath Villa beat Wolves 3-1. Darren Hedigan, Graham Fenton and Matthew McCallum are the Villa marksmen.

Saturday 26th January 1991

The youth team are beaten 4-2 at home by Peterborough, with both Villa goals being scored by Peterborough players!

Monday 28th January 1991

David Platt is named in the England squad for next week's game with Cameroon. Nigel Spink is in the B squad for the game with Wales, with Gordon Cowans being named among the 'stand-by' players.

Wednesday 30th January 1991

Coventry's David Speedie has transfer talks with Villa but ends the day as a Liverpool player. Ian Olney scores the only goal of the game in the Reserves' win at Blackburn.

Thursday 31st January 1991

Paul Birch leaves Villa to join Wolves in a deal reported to be worth around £400,000.

Friday 1st February 1991

David Platt is withdrawn from the England squad for next week's game with Cameroon because of a groin injury.

Saturday 2nd February 1991

BARCLAYS LEAGUE DIVISION ONE
ASTON VILLA 3 DERBY COUNTY 2
Scorers: Villa - Cowans (pen, 29 mins), Casciaro (74), Yorke (77). Derby - Harford (27), Sage (82).

Villa: Spink, Price, Gray, McGrath, Mountfield, Nielsen, Daley, Gage, Casciaro, Cowans, Callaghan (sub: Yorke, 59). Sub (not used): Ormondroyd.

Derby: Shilton, Sage, Cross, G. Williams, Wright, Forsyth, Micklewhite, Saunders, Harford, Hebbard, McMinn. Subs (not used): Ramage, Patterson.

Referee: J Carter (Dorset).

Bookings: None.

Attendance: 21,852.

Dwight Yorke's goal is his first in League or Cup for the first-team.
Paul Birch scores on his Wolves debut, against West Ham.

Sunday 3rd February 1991

Gordon Cowans is called into the England squad for Wednesday's game with Cameroon after several players withdraw through injury.

Monday 4th February 1991

Ian Olney is sent-off, after two bookable offences, in the Central League fixture with Coventry. Coach Peter Withe pulls on a claret and blue shirt again to play in the 0-0 draw.

Tuesday 5th February 1991

Nigel Spink plays for the England 'B' side in a 1-0 win against Wales 'B' at Swansea, but is withdrawn with a thigh injury after 71 minutes.

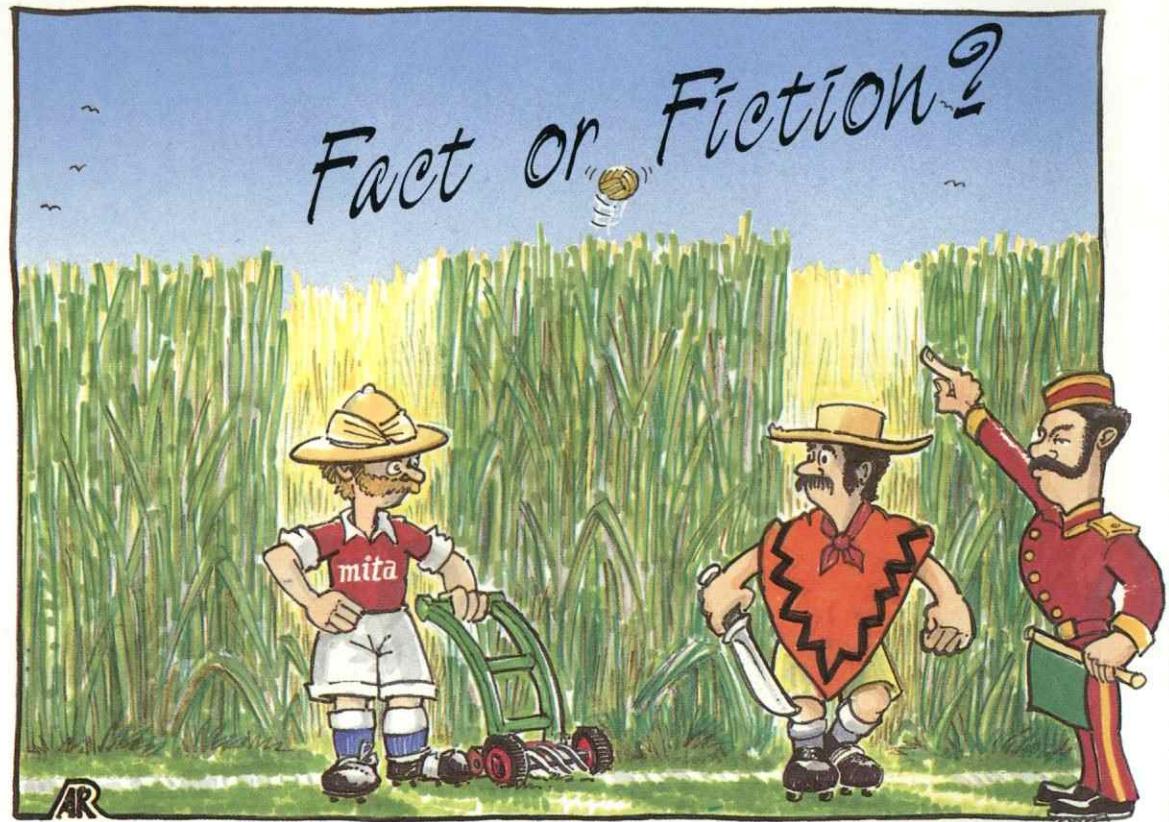
Wednesday 6th February 1991

Gary Lineker scores twice as England beat Cameroon 2-0 at Wembley.

Thursday 7th February 1991

Villa's game at QPR on Saturday is an early casualty as heavy snow sweeps Britain.

Continued on page 12...



The longest football match occurred in 1890 when an English team introduced the game to South America. The only pitch available was of pampas grass, in which all the players disappeared. The final score was indecisive as nobody managed to locate the goals; or even some of the players!

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Jim Walker

PROMOTIONS MANAGER

John Greenfield

CLUB HONOURS

European Cup Winners: 1981-82
European Super Cup Winners: 1982-83
Football League Champions: 1893-94,
1895-96, 1896-97, 1898-99, 1899-1900,
1909-10, 1980-81. Runners-up: 1888-89,
1902-03, 1907-08, 1910-11, 1912-13,
1913-14, 1930-31, 1932-33, 1989-90
Division Two Champions: 1937-38,
1959-60. Runners-up: 1974-75, 1987-88
Division Three Champions: 1971-72
FA Cup Winners: 1887, 1895, 1897, 1905,
1913, 1920, 1957. Runners-up: 1892, 1924
League Cup Winners: 1961, 1975, 1977
Runners-up: 1963, 1971
FA Youth Cup Winners: 1972, 1980

ASTON VILLA
NEWS & RECORD

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Villa and Luton have met 29 times before in the League. The first meeting was at Kenilworth Road on September 1st, 1937 when Luton won 3-2. John Maund and Alex Massie were the Villa scorers. Villa won the return game just five days later 4-1 at Villa Park.

Villa's full League record against The Hatters is:

	P	W	D	L	F	A
Home	14	9	1	4	24	13
Away	15	1	3	11	8	22
TOTAL	29	10	4	15	32	35

Villa's biggest League win against Luton is 4-1 - that first meeting at Villa Park in 1937-38 and again in 1982-83. The 1-0 win at Kenilworth Road last season is Villa's only away success against The Hatters.

Luton's biggest wins against Villa are 3-0 at Kenilworth Road in 1957-58 and 3-1 at Villa Park in 1956-57.

The highest League attendances for this fixture were for the Second Division meetings in season 1937-38 - 30,667 at Villa Park and 29,372 at Luton.

The lowest home and away 'gates' are 7,696 at Luton in 1984-85 and 10,524 here the following season.

Several Villa players share the club's record of most goals in a League game with Luton. Frankie Broome and Charlie Phillips scored two each in the 4-1 success of 1937-38; Gerry Hitchens, two in the 3-1 home win in 1958-59, Gordon Cowans, two penalties in the 4-1 win in 1982-83; and Paul Kerr, both goals in the 2-1 win here in 1986-87.



Among the players who have represented both clubs are James Adam, Paul Elliott, Jake Findlay, Steve Foster, David Geddis (on loan at Luton), Alfred Gittings, Leslie Jones, Chris Nicholl, Bruce and Neil Riach and George Stephenson.

VILLA'S RECENT MEETINGS WITH THE HATTERS

Saturday 10th March, 1990
ASTON VILLA 2 LUTON TOWN 0
Daley (29), Platt (49)

Villa: Spink, Price, Gage, McGrath, Gray, Nielsen, Daley, Platt, Oinely, Cowans, Williams. Luton: Chamberlain, Breacker, Allpress, Kennedy, James, Dreyer, Rees (sub: Pouch, 60), Nogan, Dowie, Hughes (sub: Gray, 75), Black.

Saturday 24th November, 1990
LUTON TOWN 2 ASTON VILLA 0
Black (44), Elstrup (85)

Luton: Chamberlain, Johnson, Harvey, Williams, McDonough, Dreyer, Elstrup, Preece, Dowie, Hughes, Black.

Villa: Spink, Price, Gray, McGrath, Mountfield (sub: Yorke, 72), Nielsen, Daley, Platt, Blake (sub: Birch, 57), Cowans, Casciarino.



Tony Daley finishes off a memorable solo run for the opening goal against Luton last season.

VOTE FOR YOUR MAN-OF-THE-MATCH - 0898 500 168

LUTON

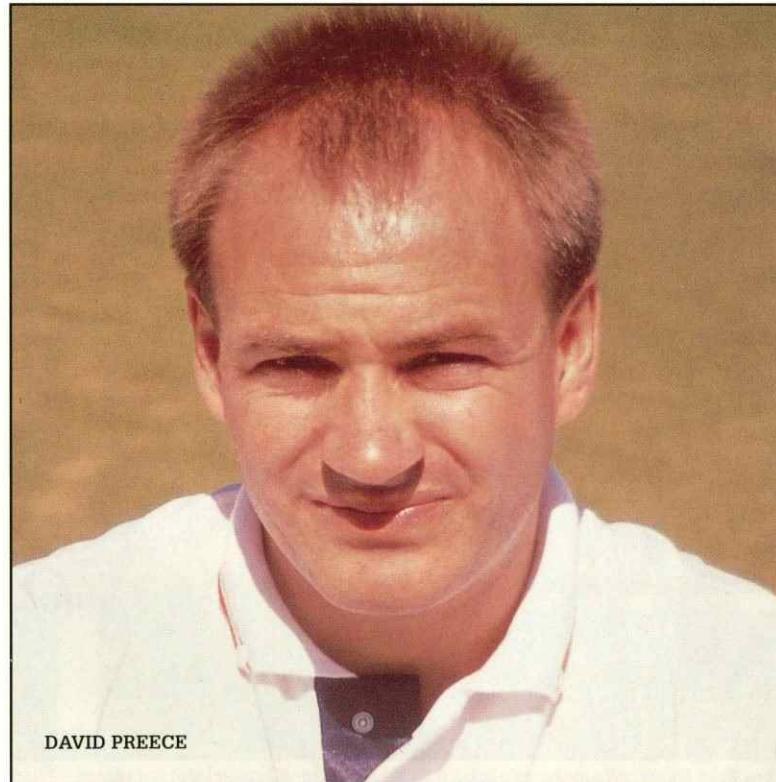
A DAY-BY-DAY DIARY

It was something of an injustice that Luton Town's best performance of the season appeared to be secondary to the motives of the media pack who descended on Kenilworth Road a fortnight ago.

The scribes were so busy raking over Liverpool's troubles that the merit of the Hatters' victory was submerged in thousands of words about Kenny Dalglish's departure from Anfield.

If the result was of national significance in knocking the champions off the top of the table, it was also vitally important to Luton after only one win in ten League games since their victory over Villa in November.

At that stage, they were comfortably placed in the top ten, but the subsequent slide - they took only five points out of 30 - put them fourth from bottom when Liverpool travelled to Bedfordshire.



Yet Luton's timely success was only in keeping with an impressive home record against the Merseysiders. They have won four and drawn two of their last seven meetings in League and FA Cup.

This is the Hatters' ninth consecutive season in Division One - easily the longest of their three spells at the top level - but last term they stayed up only on goal-difference after a last day of drama.

A 75th minute goal by Northern Ireland winger Kingsley Black clinched a 3-2 win at Derby and sent Sheffield Wednesday into the Second Division after their home defeat by Nottingham Forest.

That completed a hectic first four months in management for Jimmy Ryan, a former Luton player who was promoted from the backroom staff in January when the Hatters were second from the bottom.

A bad run of injuries forced them to field four teenagers and three 20-year-olds at Villa Park in March, but they eventually survived by winning their last three games. The summer was a quiet time on the transfer front and we begin Luton's 1990-91 diary with important news from the boardroom...

MAY

22 Peter Nelkin is the new chairman after buying up a major shareholding in partnership with David Kohler, who also joins the board.

JUNE

7 Jimmy Ryan is to be offered a three-year contract in recognition of his achievement in keeping the club in Division One.



16 Luton say that the Football League's ban on artificial pitches from the start of 1991-92 will cost them £250,000 per year in bookings.

JULY

18 Former manager John Moore returns to Kenilworth Road as reserve coach... Luton finished seventh, their highest position in Division One, when he was in charge in 1986-87.

AUGUST

2 Northern Ireland midfielder Danny Wilson joins Sheffield Wednesday for £200,000.

17 Another midfielder, Mick Kennedy, goes to Stoke City for £180,000.

25 Darren McDonough and 19-year-old Welsh prospect Ceri Hughes fill the midfield gaps in an opening 1-1 draw at home to Crystal Palace.

SEPTEMBER

1 Another young Welshman, Jason Rees, 20, deputises for Kingsley Black (thigh) at Southampton... Danish striker Lars Elstrup scores twice and Luton's first win earns the Barclays performance of the week award.

4 McDonough (rib) is replaced by Richard Harvey in a home defeat by Manchester United.

8 A single goal from Black inflicts Leeds' first defeat since their return to the First Division.

12 Black and Iain Dowie are in Northern Ireland's side for the opening European Championship qualifier against Yugoslavia in Belfast.

15 Luton are swamped by five second-half goals in a 6-1 trouncing at QPR.

22 Dowie, who has battled on since the beginning of the season with a broken toe, scores the only goal in a home win against Coventry.

29 Elstrup, carrying six stitches in a head wound after a mid-week draw with

Bradford in the League Cup, sinks Norwich with a hat-trick at Carrow Road... Recalled midfielder Steve Williams lays on two of the goals.

OCTOBER

1 Elstrup is back in Denmark's European Championship squad after a year's absence from international football.

10 The League Cup campaign ends at the first stage after a penalty shoot-out at Bradford.

11 Former England Under-21 full back Tim Breacker completes a £600,000 move to West Ham.

20 Julian James (fractured cheekbone) misses a 2-0 defeat at Sunderland.

NOVEMBER

17 After taking only one point from four games, Luton are two down at home to Manchester City but recover to snatch a draw with a late penalty by John Dreyer.

24 Black and Elstrup score against Villa in the first League win for eight weeks.

DECEMBER

1 Two more goals for Elstrup in a draw at Nottingham Forest.

5 Young striker Sean Farrell, recovered from four knee operations last season, nets four times on Finals Night in the Guinness Soccer Six in Manchester... David Preece is the player of the tournament as Luton take the trophy and £52,500 after beating Liverpool 4-0... Rees and Kurt Nogan play for Wales in an Under-21 international against England at Tranmere.

8 Another Dreyer penalty holds Arsenal to a draw after Tony Adams is sent off.

19 West Ham, unbeaten leaders of the Second Division, crash out of the Zenith Cup at Kenilworth Road... Farrell grabs two goals in a 5-1 win for the Hatters.

29 After three successive League defeats, Luton overcome Chelsea to register their first win in five weeks.

JANUARY

1 Mark Pembridge, a 20-year-old Welshman, makes his debut in a 2-0 defeat at Wimbledon.

2 Hughes is likely to miss the rest of the season after a knee operation.

5 Farrell and Elstrup (2) are on target in an FA Cup triumph at Sheffield United.

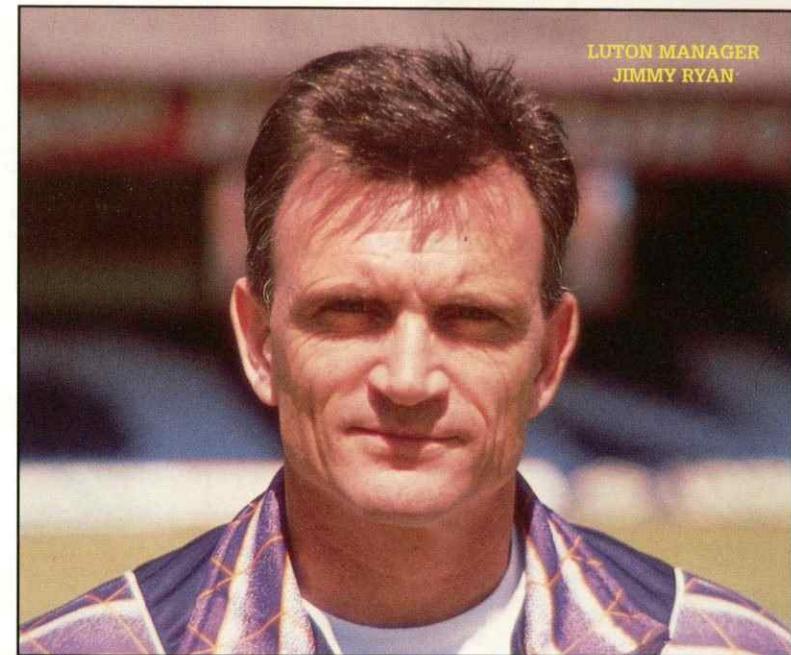
11 Paul Holsgrove, a midfielder released by Aldershot last summer, is signed from Vauxhall League club Wokingham Town for £25,000.

30 West Ham avenge their pre-Christmas upset with a 5-0 win in an FA Cup replay at Upton Park.

FEBRUARY

2 Black puts his side in front against QPR but Les Ferdinand's last-minute strike gives the Londoners their first away win since October... Injury-troubled former Coventry defender Graham Rodger re-appears after a 15-month lay-off and Holsgrove comes in for the first time as substitute.

5 After only four League appearances, Pembridge joins Rees in the Welsh team for a 'B' international against England at Swansea.



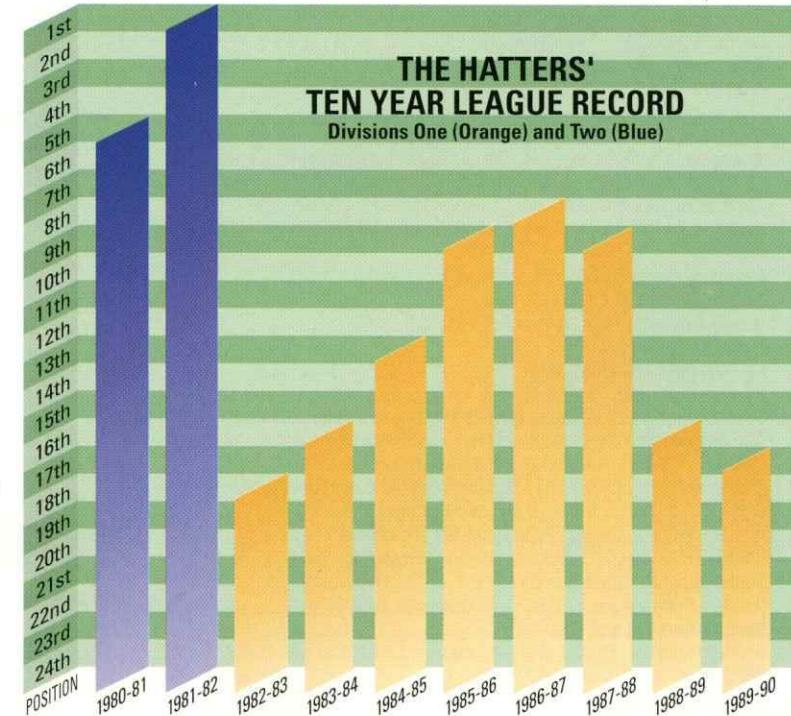
18 Luton, finalists in the Simod Cup in 1988, reach the Southern Area semi-final in the Zenith Cup by beating holders Chelsea on penalties at Stamford Bridge.

23 Second-half goals from Black and Dowie (2) overturn Liverpool's interval lead and secure the first League success in five games.

26 The Zenith Cup run closes as England striker Ian Wright scores twice for Crystal Palace at Selhurst Park.

MARCH

2 Dowie's 85th minute header clinches another home win against Forest and puts Luton one point ahead of Villa.



LUTON TOWN ROLL CALL 1990-91

Player/ Birthplace/Birthdate	Previous Clubs	League & Cup Apps	Gls
DAVE BEAUMONT Edinburgh, 10.12.63	Dundee United	24(3)	-
KINGSLEY BLACK Luton, 22.6.68	-	32	9
ALEC CHAMBERLAIN March, 20.6.64	Ipswich, Colchester, Everton	35	-
IAN DOWIE Hatfield, 9.1.65	Hendon	28(4)	7
JOHN DREYER Alnwick, 11.6.63	Wallingford, Oxford Utd	35	4
LARS ELSTRUP Raaby, Denmark, 24.3.63	Odense	33	15
SEAN FARRELL Watford, 28.2.69	-	7(10)	3
RICHARD HARVEY Letchworth, 17.4.69	-	25(2)	1
PAUL HOLSGROVE Wellington, 26.8.69	Aldershot, Wokingham Town	-(1)	-
CERI HUGHES Pontypridd, 26.2.71	-	19	1
MATTHEW JACKSON Leeds, 19.10.71	-	-(1)	-
JULIAN JAMES Tring, 22.3.70	-	15(5)	1
MARVIN JOHNSON Wembley, 29.10.68	-	18(4)	-
DARRON McDONOUGH Oldham	Antwerp, 7.11.62	20(4)	-
KURT NOGAN Cardiff, 9.9.70	-	2(6)	-
MARK PEMBRIDGE Merthyr, 29.11.70	-	13	-
ANDY PETTERSON Freemantle (Australia), 26.9.69	-	-	-
DAVID PREECE Bridgnorth, 28.5.63	Walsall	33	-
JASON REES Pontypridd, 22.12.69	-	12(9)	2
GRAHAM RODGER Glasgow, 1.4.67	Wolves, Coventry	6	-
STEVE WILLIAMS Hammersmith, 12.7.58	Southampton, Arsenal	19(1)	-
ALSO PLAYED: Tim Breacker (to West Ham) 9 apps.			

Including Barclays League, Rumbelows League Cup, FA Cup & Zenith Data Systems Cup.
(Up to and including Tuesday 5th March)

LUTON'S RESULTS SO FAR

Barclays League:

Crystal Palace (H) 1-1, Arsenal (A) 1-2, Southampton (A) 2-1, Manchester Utd (H) 0-1, Leeds (H) 1-0, QPR (A) 1-6, Coventry (H) 1-0, Norwich (A) 3-1, Sunderland (A) 0-2, Everton (H) 1-1, Derby (A) 1-2, Liverpool (A) 0-4, Manchester City (H) 2-2, Aston Villa (H) 2-0, Nottingham F. (A) 2-2, Arsenal (H) 1-1, Crystal Palace (A) 0-1, Tottenham (A) 1-2, Sheffield Utd (H) 0-1, Chelsea (H) 2-0, Wimbledon (A) 0-2, Southampton (H) 3-4, Leeds (A) 1-2, QPR (H) 1-2, Liverpool (H) 3-1, Nottingham F. (H) 1-0, Manchester City (A) 0-3.

Rumbelows League Cup:

Bradford (H) 1-1, (A) 1-1 (lost 4-5 on pens).

FA Cup:

Sheffield Utd (A) 3-1, West Ham (H) 1-1, (A) 0-5.

Zenith Data Systems Cup:

West Ham (H) 5-1, Chelsea (A) 1-1 (won 4-1 on pens), C.Palace (A) 1-3.



HELPING THE GAME



A fine new stand - one of the many initiatives supported by Trust funds.

The Football Trust 1990 has been created to help the game at all levels and to assist clubs meet the requirements of Lord Justice Taylor's Final Report.

Safety and comfort for all spectators is the primary objective and substantial funds have been made available for the provision of seating at Football League grounds. At the same time the Trust's commitment to family and community initiatives will continue with the provision of more family enclosures, better toilet facilities, covered accommodation, artificial pitches for local use and the development of women's and junior football particularly through community programmes, plus a wide range of policing and crowd control measures.

Each year The Trust expects to receive £20 million from the reduction in Pool Betting Duty plus the £10 million continuing contribution from the Spotting-the-Ball competition organised by Littlewoods, Vernons and Zetters. This money will be invested in projects which benefit football throughout the United Kingdom.

MITA COPIERS SPONSOR ASTON VILLA

Those who criticise Brian Clough for his waspish opinions on football might care to know that the Nottingham Forest manager is the flavour of month in Barnsley . . . for his chocolate bars!

A group of young Barnsley supporters couldn't believe their good fortune when they asked Cloughie for his autograph as he stepped off the team coach at Oakwell.

"Aren't you lot freezing standing out here 'cos I am? Come on, follow me." With that, he marched the kids into the Forest dressing room and told his players to sign anything they wanted.

When the autograph session was finished, he thanked them for coming and added: "Now go to our coach and tell the driver to give you a chocolate bar apiece." Exit one group of fans . . . gobsmacked!

Jinxed goalkeeper John Keeley reckons his luck went from "bad to dreadful" in six months after his £250,000 summer transfer from Brighton to Oldham Athletic.

He dislocated a finger 24 hours before his scheduled debut in August and as soon as he resumed training, he picked up a similar injury in his other hand.

A three-match suspension for being sent off in a reserve game halted his next comeback and now he is out again after fracturing a hand in another reserve match.

Even worse than the injuries, Keeley was a victim of two break-ins at his home. His wife's car was ransacked on the first visit and then burglars got away with £6,000 worth of furniture and equipment.

Manager Joe Royle agreed to transfer-list Keeley and prepared for his departure by re-signing his former reserve keeper, Andy Gorton, for £3,000.

Gorton left Boundary Park

in the summer of 1988 and was later released by Stockport County and Lincoln City. This season he has played for Glossop in the Second Division of the North West Counties League.

Former Villa favourite Brian Little maintained Darlington's promotion push in Division Four with a win at York after deciding against applying for the manager's job at Birmingham City.

It was the first time Brian had been on the winning side this season in five meetings with his brother, Alan, another former Villa player who is now assistant manager at

York. Afterwards, Brian joked: "If we had lost, people would have said I should have gone to Birmingham."

Sunderland eased their position at the bottom end of the First Division with a third successive home win which justified manager Denis Smith's decision to take his squad away to Tenerife.

Mr Smith was prepared for some flak from supporters on the subject of a mid-winter break when Sunderland were out of the FA Cup.

But he countered: "I've heard it all before. They say a team struggling near the foot of the table doesn't deserve a holiday and should be training even harder, but that's not the way I see it."

"Throughout my career as a player and a manager, this has always seemed to work to the benefit of the club. Of course we would much rather have been playing in the Cup, but now that we're not involved, it's a good idea to take advantage of a blank week-end."

Hull City's assistant manager, Mick Docherty, was put out of work when the Second Division club appointed the Rochdale duo, Terry Dolan and coach Jeff Lee, as the new management team at Boothferry Park.

But Docherty soon found a new job . . . at Rochdale. "I needed somebody with experience and it helps to be able to bounce ideas off each other," said Dave Sutton, who became manager at Spotland following Mr Dolan's departure.

Mike Lyons, who left Everton in November after three years as reserve coach, is back in football as a member of Wigan Athletic's coaching staff.

Brian Little - promotion push.

Lyons, who had two years in management with Grimsby Town, was appointed by his former Everton team-mate, Bryan Hamilton, who is now charge at Wigan.

Peter Withe's brother, Chris, saved a penalty against his OWN club when he answered a call as emergency goalkeeper for Mansfield Town in a Third Division with Bury.

Chris, on loan from Bury, went between the posts when Andy Beasley was sent off for bringing down Tony Cunningham inside the area. The penalty was taken by Cunningham but Withe stopped his shot.

Bolton Wanderers set a club record on taking their unbeaten run beyond 20 league games . . . and kept skipper Phil Brown waiting for the return of a £400 bracelet.

The bracelet was put into a jewellers for repair in October just as Bolton were starting their long unbeaten run. Brown said he had no intention of re-claiming it until Bolton are defeated.

Stockport County are taking to the air in search of a place in the Third Division next season.

Already fifth in Division Four with the help of 15 goals from 6ft 4ins striker Paul Williams, they aimed even higher with a £60,000 investment in the 6ft 7ins Derby County forward, Kevin Francis.

Francis, a 23-year-old Brummie from Small Heath, joined the Rams from Mile Oak Rovers for £3,000 in January 1989. Now the local Scoreline Combination club are to benefit from a share of Derby's profit.

Port Vale sold reserve striker Ronnie Jepson to Preston for £80,000 and spent the money on Robin Van der Laan, a 22-year-old forward from the Dutch Second Division club, Wageningen.

NATIONWIDE



ASTON VILLA TICKET INFORMATION LINE - 0898 12 18 48



Barclays League Division One
ASTON VILLA v TOTTENHAM HOTSPUR
Saturday 16th March 1991 (3pm)

THIS MATCH IS ALL TICKET.

All seat tickets have been sold.

Holte End terrace tickets priced £7 (adults) and £4 (juniors/OAPs) for blocks K and L are on sale now from the North Stand Ticket Office.

Supporters are advised to purchase a ticket prior to the game to avoid any disappointment.

Barclays League Division One
SUNDERLAND v ASTON VILLA
Saturday 23rd March 1991 (3pm)

The club will not be receiving an allocation of seat tickets for this match. Terrace tickets, priced £6, are now on sale from the North Stand Ticket Office.

Travellers Club: Coaches will depart from the Aston Villa Leisure Centre at 9.30am prompt! Fare £9.50.

The Travellers Club have opened a 'Temporary Membership' scheme for the remainder of the season at a supplement of 50p per match, payable when booking a coach seat.

Take advantage of the Access & Visa facilities and book your coach tickets via the Travel Club Hotline 021-328 3322.

Fixture Changes

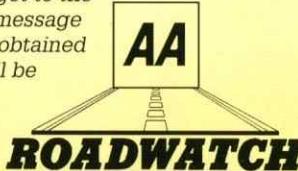
Our away League game with Queens Park Rangers, postponed on 9th February, has been re-arranged for **Wednesday 10th April**.

Our game with **Arsenal** at Highbury will now be played on **Wednesday 3rd April 1991 (7.45pm)**.

Advance bookings are now being taken for seat tickets for the club's remaining home games - Everton, Manchester United, Wimbledon, Manchester City, Norwich City and Chelsea.

*In association with AA Roadwatch, the Club have introduced the **ASTON VILLA ROUTE LINE** for fans travelling to away matches. The recorded message will include the AA's recommended route from Birmingham to away grounds and any current roadworks, delays or problems en-route to help supporters get to the game in plenty of time. The recorded message for the Aston Villa Route Line may be obtained by dialling **0836 401835**. The news will be updated right up to the last minute before fans set off on their journey.*

Calls are charged at 33p/minute cheap;
44p/minute other times.



FOR THE RECORD

Continued from page 5.

Saturday 9th February 1991

Dwight Yorke is named as the Midlands Barclays Young Eagle for January.

Monday 11th February 1991

Scunthorpe United's 19-year-old defender Neil Cox joins Villa in a £400,000 deal.

Tuesday 12th February 1991

The first team escape the snow by flying out to Hong Kong to take part in a four-team tournament.

Friday 15th February 1991

MARLBORO CUP SEMI-FINAL

At The Happy Valley Stadium, Hong Kong

ASTON VILLA 1 MOSCOW DYNAMO 0

Scorer: Cascarino (57 mins).

Team: Spink, Price, Gray (sub: Yorke, 44), McGrath, Mountfield, Nielsen, Daley, Gage, Olney, Cowans, Cascarino.

Attendance: 26,000.

In the other semi-final a Hong Kong Select XI beat Thailand 2-0.

Monday 18th February 1991

MARLBORO CUP FINAL

At The Happy Valley Stadium, Hong Kong

ASTON VILLA 1 HONG KONG SELECT XI 3

(After extra time, 1-1 at 90 minutes)

Scorers: Villa - Cascarino. Hong Kong - Tempest, Bradbury, Santos.

Team: Spink, Price, Gage, Nielsen, Cox, Comyn, Ormondroyd, Yorke, Cowans, Cascarino, Daley.

Back at Villa Park the reserves are beaten 1-0 by Nottingham Forest. Ian Woan scores the only goal after 68 minutes.

Wednesday 20th February 1991

The youngsters record a 2-0 Purity Youth League win at Port Vale.

Saturday 23rd February 1991

BARCLAYS LEAGUE DIVISION ONE

NOTTINGHAM FOREST 2 ASTON VILLA 2

Scorers: Forest - Clough (3), Hodge (88); Villa - Cascarino (49), Mountfield (53).

Forest: Crossley, Laws, Pearce, Walker, Chettle, Hodge, Crosby, Wilson, Clough, Keane, Parker (sub: Woan, 83). Sub (not used): Starbuck.

Villa: Spink, Price, Gage, McGrath, Mountfield, Nielsen, Yorke (sub: Comyn, 83), Blake, Cascarino, Cowans, Ormondroyd. Sub (not used): Cox.

Referee: A. Buksh (London).

Bookings: Villa - McGrath.

Attendance: 22,036.

Gordon Cowans is skipper in the absence of Stuart Gray and David Platt.

Monday 25th February 1991

New signing Neil Cox plays his first game at Villa Park in the reserves 1-0 defeat by Newcastle. Lee Clarke scored for the Magpies in the 79th minute.

Wednesday 27th February 1991

The youth team progress to the semi-finals of the Purity Youth League Cup by beating Walsall 3-1.

Saturday 2nd March 1991

BARCLAYS LEAGUE DIVISION ONE

SHEFFIELD UNITED 2 ASTON VILLA 1

Scorers: United - Bryson (49), Deane (61); Villa - Mountfield (56).

United: Tracey, Wilder, Barnes, Jones, Beesley, Hill, Bradshaw, Gannon, Hodges (sub: Agana, 78), Deane, Bryson. Sub (not used): Todd.

Villa: Spink, Price, Gage, McGrath, Mountfield, Nielsen, Yorke, Blake (sub: Olney, 79), Cascarino, Cowans, Gray. Sub (not used): Ormondroyd.

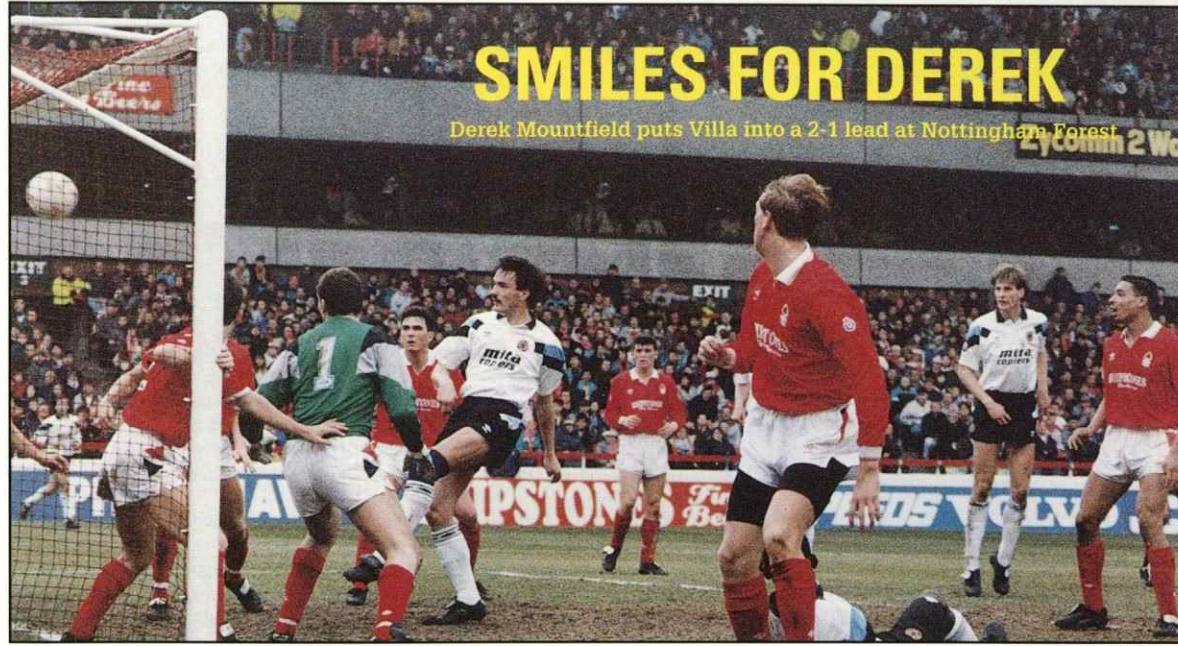
Referee: J Worrall (Warrington).

Bookings: United - Tracey.

Attendance: 22,074.

United's fifth successive win puts them on level points with Villa.

Villa's youth team are beaten 3-0 at Derby.



SMILES FOR CHARITY...

There will be red noses everywhere soon in aid of Comic Relief and we have already joined the fund-raising fun. Copies of this colour team group are available in the club shop priced £1.25, proceeds to Comic Relief. There is only a limited number available so the prints will become a collectors' item. Also on sale, in aid of the fund, are the noses and headbands.

MITA COPIERS SPONSOR ASTON VILLA



*'The manager will be delighted to discuss
more comprehensive insurance for the club and, yes we CAN have our ball back.'*

+++ YOU'RE
BETTER OFF
TALKING TO
BARCLAYS

CENTRE SPOT

Number Seventeen
GARETH WILLIAMS

IA season which was approached with great optimism by Villa midfielder Gareth Williams cannot end quickly enough after an injury-hit six months.

A recent hamstring strain would normally give little cause for concern - but in Williams case it has just added to the increasing frustration he has had to endure almost from day one this season.

A hernia complaint has been the main drawback but Williams said: "I seem to have been picking up so many niggling injuries that it is hard to keep count of them now!"

"It has been getting a bit depressing with the hamstring about the last straw. Although I still need to get a bit more fit after being out so long, I had felt things were slowly starting to come together at last before this latest setback.

"I had been looking forward to going on the trip to Hong Kong and thought if I got a game in over there and did alright then it might boost my chances.

"But just before we were due to fly out I got a little bit of a niggly pull from the hamstring in training and had to stay behind which also got me down a bit.

"I think the manager Jozef Venglos believes I am capable of doing something - but it is a case of having the chance of showing him.

"As far as I am concerned I would like to wipe this season out of my mind and I have not really played a game where I have been 100 per cent fit.

"I can't wait for the season to end and to get on with the next one and I could do without the break in the summer. I think about the most games I have played on the trot this season is five.

"What I need is a good pre-season to start me off on the right track again and I just hope that next year is not as bad as this one for me."

It is a sharp contrast to just over 12 months ago when Williams enjoyed his first extended run of senior team action since being signed three years ago by Graham Taylor from non-league Gosport Borough.

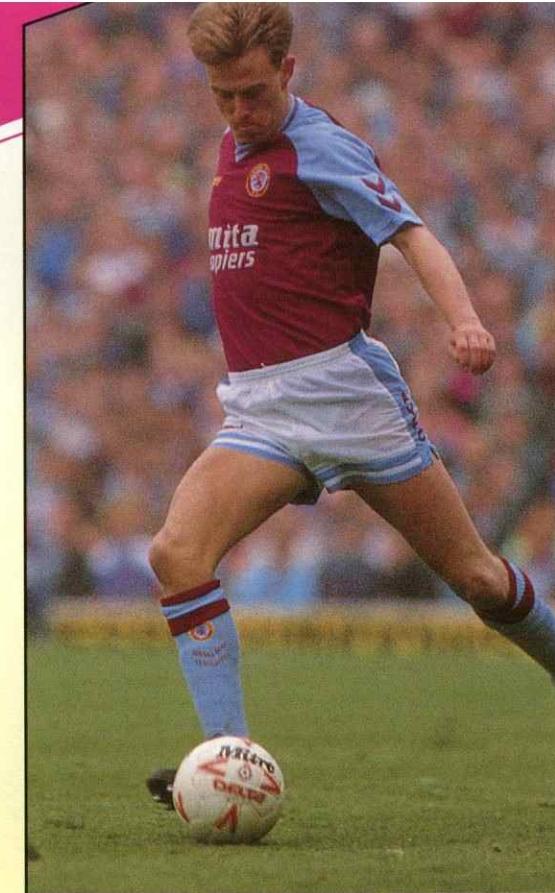
Williams put together a run of 13 successive games when he was in the final 13, including five in the starting line-up, from November through to January as Villa's title challenge gathered momentum.

Williams, who will celebrate his 24th birthday this Monday, said: "It was the time of my life and that's what makes events now seem doubly disappointing.

"The whole scene, the atmosphere, the big crowds and playing against some of the top sides like Manchester United really does work you up to play well while it is hard to get motivated playing in front of 200 people in the reserves.

"I thought I was beginning to make my mark and felt a little unlucky to be dropped but I had a bit of a problem then with a heel injury which I played on with before it got too sore.

"As we got nearer and nearer to challenging for the title I think Graham Taylor decided that the more experienced players might be able to help him a bit more when it came to the crunch.



"But I still reported back for pre-season training last July really relishing what the months ahead might have in store for me.

"I played in all the games on the tour of Sweden and did well and thought 'this is going to be my season.' It just proves how wrong you can be."

Williams, who has two years remaining of his current contract, said: "I had a little ankle injury in September which took a couple of weeks to get right but the hernia has been the main reason for the season being wasted.

"I was in considerable pain. It affected my game and the day after a match I could hardly walk and had to rest up for three days which was not doing me any good.

"We tried to let it settle down and the pain would gradually ease each time but it eventually started to get worse and worse and an operation became inevitable.

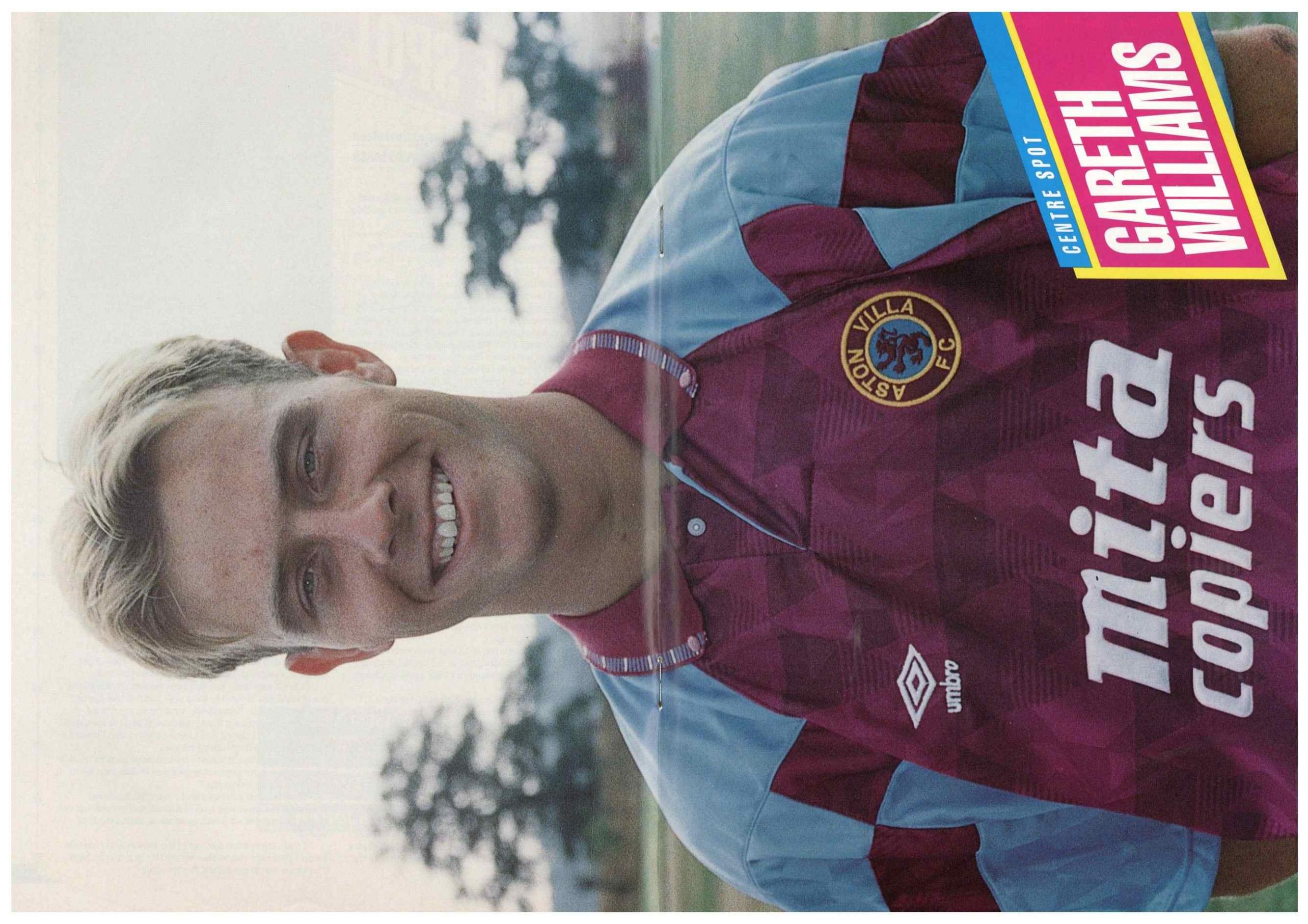
"It is a lonely time. You don't see very much of the lads - out of sight, out of mind as they say - and it is like starting from scratch again in gradually building up the fitness.

"You also wonder if the supporters, who gave me a good reception when I played and I think believed that I wasn't a bad player, have forgotten about you.

"The temptation is there to try and come back as quickly as possible but our physiotherapist Jim Walker kept me in order and it was a slow job."

"I was originally anticipating coming back around Christmas but there was a bit of a break and then one or two games were called off which gave me an extra couple of weeks.

"I don't know what the rest of the season holds in store for me. There are nine weeks left and it's going to be hard. The aim is just to get myself fit - yet again."



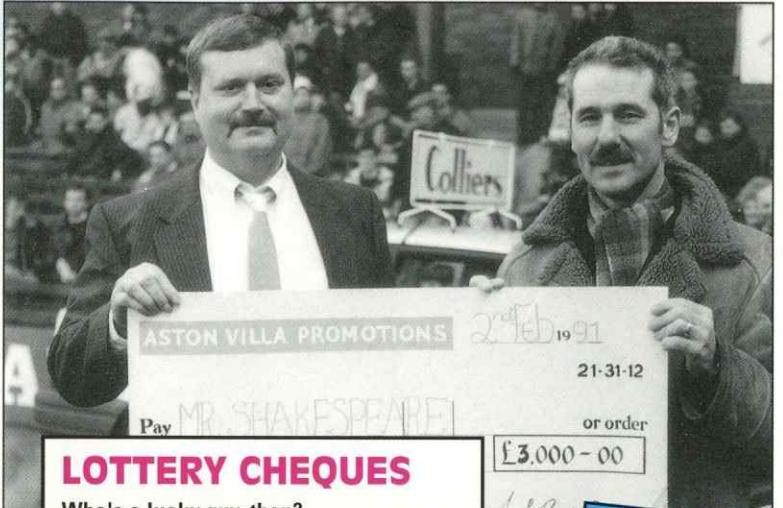
GARETH
WILLIAMS

CENTRE SPOT



mizta
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STRIKE IT LUCKY



WIN £3000 INSTANTLY FOR JUST 50p

The exciting new 'rub off' ticket currently being promoted by the Lottery Department has an additional £100 prize plus cuddly toys, Leisure packs and many other instant Cash Prizes can be won.

Tickets are on sale in hundreds of retail outlets throughout the Midlands area. Try your luck and buy a ticket now! You could be our next £3000 winner. We still require Agents in all areas. Contact the Promotions Department on 021-328 2246 or complete the slip below.

Some of the many benefits that we have to offer:

- 10% Commission on all tickets sold.
- 10% Commission of all prizes £10 & over.
- 10% Commission on goods purchased from the Souvenir Shop.

The opportunity to WATCH ASTON VILLA FREE.



LOTTERY CHEQUES

Who's a lucky guy, then?

Stan Shakespeare of Holly Lane, Dudley, receives a cheque for £3,000, the first prize in our exiting new lottery.

There's a familiar face and figure handing over the handsome amount ...it's John Robson who played for both clubs back in the 1970s but whose career was curtailed by illness.

It was good to see John looking in such good shape. Stan purchased the winning ticket from the off-licence in Bradford Road, Dudley.

Another fortunate £3,000 lottery winner was Jonathan Morris of Bentley, who accepted his top prize from Brian King, the area manager of Thresher Wines, from whom the winning ticket was purchased. The presentation was made by Martin Grealish, senior executive of Ansell's Big Steak Houses.

I AM INTERESTED IN BECOMING AN AGENT:

Name _____ Tel No. _____

Address _____

I am over 16 years of age.

WIN £3000 INSTANTLY FOR JUST 50p

The exciting new 'rub off' ticket currently being promoted by the Lottery Department has an additional £100 prize plus cuddly toys, Leisure packs and many other instant Cash Prizes can be won.

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The opportunity to WATCH ASTON VILLA FREE.



HAPPY NEW YEAR!
That's what Dave Wallis and family had to say when they met the team on their recent two-match trip to Hong Kong, which coincided with the Chinese New Year.

The former Family Club Organiser would like us to pass on their best wishes to all Villa fans, particularly those in the Panini Room and look forward to seeing everyone when they come over later in the year.



SOCER SPECIAL

As the Soccer Special will be exceptionally busy for the Spurs game on March 16th, we need to know in advance who will be attending.

Can you please make sure you let Glyn, Phil, Bob or Gary whether you will be coming on that day, after the home game with Luton. Only a limited number of tickets are available.

GUESS THE SCORE

Quite a few members correctly picked Villa to beat Derby 3-2, including Family Club Organiser Glyn.

All the names had to go into a hat and the first to be drawn out was Ian Humphreys of Willenhall. If Ian comes along to see either Glyn or Jane in the Panini Room this afternoon he will be able to claim his prize.

THE PRICE IS RIGHT

Not to be outdone by her famous father, ten-year-old Natasha Price was a winner in both the raffle and guess-the-crowd competitions at the Derby game.

One of the prizes was a Subbuteo game, wonder if Chris has mastered the table-top game yet?

REF'S DECISION

Another teaser from our Man in the Middle: What action does the referee take if, at the taking of a penalty, the ball strikes the goal-post or cross-bar and bursts?

1. Ask for another ball and re-start the game with a goal-kick?
2. Ask for another ball and re-take the penalty?
3. Ask for another ball and re-start the game with a drop ball?
4. Ask for another ball and re-start the game with a corner?

The answer is printed on the statistics page of today's programme.

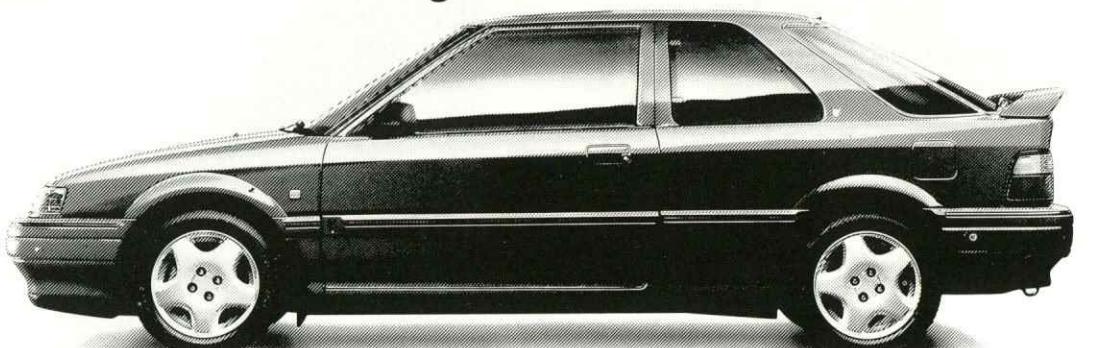


GEMMA MEETS MR. WRIGHT

Little Gemma Robinson, our mascot for the Derby game, found herself surrounded by men at the pre-match 'spin-up', but the eight-year-old from Great Barr had eyes for only one... Derby skipper Mark Wright.

THE PANINI FAMILY CLUB
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Sheer Magic

**RESERVE
+ YOUTH**



Birmingham-born YTS player Lee Williams went straight into the Central League side on his return from a broken leg.

Injured in a Birmingham Senior Cup-tie at Stourbridge in November, he was back at Blackburn in January, four days before his 18th birthday. Coach Bobby Downes said: "He's 100 per cent fit and there has been no reaction."

A goal from Ian Olney clinched a hard-earned victory at Blackburn, but the Reserves than failed to score in three successive home matches.

Peter Withe wore a Villa shirt for the first time in more than five years when he turned out as a central defender in a goalless draw against Coventry City.

Brian Flood, a 19-year-old Irish trialist, played at centre back in 1-0 defeats by Nottingham Forest and Newcastle United.

The youth team continued their successful run in the Purity League Cup. Losing finalists last year when they progressed to this season's semi-final with a 3-1 win against Walsall. Graham Fenton scored his seventh goal in six games and Martin Carruthers netted his 21st of the season.

MATCH DETAILS

Wednesday 30th January 1991

Pontins Central League

BLACKBURN ROVERS 0 ASTON VILLA 1

Scorer: Olney.

Villa: Butler, Gage, G. Williams, Hedigan, Mountfield (sub: McCallum 80), Comyn, Callaghan, Yorke, Olney (sub: Ibrahim 70), L. Williams, Ormondroyd.

Monday 4th February 1991

Pontins Central League

ASTON VILLA 0 COVENTRY CITY 0

Villa: Butler, Callaghan, Gallacher, Hedigan, Comyn, Withe, Ormondroyd, L. Williams (sub: Ibrahim 83), Olney, Yorke, G. Williams. Sub (not used): Peachey.

Monday 18th February 1991

Pontins Central League

ASTON VILLA 0 NOTTINGHAM F. 1

Villa: Livingstone, Crisp, Small, Blake, Flood, Duffy, Liddle, G. Williams, Carruthers, Froggatt (sub: Jones 70), Bullivant. Sub (not used): Morgan.



Lee Williams - recovered from a broken leg.

Wednesday 20th February 1991

Midland Purity Youth League

PORT VALE 1 ASTON VILLA 2

Scorers: Hodgson, Fenton.

Villa: Livingstone, McNamara, Boden, Frogatt, Hoban, Bullivant, Morgan, Ibrahim, Hodgson, Goodwin, Fenton. Subs (not used): Walker, Peachey.

RESERVE APPEARANCES 1990-91

	Apps	Gls	Ibrahim	(-2)	-
Birch	11	-	Jones	10(3)	-
Blake	10	2	Liddle	10(1)	-
Bullivant	2(1)	-	Livingstone	2	-
Butler	18	-	McCallum	(-1)	-
Callaghan	9	2	McGrath	1	-
Carruthers	9(1)	3	Money	1	-
Cascarino	1	-	Morgan	(-2)	-
Comyn	14	-	Mountfield	1	-
Cox	1	-	Olney	6	2
Crisp	9(2)	-	Ormondroyd	12(1)	7
Duffy	18	-	Parrott	1(1)	-
Flood	2	-	Small	15(1)	1
Froggatt	6(1)	-	Williams(G)	12	3
Gage	8	1	Williams(L)	3(3)	-
Gallacher	12	-	Withe	1	-
Hedigan	2	-	Yorke	13	8

CENTRAL LEAGUE TABLE

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Nottingham F.	21	14	4	3	64	34	46
Manchester Utd.	25	14	4	7	42	26	46
Sheffield Wed.	22	14	3	5	45	27	45
Liverpool	23	13	3	7	41	21	42
Everton	25	13	3	9	47	35	42
Sunderland	22	9	7	6	44	36	34
Rotherham Utd.	22	10	4	8	39	37	34
Leeds United	24	9	7	8	35	33	34
Manchester City	22	8	5	9	36	40	29
Aston Villa	20	8	5	7	29	34	29
Coventry City	23	6	9	8	27	34	27
Derby County	23	6	8	9	21	30	26
Newcastle United	22	7	3	12	29	31	24
Sheffield United	22	6	5	11	35	50	23
Leicester City	23	6	3	14	33	43	21
Wolves	21	6	3	12	29	50	21
Blackburn Rovers	21	5	11	31	41	20	
Huddersfield T.	21	3	7	11	26	51	16

PONTIN'S CENTRAL LEAGUE FIXTURES 1990-91

Aug	29	H Liverpool	2-1
Sep	3	H Manchester City	1-0
	10	H Derby County	1-1
	20	A Sheffield Wednesday	1-4
	24	H Rotherham United	3-1
Oct	10	A Everton	3-3
	15	H Sunderland	2-1
	23	A Leeds United	1-3
	29	H Huddersfield Town	2-2
Nov	9	A Nottingham Forest	0-3
	12	H Leicester City	4-3
	19	H Sheffield United	1-3
	29	A Newcastle United	2-1
Dec	4	A Coventry City	1-1
Jan	10	A Liverpool	0-2
	23	A Derby County	4-3
	30	A Blackburn Rovers	1-0
Feb	4	H Coventry City	0-0
	18	H Nottingham Forest	0-1
	25	H Newcastle United	0-1
Mar	4	H Blackburn Rovers	0-1
	6	A Sheffield United	
	12	A Manchester City	
	14	A Huddersfield Town	
	18	H Manchester United	
	27	A Wolverhampton Wanderers	
Apr	3	A Manchester United	
	8	H Wolverhampton Wanderers	
	16	A Rotherham United	
	22	H Leeds United	
	29	H Everton	
May	2	H Sheffield Wednesday	
	8	A Sunderland	
TBA		A Leicester City	

PURITY YOUTH LEAGUE FIXTURES 1990-91

Aug	25	A Nottingham Forest	0-2
Sep	8	H West Bromwich Albion	5-2
	12	H Birmingham City	0-1
	15	A Peterborough United	0-2
	22	H Port Vale	2-1
	29	A Mansfield Town	0-6
Oct	6	H Arsenal (SJFC)	0-2
	6	H Chesterfield (LC2)	5-1
	16	A Birmingham City (MYC)	1-1
	13	H Leicester City	3-3
	27	H Derby County	2-1
Nov	3	A Notts County	1-3
	5	H Birmingham City (MYC Rep)	2-3
	17	A Walsall	1-3
	24	H Northampton Town	2-1
	27	A Derby County (FAYC 2)	3-0
Dec	1	A Stoke City	0-0
	15	H Chesterfield	1-1
	19	H Sheffield Wed. (FAYC 3)	2-3
	22	A Coventry City	1-3
Jan	5	H Nottingham Forest	3-0
	12	H Shrewsbury Town	3-2
	19	A Birmingham City	1-1
	23	H Wolverhampton W.	3-1
	26	H Peterborough United	2-4
Feb	20	A Port Vale	2-1
	27	H Walsall (LC3)	3-1
Mar	2	A Derby County	0-3
	9	H Notts County	
	11	H Mansfield Town	
	16	A West Bromwich Albion	
	23	League Cup Semi-final	
	30	A Northampton Town	
Apr	6	H Stoke City	
	13	A Chesterfield	
	20	H Coventry City	
	27	A Shrewsbury Town	
May	4	A Wolverhampton Wanderers	
	9	H Shrewsbury Town	
	11	H Walsall	
TBA		A Leicester City	

KEY: FAYC = FA Youth Cup
SJFC = Southern Junior Floodlit Cup
MYC = Midland Youth Cup
LC = League Cup

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BARCLAYS LEAGUE DIVISION ONE

Attendances		Home			Away								
Best	Average	P	W	D	L	F	A	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
42,512	36,410	Arsenal*	26	10	2	0	30	5	7	6	1	18	757
38,463	36,039	Liverpool	26	10	2	1	30	8	6	4	3	17	54
28,181	19,729	Crystal Palace	27	7	4	1	17	12	7	3	5	18	49
30,893	28,864	Leeds United	25	8	2	2	26	11	4	5	4	12	55
36,427	27,524	Manchester C.	26	9	1	3	23	14	2	7	4	16	91
47,485	44,166	Manchester U.*	26	7	3	4	23	13	4	5	3	15	40
13,733	7,364	Wimbledon	27	7	5	3	24	16	3	5	4	17	40
35,033	31,806	Tottenham	26	7	5	2	27	16	3	4	5	10	39
33,478	21,370	Chelsea	27	8	5	1	22	14	2	2	9	18	30
21,275	15,406	Norwich City	26	7	1	5	21	23	3	3	7	11	34
39,847	27,138	Everton	27	7	3	4	21	11	2	3	8	11	20
27,347	21,431	Nottingham F.	26	5	3	4	20	16	3	5	6	19	21
21,405	16,640	Southampton	26	6	3	3	21	13	2	2	10	17	34
12,576	10,217	Luton Town	27	6	4	4	19	14	2	1	10	12	30
40,026	26,153	Aston Villa	25	5	6	0	16	8	1	4	9	11	20
22,731	14,104	Coventry City	26	6	5	3	21	14	1	2	9	5	17
21,405	14,322	Q.P.R.	27	5	3	5	19	17	2	4	8	13	27
27,009	21,061	Sheffield Utd.	27	6	2	6	16	17	2	2	9	8	26
31,107	23,035	Sunderland	27	5	4	4	12	10	1	4	9	17	30
21,729	16,825	Derby County	26	2	8	4	16	21	2	0	10	8	25

* Arsenal 2pts deducted, Manchester United 1pt deducted.

APPEARANCES 1990-91

	League Apps	Cup Gls	League Apps	Cup Gls
MARK BLAKE	3	-	-	-
16.12.70 Nottingham				
LEE BUTLER	1	-	-	-
30.5.66 Sheffield				
NIGEL CALLAGHAN	2	-	2(1)	-
12.9.62 Singapore				
TONY CASCARINO	21(2)	4	7(1)	1
1.9.62 St Paul's Cray				
ANDY COMYN	6(2)	-	5	-
2.8.68 Wakefield				
GORDON COWANS	25	1	11	-
27.10.58 Durham				
NEIL COX	-	-	-	-
8.10.71 Scunthorpe				
TONY DALEY	20	2	8	2
18.10.67 Birmingham				
KEVIN GAGE	8	-	1	-
21.4.64 Chiswick				
BERNIE GALLACHER	2	-	-	-
23.3.67 Johnstone				
STUART GRAY	21	-	11	1
19.4.60 Withernsea				
PAUL MCGRATH	23	-	9	-
4.12.59 Ealing				
DEREK MOUNTFIELD	20	3	8	2
2.11.62 Liverpool				
KENT NIELSEN	25	1	10	1
28.12.61 Fredriksberg				
IAN OLNEY	8(1)	1	4(2)	1
17.12.69 Luton				
IAN ORMONDROYD	8(5)	1	5(2)	2
22.9.64 Bradford				
DAVID PLATT	22	11	11	5
10.6.66 Chadderton				
CHRIS PRICE	25	1	11	-
30.3.60 Hereford				
NIGEL SPINK	24	-	11	-
8.8.58 Chelmsford				
IVO STAS	-	-	-	-
10.2.65 Ostrava				
GARETH WILLIAMS	-	-	-	-
12.3.67 Isle of Wight				
DWIGHT YORKE	5(7)	1	3	-
3.11.71 Canana, Tobago				
OWN GOALS	-	1	-	1

Also played: PAUL BIRCH (now Wolves)
6(2) Lge Apps, 4(5) Cup Apps.

STATS

FIRST TEAM FIXTURES 1990-91

Date	V	Opposition	F-A	Att.	Pos.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	Sub	Sub	
Aug 25	H	Southampton	1-1	29,542	-	Spink	Price	Gray	McGrath	Mountfield	Nielsen	Daley	Platt	Olney	Cowans	Cascarino 1	Gage	Comyn	
Sep 1	A	Liverpool	1-2	38,061	18	Spink	Price	Gray	McGrath	Mountfield	Nielsen	Daley	Platt 1	Gage	Cowans	Cascarino	Comyn	Olney	
Sep 5	A	Manchester City	1-2	30,199	18	Spink	Price	Gray	McGrath	Mountfield	Nielsen	Daley	Platt 1	Gage	Cowans	Cascarino	Olney(5)	Yorke	
Sep 8	H	Coventry City	2-1	27,001	13	Spink	Price	Gallacher	McGrath	Mountfield	Nielsen	Daley	Platt 1	Olney	Cowans	Cascarino 1	Yorke(9)	Comyn	
Sep 15	A	Derby County	2-0	19,024	8	Spink	Price	Gray	McGrath	Mountfield	Nielsen	Daley 1	Platt 1	Gage	Cowans	Cascarino	Ormondroyd	Yorke	
Sep 19	H	Banik Ostrava (UEFA Cup 1/1)	3-1	27,317	-	Spink	Price	Gray	McGrath	Mountfield 1	Nielsen	Daley	Platt 1	Gage	Cowans	Cascarino	Ormondroyd(9)	Olney(11) 1	
Sep 22	H	Queens Park Rangers	2-2	23,301	9	Spink	Price	Gray	McGrath	Mountfield 1	Nielsen	Daley	Platt	Olney	Cowans	Ormondroyd 1	Gage	Yorke(9)	
Sep 26	H	Barnsley (RLC 2 - 1st leg)	1-0	14,471	-	Spink	Price	Gray	McGrath	Mountfield	Nielsen	Daley	Platt 1	Olney	Cowans	Ormondroyd	Birch(11)	Blake	
Sep 29	A	Tottenham Hotspur	1-2	34,939	11	Spink	Price	Gray	McGrath	Mountfield	Nielsen	Daley	Platt 1	Olney	Cowans	Birch	Comyn	Ormondroyd(9)	
Oct 3	A	Banik Ostrava (UEFA Cup 1/2)	† 2-1	25,000	-	Spink	Price	Gray	McGrath	Mountfield 1	Nielsen	Daley	Platt	Olney	Cowans	Ormondroyd	Butler	Comyn	Yorke
Oct 6	H	Sunderland	3-0	26,017	9	Spink	Price	Gray	McGrath	Mountfield	Nielsen	Daley 1	Platt 1	Olney 1	Cowans	Birch	Ormondroyd(11)	Cascarino(9)	
Oct 9	A	Barnsley (RLC 2 - 2nd leg)	1-0	13,924	-	Spink	Price	Gray	McGrath	Mountfield	Comyn	Daley 1	Platt	Olney	Cowans	Cascarino	Gallacher		
Oct 20	A	Wimbledon	0-0	6,646	9	Spink	Price	Gray	Comyn	Mountfield	Nielsen	Daley	Platt	Ormondroyd	Cowans	Cascarino	Birch(9)	Olney	
Oct 24	H	Internazionale (UEFA Cup 2/1)	2-0	36,461	-	Spink	Price	Gray	Comyn	Mountfield	Nielsen 1	Daley	Platt 1	Birch	Cowans	Olney	Butler	O'royd	Yorke
Oct 27	H	Leeds United	0-0	24,219	8	Spink	Price	Gray	Comyn	Mountfield	Nielsen	Daley	Platt	Birch	Cowans	Cascarino	Olney	Blake	
Oct 31	H	Millwall (RLC 3)	2-0	15,117	-	Spink	Price	Gray	Comyn	Mountfield	Nielsen	Daley	Platt 1	Ormondroyd	Cowans	Cascarino 1	Birch(3)	Olney	
Nov 3	A	Chelsea	0-1	23,555	9	Spink	Price	Gallacher	McGrath	Mountfield	Nielsen	Daley	Platt	Birch	Cowans	Cascarino	Comyn	Ormondroyd(7)	
Nov 7	A	Internazionale (UEFA Cup 2/2)	0-3	75,580	-	Spink	Price	Gray	McGrath	Mountfield	Nielsen	Daley	Platt	Birch	Cowans	Cascarino	Olney(5)	**	
Nov 10	H	Nottingham Forest	1-1	25,797	9	Spink	Price	Gray	McGrath	Mountfield	Nielsen 1	Daley	Platt	Olney	Cowans	Cascarino	Blake	Birch	
Nov 17	A	Norwich City	0-2	17,243	13	Spink	Price	Gray	McGrath	Mountfield	Nielsen	Daley	Platt	Olney	Cowans	Cascarino	Comyn	Birch	
Nov 24	A	Luton Town	0-2	10,071	13	Spink	Price	Gray	McGrath	Mountfield	Nielsen	Daley	Platt	Blake	Cowans	Cascarino	Birch(9)	Yorke(5)	
Nov 28	H	Middlesbrough (RLC 4)	3-2	17,317	-	Spink	Price	Gray	McGrath	Mountfield	Nielsen	Daley 1	Platt 1	Olney	Cowans	Ormondroyd 1	Cascarino	Birch(8)	
Dec 1	H	Sheffield United	2-1	21,713	12	Spink	Price 1	Gray	McGrath	Comyn	Nielsen	Daley	Platt 1	Olney	Cowans	Ormondroyd	Casarino(9)	Birch	
Dec 15	A	Southampton	1-1	16,604	13	Spink	Price	Gray	McGrath	Birch	Nielsen	Daley	Platt 1	Ormondroyd	Cowans	Cascarino	Birch	Yorke(5)	
Dec 23	H	Arsenal	0-0	22,687	13	Spink	Price	Gray	McGrath	Mountfield	Nielsen	Daley	Platt	Ormondroyd	Cowans	Cascarino	Comyn	Ormondroyd(7)	
Dec 29	A	Manchester United	† 1-1	47,485	15	Spink	Price	Gray	McGrath	Mountfield	Nielsen	Daley	Platt	Yorke	Cowans	Cascarino	Ormondroyd	Callaghan	
Jan 1	H	Crystal Palace	2-0	25,523	13	Spink	Price	Gray 1	McGrath	Comyn	Nielsen	Daley	Platt 2	Cascarino	Cowans	Ormondroyd	Comyn	Callaghan	
Jan 5	H	Wimbledon (FAC 3)	1-1																

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SPONSORS ROLL CALL

A special Villa Park welcome this afternoon to Matchball Sponsors BSK Aluminium Ltd. and their Managing Director Mr Jack Bonar; Boardroom Sponsors Wilson Construction and their Marketing Manager Mr Mike Wilkes; Houghton Suite Sponsors Pauline Hyde & Associates Ltd. and Managing Director Mr Christopher Blasdale; and McGregor Suite Sponsors B&B Insurance Services who are hosted by partners Mr Tony Bank and Mr Brian Bisp.

Our prestige home fixtures against Tottenham on Saturday 16th March, Everton on 30th March and Manchester United on 6th April, offer an ideal opportunity for companies to promote their services and products and at the same stage, entertain valuable existing clients, potential clientele or as a staff reward.

In addition, you would have the thrill of watching some of the most exciting players in the land - Gascoigne, Lineker, Southall, Nevin, Robson, Hughes, Platt, Daley etc. etc.

Due to the hospitality facilities at the stadium already being allocated for these games, we intend to join forces with a local four-star hotel in order to meet the demand for additional requirements.

The proposed package for the day is available for a minimum of four guests from a cost of only £55.00 plus VAT per person and includes a wine reception, lunch, bar facilities, after dinner speaker, coach transfers and prime match tickets.

Should you wish to reserve the Package for the game of your choice or require additional information, please do not hesitate to contact us on 021-327 5399 or by fax on 021-322 2107.

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BARCELONA HELP CRUYFF RECOVER
Shock waves reverberated around European football when it was learned that Barcelona boss Johan Cruyff had undergone double heart by-pass surgery.

The talented Dutchman (pictured below) had always been regarded as Mr. Ice Man, immune from the pressures afflicting ordinary soccer mortals yet his side were suddenly left temporarily leaderless in their full-steam-ahead surge for the Spanish title.

However, his recovery from the operation was given the one lift he wanted most in the shape of a 1-0 home win over Tenerife to maintain a runaway five-point lead over Atletico.

The Madrid club seem unlikely to catch them now but with a seven-point gap on ailing Real they are happy enough and have undergone a period of unusual stability.

Notorious president Jesus Gil has kept his finger off the trigger as the slav Tomislav Ilic has remained in the hottest of hot seats all season.

So impressed is Senor Gil with Ilic's dedication that he has declared that the club coach is thinking of Atletico's affairs: "Even when he is making love."

Last Sunday they were beaten 1-0 at home by St Pauli while Kaiserslautern went down by the odd goal in seven against Eintracht in Frankfurt allowing Werder Bremen to keep their nose in front on a week-end off.

WORLD CUP UK?
England have been officially named as one of the countries bidding to stage the 1998 World Cup Finals.

They have thrown their hat into the ring along with Brazil, Chile, France, India, Morocco, Portugal and Switzerland.

Bookmakers William Hill have quoted narrow odds of only 11-10 against England staging the finals four years after the USA event and 32 years since Alf Ramsey's side won against West Germany.

PLATINI JOB CHANGE
Michel Platini is showing signs of disenchantment with the French soccer scene which has been in so much turmoil in recent months.

Platini, the nation's greatest former player, hinted that he had received major offers when he said he could either 'take on more responsibilities in Paris' or move to a club job abroad.

However, at much the same time Platini was announcing a game between

BOBBY'S BOOST
Continued press reeports suggest that Bobby Robson is on dodgy ground with Dutch club PSV Eindhoven so last week-end's 6-0 home win over Feyenoord as bitter rivals Ajax were being held to a 1-1 draw by Groningen in Amsterdam will have given his morale a boost.

JUVENTUS SLIP BACK
The neck-and-neck tussle for the prestigious Italian title appears to have become a three-horse race following a 1-0 away defeat for Turin giants, Juventus, in Lazio.

Sampdoria slipped back a shade with a 1-1 draw in Atalanta as Inter's goal difference and a 1-0 win in Pisa gave them a fractional lead at the top as powerful AC Milan won 4-1 at home against reigning champions Napoli and lurked just one point behind in third place.

BAYERN WOBBLE
The German Bundesliga is getting even tighter than the Italian League and Bayern Munich look to be feeling the pressure.

But, before he could get his career in France underway he had to undergo knee surgery and he then broke down immediately on his return, requiring more surgery.

Now there is a chance of his being available for the European Cup final stages.

NOT MORE TROUBLE, DIEGO?
Diego Maradona continues to be the most newsworthy personality in world football.

England and France at Wembley on February 19, 1992. This would be a possible warm-up for the European Championship finals, assuming both nations qualify.

France were off to a flier in Group 1 with three wins out of three (against Iceland, Czechoslovakia and Albania) while England are involved in a far tighter schedule.

Graham Taylor's crunch

match comes at Wembley on

March 27 with the return leg

against Jack Charlton's Irish Republic.

With both nations expecting similar results against Poland and Turkey and a draw already recorded in Dublin, the Wembley showdown could decide which nation goes through.

NOT MORE TROUBLE, DIEGO?
Diego Maradona continues to be the most newsworthy personality in world football.

On the heels of his World Cup Final pique, his break with his business manager, his returns to Argentina against club rules, his fines, his threats to quit, comes the latest bombshell.

From Naples came a report that his name was being linked to a drugs and sex ring uncovered through police tapping of telephone lines.

Amazingly, that report came only days after Napoli had announced that their rift with the Argentinian megastar seemed to have been healed.

At last he had returned to the club's training ground for several successive days preparation and then scored two goals from penalties and set-up in the other two in a 4-2 victory over well-placed Parma.

Now his future in Italian football is in doubt again until the inquiries are completed.

All that apart, his life has been fairly dull lately...

Euro News

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SIDELINES

NEW STEWARDS ON PARADE

Thirteen new club stewards took up their Villa Park duties at the fixture against Derby County and are seen below being briefed by John Hood, the clubs Safety & Operations Manager.

The newcomers are qualified in First Aid and Fire Fighting and have also been taught in certain procedures by the police and by former police chief, Mr Hood.

These stewards are part of the club's ongoing policy of meeting all of the requirements of the Lord Justice Taylor Report.

NEW PROMOTIONS CHAIRMAN SUCCEEDS ALAN WEBB

Villa fan and shareholder ALAN WEBB is pictured (right) giving a welcoming handshake to David Owen who is succeeding him as chairman of the club's promotions department.

Alan, from Tamworth, became chairman of what was formerly the Aston Villa Development Association, which is responsible for the lottery, shop and some other fund-raising activities, 15 years ago.

He has brought his lengthy stint in the chair to a close because of new, pressing commitments but he will remain on the committee.

"I am keen to go on helping the club in this way," he said "but I can longer afford the time it requires to be a fully active chairman."

Alan sold out his bookmaking business recently, retired, but went into a new business venture in the form of the big new indoor bowling centre in Tamworth.

However, the custom-built new premises was virtually destroyed by fire recently



and a good deal of planning and organising has to go into rebuilding it. "He has been a very hard-working and dedicated chairman," said promotions manager John Greenfield.

"Most people do not realise the amount of time and effort that goes into it." The new chairman is a solicitor and an avid Villa fan and shareholder.

BARLOW GAVE CLUB A LIFT

Barlow Handling, sponsors of the Derby County victory provided the novel sight of one of their fork-lift trucks parading the pitch perimeter with a couple of caged promotion girls on show.

The girls, quite apart from being lovely to look at, were distributing goodies to the supporters as part of their company project.

One person who particularly liked what he saw (that's the fork lift truck, not the girls!) was stadium manager, Ted Small.

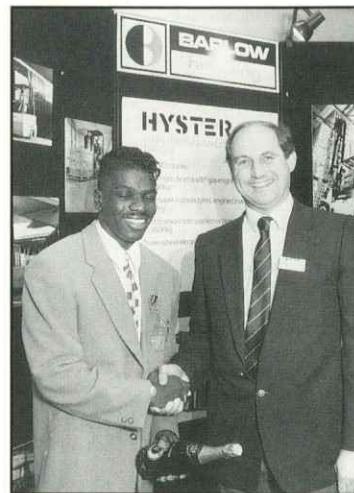
Ted was impressed with the smooth working and efficiency of the truck and promptly placed an order to help with his multitude of Villa Park jobs.

In our picture (above) the Barlow managing director, Chris Parnall, is seen handing over a bottle of champagne to Tony Daley, who was their Man of the Match selection.

EAGLE YORKE FLYING HIGH

Trinidadian Dwight Yorke, who 'signed in' with his first goal for Villa against Derby - along with a Roger Milla wiggle - was named the Barclays Young Eagle, (Midland Region), for the month of January.

Before today's game Dwight will be presented with silver salver by Ray Waterson, corporate director of Barclays Birmingham regional office.



'GHOST' TRANSFER

An intriguing item in the magazine 'Football Monthly' has caused a couple of furrowed brows at Villa Park.

In their coverage of transfer dealings for the month of January they list among those for 'less than £30,000', a signing by Villa of Kosecki from Legia Warsaw.

"It's news to us ..." said commercial manager, Abdul Rashid.

The otherwise excellent magazine also contains in its February issue an interesting 'Fans view' of a visit to Villa Park in their 'Terrace Man' series. Well worth a read.



DOWN-UNDER VILLA

Aston Villa's supporters branch in Australia is still going strong and would welcome new members from anywhere down-under.

They describe themselves as being 'for Villans down-under', are anxious to be as active as possible with regular meetings and the staging of functions.

Anyone interested can write to the secretary, Ken Shaw, 13 Summit Ave, Dee Why, NSW 2099. Telephone: (02) 9812614.

FAIR PLAY? THERE'S NO 'MATCH' FOR VILLA

Following Villa's joint-top selection in the Match magazine Fair Play awards for December, the January choice has now been given exclusively to Jozef Venglos's team.

PONTINS WINNER

In the programme for the game with Liverpool in January we asked readers to write in and tell us of their favourite Villa memories, with the chance of winning a fabulous prize of a free weekend break for two at one of Pontins' attractive self-catering chalets.

Thanks to all those who sent in entries, telling stories from all eras, including one from a lady whose greatest Villa memory was from as recent as January 1991! But we can only have one winner and after much deliberation we've plumped for this letter from Clive Hartwell of Middleton Hall Road, Kings Norton, Birmingham, recalling the never-to-be forgotten night of May 26th, 1982...

"After thirty years of regular visits to watch the Villa there have been many magic moments but there can only be one choice as my favourite memory ... that night in Rotterdam!

The growing excitement at work on the day before ... the fun, good humour and companionship in the 'Ben Johnson' on the evening ... the long coach journey through the night when no-one slept ... the best wishes of the captain and crew on the ferry ... the suspicious looks followed by the 'thumbs-up' from police and frontier guards across Europe ... the friendliness of the Dutch people on the afternoon ... and then the match!

On entering the stadium being separated from friends and denied access to the seats because of overcrowding before finding a place behind the goal ... the welcome for the teams ... the mystery of Rimmer's departure ... the heroics of Spinkie ... the GOAL ... leaping into the air, fists punched into the sky ... the cheer of victory ... the tears when Dennis held up the cup ... the reunions with friends ... and a story to tell forever - to friends, colleagues, children and eventually (hopefully!) grandchildren.

I WAS THERE IN 1982!

Another competition in the Liverpool programme, on the Family Club page, was for a prize of a Club Edition Subbuteo set. The lucky winner was Kirk Barham of Hartley Road, Kingstanding, Birmingham.

Kirk gave the answers correctly as 1. Crewe; 2. Dundee; 3. Spain; 4. Salvatore Schillaci; 5. Tim Buzaglo.



MEETING THE FANS

Two of Villa's disabled supporters Haley Meldrum and Mary Collett fulfilled an ambition when they were introduced to Tony Daley and Nigel Spink at the Derby game.

Haley (front, left) and Mary are pictured (above) with their heroes. Also in the picture are Alan Thomason, Martin Jackson and Dennis Wilkes, who helped set up the 'Fix-it'.

TV SCANDINAVIA

Today's game is not on UK TV but the adverts around the track give a clue that it is to be screened elsewhere.

In fact the match is being screened in Norway, Denmark, Finland and Sweden.

DJ BEAR

DJ Bear, the Football League mascot, will be on parade before next Saturday's home game with Spurs.



IRISH HEROES

Irish World Cup stars Paul McGrath and Tony Cascarino were an obvious attraction for John Cousins when he visited Villa Park as a guest of club sponsors, Mita.

John is managing director of Astra Copiers Ltd., distributors in Ireland for Mita products John is seen with the two members of the Jack Charlton squad which made such a lasting impression on Italia 90.

IN SEARCH OF THE LIONS



Eric Woodward continues his series of interviews with former Villa Park favourites.

Today: BOBBY THOMSON

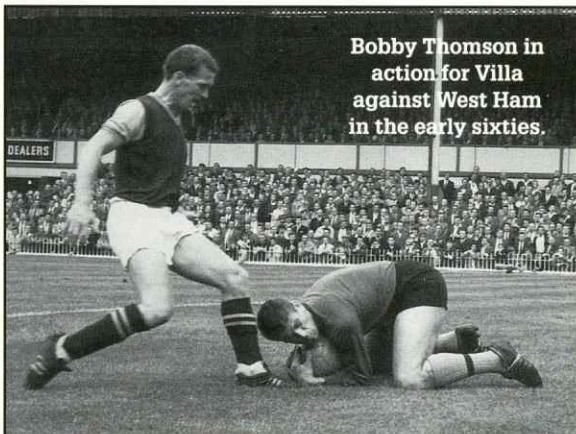
In June, 1959, Bobby Thomson was transferred from Wolves to Aston Villa, one of a few new players Manager Joe Mercer had drafted into the team following their relegation the season before.

At the time, I was chief football writer of the 'Birmingham Mail', and Thomson's arrival was a much-needed boost after the previous campaign's disasters.

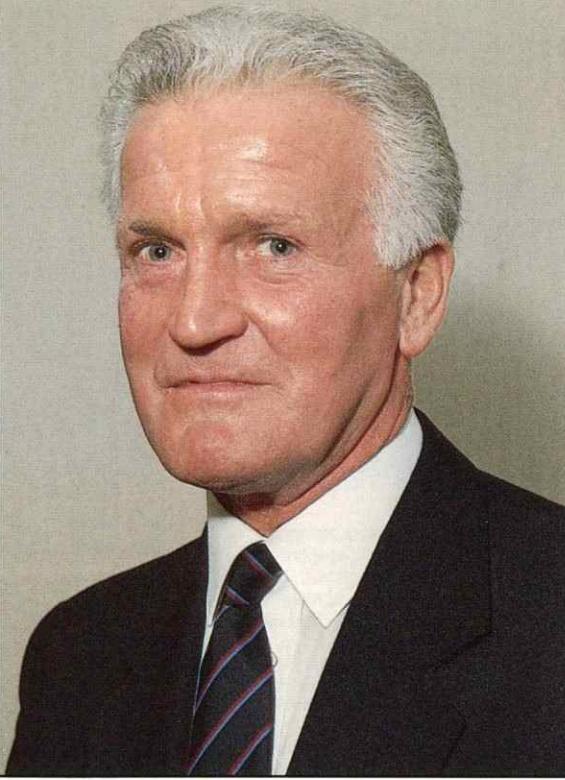
Now Thomson had been sent off in his last game for Wolves and was given a two week's suspension by the Football Association, effective from the start of the new season.

So when I started writing the traditional pre-season articles on the West Midlands clubs prospects, I pointed out that Villa would not have Thomson in their team for the first three games.

Just after 2pm on the



Bobby Thomson in action for Villa against West Ham in the early sixties.



day that piece was published, Joe Mercer called me. "You've got it all wrong" he said.

"Thomson's only suspended for a week". My response was quick - and genuine. I promised to put the matter right in the remaining editions of the day, and set about doing just that. But ...

My Sports Editor wanted to know why I was changing the story. I explained. So then he wanted to know why I had been inaccurate in the first place; where had I got my original belief that a two weeks' suspension was involved?

I thought that it was something I had picked up and stored in my memory. He wasn't satisfied which, I suppose, was a back-handed tribute to my memory. "Check with the F.A." he said.

So I rang Lancaster Gate, and the F.A. spokesman confirmed: "Thomson is suspended for TWO weeks". My Sports Editor sniffed a bit of irregularity. "Ring Joe Mercer and ask him where he got HIS information from".

I duly called Villa Park. "Joe", I said, "I've been on to the F.A." ... and there was an anguished cry at the other end. "What have you done to me?" Joe wailed. By this time, I heard the penny drop. "Joe" I said, "you'd better tell me the whole story....."

And so the story came out. The F.A. had made a mistake. They had given Thomson a two weeks' 'sentence' alright - but the official notification was for only one, and all Joe had to do to make it legal was acknowledge it by returning a tear-off slip.

Of course the end of the story was that Joe was forced to call the F.A. and tell them they had made a mistake. They were very grateful. Joe was livid. And the following day's national newspapers reported the story of how honest Joe Mercer had told the truth, and the Football Association had been spared considerable embarrassment.

I tell this story today, for the first time, because I was reminded of it when Bobby and I met at a recent funeral. He knew nothing of it, naturally, and always thought he was down for two weeks anyway. And when he did finally play, he scored. He scored on his Wolves debut, and for Birmingham City when he stepped out for the St. Andrews side in September, 1963.

Now silver-haired, but immaculate and looking immensely fit, we had a great time remembering old times and old friends. He always felt that he stayed too long in the shadow of so many fine players assembled at Molineux, just as he had his most enjoyable period, from a personal point of view, with Blues.

For all three clubs he

was an incredible workaholic, either as an inside-forward or wing-half, despite a lifestyle in the fast lane. He worked as hard as he played - and that's no mean feat. And, in retrospect, he was better than he was given credit for.

A hard childhood led to a lengthy period at a military academy, and I always sensed that, come what may, he thought life was for living.

He scored 70 goals in 171 League and Cup appearances for Villa, and 26 goals in 125 appearances for Blues, plus his in and out appearances at Molineux. All three clubs had their monies' worth, though Bobby is adamant that he "wasted" his time with Wolves and should have left earlier.

These days, Bobby Thomson lives close to Birmingham's city centre, keeps active by playing a great deal of squash and tennis - but never watches football. "If there's something else on the telly, I'll watch it rather than football" he said. "No gripes. I'm one of those people who have to be participating. I was just the same as a player. If I didn't get the ball I would sulk".



Ron Wylie, Malcolm Beard and Thomson all played for Villa and Blues.



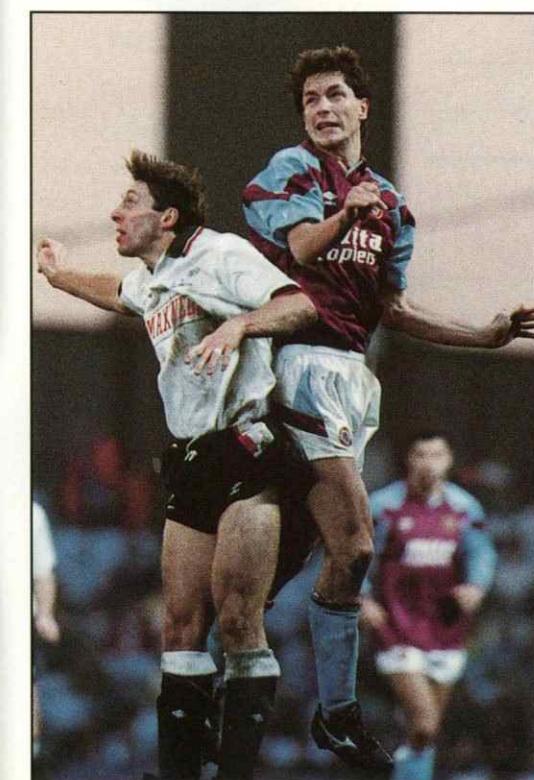
NEW SHOP TAKES OFF

Supporters swarmed into the new club shop which was officially opened by chairman Doug Ellis and Villa's 1957 FA Cup-winning skipper Johnny Dixon (see picture below) in January.

Any fans who have not seen the scope and lay-out of the new premises are invited to take a look. They will find an exciting additional range of goods to the extensive selection previously on offer and will receive a warm welcome from the friendly shop staff (seen in the bottom picture). It's well worth a visit.



Villa's second goal in the 3-2 win against Derby was hardly one for the purists, but they all count. Our series of pictures here show what happened after Dwight Yorke's initial effort was blocked by Micheal Forsyth. More and more players became involved in the goalmouth scrimmage, all trying to get the vital touch. Eventually Chris Price managed to divert the ball across the goal ...into the path of the unmarked Tony Cascarino, who drove the ball past Peter Shilton. The first goal came from a Gordon Cowans penalty after Gary Micklewhite had handled (as our picture, right, clearly proves). The other pictures are of Stuart Gray, being thwarted by Mick Harford's elbow and getting the better of Micklewhite.





TEAM CHECK

MATCH OFFICIALS

Referee: Mr L R Dilkes (Mossley, Lancs).

Linesmen: Mr A Black (red trim) and Mr D T Colwell (yellow trim).

Standby Official: Mr K L Rzepkowski.

ASTON VILLA v LUTON TOWN

NIGEL SPINK 1 ALEC CHAMBERLAIN

CHRIS PRICE 2 MARVIN JOHNSON

KEVIN GAGE 3 DARRON McDONOUGH

PAUL McGRATH 4 DAVE BEAUMONT

DEREK MOUNTFIELD 5 GRAHAM RODGER

KENT NIELSEN 6 JOHN DREYER

DWIGHT YORKE 7 LARS ELSTRUP

MARK BLAKE 8 DAVID PREECE

TONY CASCARINO 9 IAIN DOWIE

GORDON COWANS 10 MARK PEMBRIDGE

STUART GRAY 11 KINGSLEY BLACK

Sub

Sub

NEW VILLA STRIP BY UMBRO



VILLA MASCOT

Today's Villa mascot is ten-year-old Jamie Lowe from Streethay in Lichfield. Jamie attends St. Michael's School, Lichfield and his hobbies include football, swimming, drawing and reading.

The mascot's kit is kindly supplied by Umbro and is retained as a souvenir of the occasion.

VILLA
VOUCHER

18

09.03.91

All telephone calls to Clubcall, Ticketline and Man-of-the-Match numbers cost 33p/minute cheap; 44p/minute other times.

SCORECHECK

FA Cup Sixth Round

Arsenal v Cambridge United
Norwich City v Nottingham Forest

Barclays League Division One

Chelsea v Manchester United
Crystal Palace v Southampton
Leeds United v Coventry City
Manchester City v Liverpool
Sunderland v Sheffield United

Division Two

Bristol City v Ipswich Town
Leicester City v Hull City
Middlesbrough v Oxford United
Millwall v Brighton & Hove Albion
Oldham Athletic v Bristol Rovers
Port Vale v Blackburn Rovers
Portsmouth v Charlton Athletic
Sheffield Wednesday v W.B.A.
Watford v Newcastle United
Wolves v Barnsley

Division Three

Rotherham Utd. v Birmingham City

Division Four

Walsall v Cardiff City



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