

# The



Season  
2007/08

Issue 16

# Pirate

The Official Matchday Programme of  
BRISTOL ROVERS FOOTBALL CLUB

£2.50



## v Luton Town

Wednesday 26th December 2007

kick off 3.00pm

The Memorial Stadium



**COWLIN  
CONSTRUCTION**

# one of the team

Building your future from a solid foundation



Main club partners since 1998  
The region's leading Construction Group

[www.cowlin.co.uk](http://www.cowlin.co.uk)



# Eager to be back in home action

**I hope that you all enjoyed a very Happy Christmas, and would like to welcome you all to the Memorial Stadium for our Boxing Day match against Luton Town.**

The last game we played, before writing my notes for this afternoon, was against Huddersfield and we went into that game having had a couple of weeks off due to the postponement of our home fixtures against Cheltenham Town and Swansea City.

We were missing two players through suspension and a couple more through injury, but we suffered a disappointing defeat at the Galpharm Stadium. We were a little bit slow out of the traps, which may have been due to our enforced lay off, but in the second half we came strong and had enough of the game to have taken something from it. However we still lacked quality, in and around their penalty area, to create and score goals.

Having got back on level terms though we thought we were going to go on and take something, but it was a blow to concede a second goal so soon after our equaliser and that's now happened on numerous occasions.

With the prospect of two home games following our FA Cup wins against Leyton Orient and Rushden & Diamonds, we were keen to continue our form. The postponements meant that didn't happen.

The cup games and the Huddersfield match gave one or two of our younger players the chance to be involved, and although we now have players on the way back from suspension and injury, they have to use that experience as a little taster of what they can do, what they can achieve and where they can play.

They are going to be needed again

throughout the season, though maybe not week in, week out. Things change very quickly in football, though, and you can go from having a fully fit squad to having a number of people out in a short space of time and they have to be ready when that chance comes.

What they gave in the chance they have already had was very encouraging and, obviously, they are hoping they get another chance.

Tom Parrinello, in particular, has had to be very patient for his chance. He's been with us for a while now and he's progressing well. He had a little bit of involvement last season and it was pleasing to get him on against Rushden.

He's shown tremendous application and attitude since he's been with us and he has a very good mentality in training and in games. Nothing fazes him, and he has the mental strength needed to be a footballer. We are pleased with Tom's contribution and hopefully this is the start for him.

Matt Groves missed the majority of pre season through injury and experienced a lot of injury problems last year as well, but gradually he's got fitter and stronger and has produced some good performances in the reserves.

When he came on against Rushden he looked lively and showed some nice touches and good movement. At Huddersfield he went on in difficult circumstances when we were chasing the game, but it's all part of his learning process. He can be pleased with the start he's made and, hopefully, there's a lot more to come.

We face a Luton side this afternoon who have been playing very well. We had a good game against them up at Kenilworth Road earlier in the season, when we were delighted to come away with all three points.

Rickie Lambert scored a great goal that day but they showed then what a good side they are. They pass the ball very, very well and they have some very good individual players, so we know that it's going to be a tough game.

Despite their ten point deduction they



**“NO MATTER WHICH TEAM YOU PLAY FOR, OR IN WHAT LEAGUE, IT'S A CRUCIAL PERIOD AND YOU WANT TO COME OUT OF IT HAVING BETTERED YOUR LEAGUE POSITION AND THAT'S CERTAINLY OUR AIM”**

are still producing good performances and have a very good spirit about them and they will be confident of getting themselves out of trouble.

It's a good challenge for us today, but we've waited a long time for a home game. We felt our home form had just turned the corner before we had an enforced lay off, so we are eager to get back into action, to play in front of our own fans and, obviously, we are looking to get three points.

We train right through the festive period, and this time of year is one of the very few when being in football is not such an attractive proposition as it might seem. Being a footballer means you are unable to enjoy the festivities in the same way as everyone else, and you have to be disciplined and professional.

No matter which team you play for, or in what league, it's a crucial period and you want to come out of it having bettered your league position and that's certainly our aim.

I hope that you all enjoy the game this afternoon and look forward to seeing you back here again on Saturday, when we take on Carlisle United.

**TROLLOPE Paul** **FTC**  
SOS Group Ltd 08452 308080  
Electrical Office Equipment

British Army Germany Gasheads





**BRISTOL ROVERS FOOTBALL CLUB**

The Memorial Stadium,  
Filton Avenue,  
Horfield, Bristol BS7 0BF

**Chairman** Ron Craig

**Vice-Chairman** Nick Higgs

**Directors**

Barry Bradshaw, David Brain,  
Geoff Dunford, Rod King,  
Ken Masters, Edward Ware

**Associate Director** Pete Thornell

**President** Denis Dunford

**Honorary Vice-Presidents**

Bob Andrews, Arthur Holmes,  
Roy Redman, Alan Seager,  
Vernon Stokes

**Director of Football**

Lennie Lawrence

**First Team Coach** Paul Trollope

**Head of Youth** Kevin Hodges

**Goalkeeping Coach** Steve Book

**Chief Scout** Paul Molesworth

**Centre of Excellence Manager**

Stewart Naughton

**Director of Administration**

Rod Wesson

**Physiotherapist**

Phil Kite, BSc Hons, MCSP, SRP

**Kit Manager** Roger Harding

**Club Doctor** Dr Tim Jenkinson

**Company Secretary** Toni Watola

**Stadium General Manager**

Ian Holtby

**Community Officer**

Peter Aitken

**Safety & Liaison Officer**

Dave Harper

**IT Manager** Ian Cole

**PR Officer** Kirsty Pugh

**Club Chaplain**

Rev David Jeal

**HONOURS**

Football League

Division Three (South)

Champions: 1952/53

Football League Division Three

Champions: 1989/90

Runners-Up: 1973/74

League Two Play Off Winners:

2008/07

Division Three (South)

Cup Winners 1934/35

Watney Cup Winners 1972

# Disappointment at Huddersfield



**The last game we are able to report on, due to the Christmas shutdown at the printers, is the defeat at Huddersfield some two weeks ago.**

Rovers went into that match with successive FA Cup wins under their belt, but had been out of action for a fortnight following the postponement of home games against Cheltenham and Swansea.

Defender Joe Jacobson returned to the starting lineup at the Galpharm Stadium, after serving a one match ban, and was disappointed with the outcome.

Confidence was high after those two wins in the FA Cup, and then there was a little break due to the postponements. The fact that we hadn't played for two weeks shouldn't really have affected us at Huddersfield because we prepared for the game in exactly the same way we prepare for any game.

Unfortunately, it turned out to be one of those days when we didn't really get it right and we never really passed the ball well, and a few lapses of concentration cost us the game.

Both sides started the game slowly, and Huddersfield's opener came out of the blue when Ronnie Wallwork's shot took a wicked deflection to wrong-foot Steve Phillips before ending up in the back of the net.

I think we seemed pretty comfortable up until that point and we hadn't had any problems with their set pieces. I thought we were coping well until the goal and the shot took a deflection on it's way into the net, which seems to be the way things have been going for us in a lot of games this season.

There were a few scares for Rovers in the final minutes of the first half, and Joe managed to get a block on a thundering drive from Wallwork and, after Steve Phillips had saved well from Michael Collins, he made a fine tackle to deny veteran striker Andy Booth a goalscoring opportunity.

We regrouped at half time and pulled a goal back. I thought we deserved that, but we conceded a second goal after some poor defending following a long throw. We'd been dealing situations like that throughout the game, which made it worse. There was a delay before the throw

was taken, as David Pipe needed treatment, so perhaps people were a little bit slow to react. I don't know. Once again, though, goalscorer Phil Jevons benefited from a lucky ricochet as the ball went straight back to him after his initial shot and he put the ball into the net with his second effort.

After the second Huddersfield goal, Rovers enjoyed a great deal of possession, but couldn't make the breakthrough for an equaliser.

When we pushed forward we couldn't quite get a good goalscoring opportunity. We huffed and puffed, but that last bit of quality just evaded us. We limited Huddersfield to long range efforts, and they benefited from a number of fortunate little ricochets. The ball seemed to bounce for them a bit more around our box than it did for us around their box.

Away from home, we've been playing well and we go into every away game full of confidence and thinking we can win. It was the same for this game, and maybe we didn't quite get it right, but we were in the game at 1-1 and we thought if we could hold on to that, there was a belief we would go on and win so to come away with nothing was very disappointing.

There was no time to dwell on defeat, as preparations began immediately for a return to Yorkshire and last Saturday's game against Leeds United.

They are regarded as the best team in the league, and it will be our hardest game of the season. We will prepare for the game in the right way and go there wanting to win the game.

# Danny Coles

**“AT OUR RECENT CHRISTMAS PARTY, RICHARD WALKER WORE THE NAUGHTIEST RED CARDIGAN I HAVE EVER SEEN, WITH THE WORST TIE EVER!”**

**This afternoon it's the turn of loan signing Danny Coles to be up close and personal.**

He might not have been here long, but he's already sussed out the players with the worst dress sense and tattoos, as well as the dressing room moaner. Were you aware that Steve Phillips was vain enough to carry a hair dryer around with him, that Craig Hinton never shuts up, that Uncle Albert is definitely someone you wouldn't want to be stuck in a lift with.

Oh, and here's hoping that Father Christmas delivered some decent jumpers to Richard Walker!

How do you prepare for a home match?

I'm quite superstitious, so I do the same before every home game. I get up at 9.00am, have breakfast, watch TV, have a pre match meal and then set off for the Mem at midday.

How do you pass the time on the coach to away games?

I sit next to Steve Phillips, and when he talks I tend to doze off!

Who do you room with on overnight stops?

Steve Phillips... and his hair dryer! Does he have any bad habits?

He used to put his hair dryer on to get warm, but he hasn't done that a lot recently.

Who wouldn't you want to room with?

Craig Hinton, because he never, ever, shuts up!

Who is the dressing room joker, and who moans the most?

I'd say the joker is Sammy Igoe, as he's someone you always have to be aware of! As for the biggest moaner, it's definitely Steve Phillips, but I guess it's because he likes to do things properly. Favourite away ground?

The City Ground, home of Nottingham Forest.

Best manager you've played for?

Danny Wilson was second to none, an awesome bloke.

What's the worst thing about being a professional footballer?

Ask my wife,

because she has a list as long as my arm! Seriously, it's probably the fact that we are only able to go away at certain times of the year.

What's the best football chant you've heard?

'Goodnight Irene!'

What was your worst subject at school?

Biology!

Who was the biggest influence on your career?

My family have been a big influence on my career and as my Dad always played football, the father/son relationship has worked well for me.

What programme would you record and which programme would you never watch?

I'd record 'Prison Break', but definitely not 'Ugly Betty'.

What's the best advice you've ever been given?

Always give 100% and always believe.

What advice would you give to youngsters?

Work hard at what you want to achieve, and stay in school!

On 'Who wants to be a Millionaire?' who is your friend to phone?

My wife, because she is very intelligent.

Which member of the squad would do well on 'Millionaire' and who wouldn't have a clue?

I think that Stuart Campbell would do well, but as for the rest of the lads, they would all struggle to come away with £100.

If the dressing room was the Big Brother House, who would be the first to be evicted and why?

I want to say Lewis Haldane, but he's the male Jade Goody, because he's not the sharpest tool in the box! However it



would probably be Ryan Green, because no one else would be able to get near the mirror!

The last book you read?

'Ollie'.

The last film you watched?

'American Gangster'.

What's your favourite track or album at the moment?

'Crank That' by Soulja Boy.

Which daily newspaper do you read?

The Sun.

What's the funniest thing ever shouted at you during a game?

I can't really recall anything to be honest, but I'm sure that I've been called a few names!

Best chat up line you've ever heard from a Rovers player?

I've not been here long enough to have heard any, to be honest.

Best player you've played with, and against?

The best I've played with is Nick Barmby, who is different class, while the best I've played against is Sammy Eto'o who is an unbelievable player.

Who wouldn't you want to be stuck in a lift with?

Kitman Roger Harding, because all he does is smoke cigars!

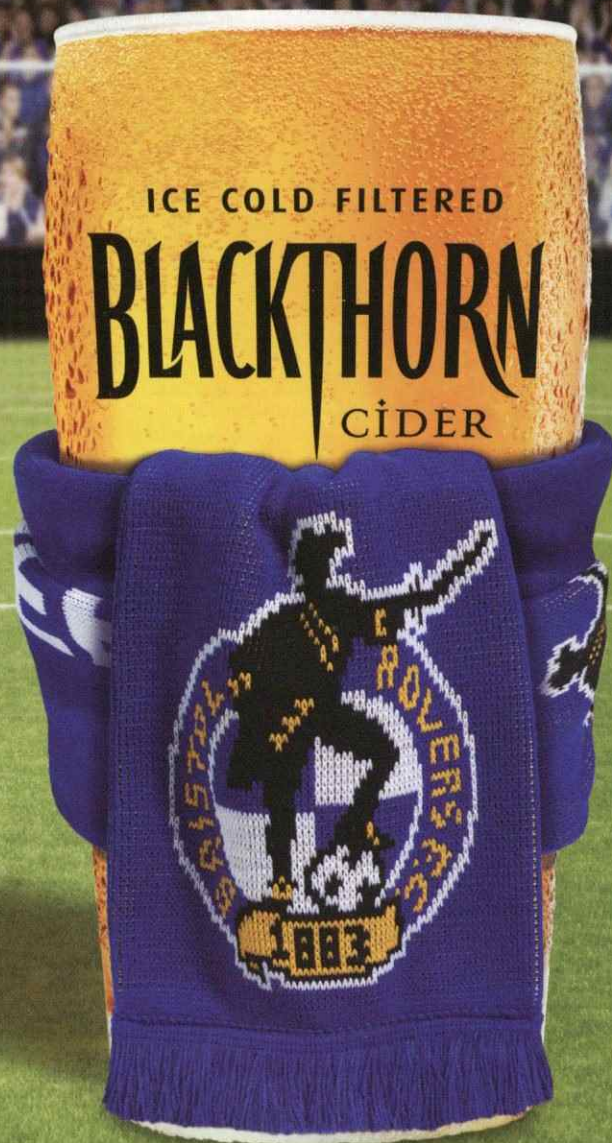
A number of Rovers players have tattoos. Who has the best... and the worst?

Lewis Haldane has the worst. His Leeds United tattoo is disgraceful. As for the best, I'd say the one that Sean Rigg has on his arm.

Which Rovers player has the worst dress sense?

At our recent Christmas Party, Richard Walker wore the naughtiest red cardigan I have ever seen, with the worst tie ever!

# "E'MON YOU GAS!"



ICE COLD FILTERED

## BLACKTHORN

CIDER

Please drink Blackthorn responsibly  
www.drinkaware.co.uk

SUPPORTING SPORT IN **BLACKTHORN**  
COUNTRY

BRISTOL ROVERS THE PIRATE



### BRISTOL ROVERS FOOTBALL CLUB

The Memorial Stadium,  
Filton Avenue,  
Horfield, Bristol BS7 0BF

#### DIRECTORY

##### Stadium

Tel: 0117 909 6648  
Fax: 0117 908 5530  
e-mail:  
ianholtby@bristolrovers.co.uk

##### Youth Department

Tel: 0117 952 2580

##### Community Department

Tel: 0117 952 2581

##### Ticket Office

(Matchdays Only)  
Tel: 0117 909 8848

##### BRFC Official Website

www.bristolrovers.co.uk

##### Pirate Leisure

Tel: 0117 909 6648  
Fax: 0117 908 5530  
e-mail shop@bristolrovers.co.uk

##### Supporters Club

Tel: 0117 961 1772  
Fax: 0117 961 1773  
email: brsc199@btconnect.com  
website:  
www.bristolrovers.co.uk

##### Share Scheme Administrator:

Clare McDonagh  
email: clare@bristolrovers.co.uk

##### Programmes Phil Draper

e-mail:  
phildraper@bristolrovers.co.uk  
Website:  
www.geocities.com/piratesprogs

##### Stadium Contacts

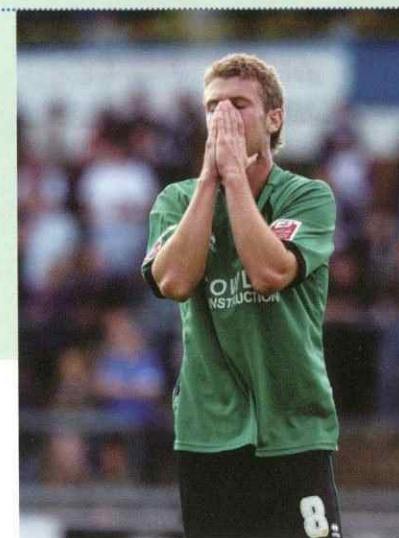
Trish Elvy  
(Conference Bookings)  
e-mail:  
trish@bristolrovers.co.uk  
Liz Jack  
(Corporate Hospitality)  
e-mail:  
lizjack@bristolrovers.co.uk

##### Helpline membership

Kate Radnedge  
Tel: 01454 321191

##### Presidents Club

Roger Hynam  
Tel: 0117 976 0568



It was a frustrating day for striker Andy Williams in our penultimate game before the Christmas period.

Playing against Huddersfield, at the Galpharm Stadium, he was close to equalising for Rovers when he appeared to be tripped, but fortunately the ball ran to David Pipe who netted his second goal for the club.

Then, when the home side had regained the lead, he had another scoring opportunity when once again he appeared to be tripped. He lost his balance, and the chance was gone but perhaps if he had gone down their might have been justifiable claims for a spot kick.

There was one more chance in the final minute of the game when his glancing header, from Joe Jacobson's cross, flew over the crossbar.

It was a strange game, he said afterwards it had been two weeks since our last game and I don't think we started well. We didn't pass the ball as well as we would have liked at any stage in the game, though when we managed to get back on level terms we should have gone on and claimed at least a point.

Huddersfield never created a great deal, but everything seemed to be dropping just right for them and not quite right for us. We didn't capitalise on the little chances we had, and it was a really frustrating day.

Their opening goal came after a fortuitous deflection from a shot by Ronnie Wallwork, which seemed to sum up the day. We were more lively in the second half, but it probably wasn't the best of games for the fans to watch and it wasn't the best to play in, either.

In the build up to our goal I was clipped but luckily 'Pipey' was on hand to score, and it was the same when Matt Groves put me

## A crucial time

through later in the game. Perhaps I should have gone down, but all I was thinking about was scoring. That was really frustrating, because their player made contact with me.

Today marks the start of a hectic time for footballers across the country.

The Christmas period is an important time, though I'm not complaining, because we have the best job in the world. As far as we are concerned, we will carry our normal routine and be sensible with what we eat and prepare thoroughly for every game.

There are nine points at stake in the next week, so it's a crucial time.

It's a tough period, as we face a lot of games in a short period of time, and we have a couple of home games in which we want to take maximum points. Hopefully, over the Christmas period, we can start putting a few results together and pull away from the bottom of the table and look towards the top again.

Following the New Year's Day fixture against Southend, we travel to London to take on Fulham in the Third Round of the FA Cup.

They are a good Premiership side, with a lot of good players and it will be nice to go to Craven Cottage. I think we'll have a good chance against them, and it's a game we will look forward to when it comes around. In the meantime, though, we just have to concentrate on the league and pick up some points in the hope we have a bit of momentum going into the game.

As he looks back on his first six months at the club, the former Hereford striker admits he's had a little bit of a frustrating time.

It's been good, though it has been a little bit frustrating at times, both for myself and for the team. We started quite well, and I got a couple of goals and was doing alright, and then things started to slide a bit. The goals dried up for me, and the points dried up for the team. It did take a while to settle in but, hopefully, I can start to put in some good performances and the goals will start to come again.



# Footballing glory and a watery grave

**Just before five o'clock on the last Saturday in May 2007, Bristol Rovers' Sammy Igoe collected the ball on the edge of his own penalty-area in front of a crowd of 61,589 at the newly-reopened Wembley and made the most significant run of his footballing career.**

'Sixty yards, two look-ups and a slight swerve to the right later, he let go a shot that, by the time it rolled in, had secured the fourth promotion of Rovers' 87 years in the Football League' (1).

There was a brief moment, as the ball trickled accurately and gently towards the goal-line and then came the most explosive eruption of sound. Igoe disappeared beneath a mound of players.



Action from the FA Cup Tie against Hull City



Sammy Igoe deserved a beer or two after his goal clinched promotion!

the crowd became ecstatic, 'Goodnight Irene, I'll see you in my dreams' was sung by the collected masses and Rovers had returned to League One, so ending a dismal six seasons entrenched in the basement division.

For many beyond the confines of the Memorial Stadium, an awareness of the role of 'Goodnight Irene' in all things Bristol Rovers and an understanding of its significance is something of a mystery.

Yet, unlike the story of many club songs, the tale of this crowd favourite appears to have a clear beginning.

On 4th November 1950, Plymouth Argyle arrived at Eastville with an accordion player, who performed contemporary songs around the edge of the pitch prior to the start of the match. One of these songs was the Huddie William 'Lead Belly' Ledbetter record 'Goodnight Irene', sung by Argyle supporters by dint of the fact that The Weavers, featuring Pete Seeger, had on 26th May 1950 released their

own version, which reached number one in the American charts. As Argyle took a first-half lead, their supporters used the song to taunt home fans. Three Rovers goals in eight second half minutes provoked a rendition of 'Goodnight Argyle' and the song soon caught on.

When Rovers played at Newcastle United before a crowd of 62,787 in that season's FA Cup quarter-final, the Magpies bowed to pressure and played the Jo Stafford rendition of the song during the pre-match build-up.

The significance of the Newcastle tie lies in the fact that no Bristol Rovers side had ever progressed so far in the FA Cup; nonetheless, the 1950/51 season had seen the birth of the halcyon days of the club's history. This eleven-game cup run had begun with three ties against an obdurate non league Llanelli side who included Jock Stein, later an influential manager of Scotland, in their side, and three games against Gillingham, Ray Warren's penalty five minutes from time settling a second replay at White Hart Lane. Over 13,000 saw Vic Lambden put Rovers ahead after only eight seconds against Aldershot in the Third Round and, with the powerful centre forward completing a hat trick, Rovers sailed through 5-1 to meet Second Division Luton Town in round four. George Petherbridge's goal at Kenilworth Road secured a famous victory and Hull City, a Second Division side boasting in their number Raich Carter and Don Revie, were drawn in the Fifth Round. Cup fever had hit Bristol in earnest and a new ground record at Eastville of 31,660, producing gate receipts of £2,600, saw Josser Watling scramble Rovers ahead after 26 minutes and crash home a second off the



Geoff Bradford in action against Newcastle

saw them through, the same eleven players as had played Rovers later beating Blackpool in the Wembley final.

'Goodnight Irene' had been swiftly adopted as a club anthem. The 1950's were, in many respects, Rovers' golden era as the club rode high in the old Second Division, threatening more and coming within two games of a top flight place in 1955/56. Geoff Bradford became the only Rovers player to represent England, when he appeared against Denmark in Copenhagen in October 1955, adding a goal after 82 minutes with a low, right footed shot from Jackie Milburn's flighted pass.

Three months later, as Rovers defeated the Busby Babes 4-0 at Eastville, 'Irene' was once again in full voice. Despite relegation in the early 1960's, the Tote

End continued to sing 'Goodnight Irene' and this was certainly the case through the two memorable League Cup runs of the early 1970's.

In 1970/71, Rovers brushed past Brighton, Newcastle, Norwich and Birmingham before losing to Aston Villa in a League Cup quarter-final; the following season, victories over Exeter, Sunderland, Charlton and QPR brought Gordon Banks' Stoke City side to Eastville. A crowd of 33,624 sang 'Goodnight Irene' in fine voice, but were drowned out by four Stoke goals, though late strikes from Robin Stubbs and Brian Godfrey lent an air of respectability to Rovers' inevitable defeat.

Twelve months later, Rovers drew with Manchester United in the same tournament and then defeated them 2-1 at Old Trafford, after Dick Sheppard had saved a George Best penalty. However, as the vocalists began to migrate from the Tote End to the North Enclosure, so the legend of Irene began to wane at Eastville. Supporters relate that they sang the anthem on the pitch in April 1974 after an end of season 1-1 draw with Brighton, having secured promotion to Division Two in the previous game at Southend, but this is the last remembered public rendition for about fifteen years.

The rebirth of 'Goodnight Irene' came in the spring of 1989. Nomadic by name, Rovers had been relocated to Bath and there was a need to summon any community spirit and support this ailing club. Gerry Francis, an emotive manager, looked at ways to summon up the

Tote End Boys



crossbar ten minutes after half-time. Bill Roost then set up Lambden fifteen minutes from time to secure an improbable 3-0 victory.

This set up the tie at St James' Park and the largest crowd ever to watch a game featuring Bristol Rovers saw the underdogs from the south-west hold the cup favourites to a goalless draw. Apocryphal tales report of over 100,000 supporters attempting to purchase tickets for the Wednesday afternoon replay and of companies grinding to a halt that day. Just over 30,000 fortunate spectators witnessed Geoff Bradford's opportunistic goal after a quarter of an hour and 'Goodnight Irene' reverberated around the ground. Sadly for Rovers, the Magpies were too strong and three goals



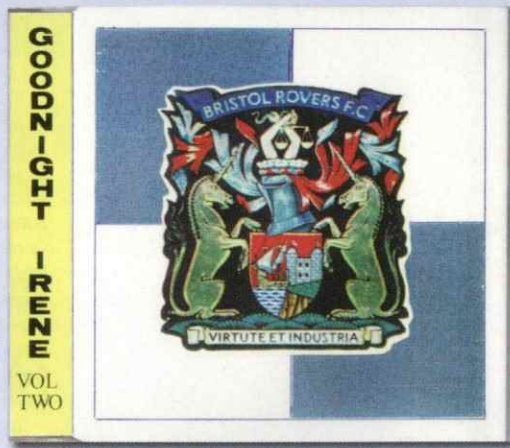
courage and bravery that had earned the club success in previous eras. In March 1989, the team was taken to a recording studio in Surrey to create a version of 'Goodnight Irene' that was featured on the opening sequence of the first Screen Soccer video.

The 1989/90 season saw Rovers promoted to Division Two as champions, losing just five matches all season. Undefeated all campaign at their new home, Twerton Park, the club played to renewed support and reached Wembley that May for the first time in the club's history, losing 2-1 to Tranmere Rovers in the Leyland Daf Trophy Final.

The 1990's saw the club move back to Bristol, led at first by manager Ian Holloway, a man of enormous stature locally, and the song once again became increasingly popular. Nowadays, the version of 'Goodnight Irene' performed by Maximum Roverdrive, a motley assortment of Rovers fans, is played before each home game and the popular version is generally preceded by a well-rehearsed prelude: 'we're Rovers supporters, we're faithful and true, we'll always follow the boys in blue, we all made a promise, that we'll never part, so Goodnight Irene, I'll see you in my dreams...'

So, who was this songwriter Lead Belly? His biography is shrouded in mystery, as befits a man who spent several stints in jail. What is clear is that he was born on a plantation near

.....  
Huddie William 'Lead Belly' Ledbetter



One of 5 CD's brought out by the Supporters Club, containing different versions of Goodnight Irene. The whole set covers 98 versions!

Mooringsport in Louisiana in January 1888 (perhaps 20th, 21st, 23rd or even 29th of that month) (2) - his gravestone says 1889 - and died in New York on 6th December 1949.

A blues and folk musician, who sang about everything from women to alcohol, cattle herding to politics, and could play guitar, piano, mandolin, accordion, harmonica, violin and concertina, 'his arms were like big stove pipes, his face was powerful and he picked the twelve-string guitar' (3). The son of Wesley Ledbetter, a black plantation worker, and Sallie Brown (or perhaps Pugho), a half-Indian, he was brought up with his step sister Australia Carr, left home at eleven and had fathered two children by Margaret Coleman before marrying Aletha Henderson, a fifteen year old, in 1908 ('I asked your mother for you - she told me that you was too young', as one verse of 'Goodnight Irene' goes); he later married the evocatively named Martha Promise in 1935. Boastful, quick tempered and proud, Lead Belly killed a relative, Will Stafford, in a fight and was sentenced in January 1918 to seven years in a prison in Dallas. It was in jail both that his sobriquet originated, on account of his physical toughness, and that he was 'discovered' by musicologists John and Alan Lomax in 1930, whilst Lead Belly languished in a Louisiana penitentiary on a homicide charge; 'Goodnight Irene' was recorded in July 1933. His burgeoning music career, however, was hampered by a later sentence, between 1939 and 1940, for assault.

Lead Belly started recording for Capitol Records in 1944 and set off on a European tour in 1949 only to fall ill after a few days and die on his return to the States. 'The murderous old minstrel Lead Belly' (4) is buried in Shiloh Baptist Church cemetery at Mooringsport, in the only grave on that site facing the rising sun.

There is some anecdotal evidence to suggest that Lead Belly's source for 'Goodnight Irene' was the 1886 song 'Irene, Good Night', written by an African American songwriter from Cincinnati,

Gussie Lord Davis (1863-1899). All songs, though, need inspiration and what better source than old spirituals - 'old songs, the precious music of the heart!' (5) Lead Belly himself claimed to have learned 'Goodnight Irene' in 1918 from his uncle Terrell Ledbetter, who had encouraged his early musical interest.

Indeed, Lead Belly's untimely death in 1949 meant that his fame as the self-professed 'king of all twelve-string guitar players' was almost entirely posthumous. In 1950, three versions of the song, those by The Weavers, Jo Stafford and Dennis Day, all made the top thirty in the Billboard Charts in the USA as American music appeared to pay homage following the musician's death. James Booker, ironically whilst serving time in a Louisiana prison for drugs offences, also released a version in 1976; artists as wide-ranging as Bryan Ferry, Half Man Half Biscuit, Jerry Lee Lewis, Bob Hope, Carl Perkins and Lonny Donegan have produced their own versions. Van Morrison's first childhood performance was a rendition of 'Goodnight Irene'.

There are many apocryphal tales as to why exactly this song is so central to the Bristol Rovers story. Most appear to revolve around one particular verse, which announces that 'sometimes I have a great notion to jump in the river and drown'. The proximity of Rovers' spiritual home at Eastville to the River Frome is critical in the club's early history.

During the course of the 1896/97 season, Rovers purchased a sixteen acre site on heavy red clay soil amidst the watercress meadows of Eastville for £150 from Sir Henry Greville Smyth of Ashton Court, an extensive landowner in late



Rovers at Wembley 1990

Victorian Bristol. It was 'a ground surrounded with a gasworks, a railway viaduct and a river that always threatened to swamp the ground' (6). The Frome, or 'Danny' as it was fondly termed locally, was highly susceptible to flooding and there had been terrible damage caused by rising waters in 1607, 1703, 1720 and 1738. On 9th November 1800 part of Stapleton Bridge, a goal kick away from the future ground at Eastville, was carried away by rising floods (7).

In October 1882, just months before Rovers' formation, the Baptist Mills and Eastville areas were reported to be badly affected by flooding. Frederick Hunt, landlord of the 'Black Swan' on Stapleton Road, where Rovers were to be based until 1910, had stated he was ruined, as all his stock was under five feet of water. An area of some 200 acres was flooded in March 1889 as snow thawed and Sevier Street was reported as impassable by 9th March; on 8th April 1889 it was reported that a Floods Relief Fund had raised £11,700.

There were to be further problems of this nature in 1936, 1937, 1947 and 1968. In addition, there was water seven feet deep on Rovers' pitch on 21st November 1950. The Bristol Flood Prevention Acts of 1885 and 1890 promised a series of schemes but it was to be the Northern Stormwater Interceptor, incepted in 1962 and completed shortly after the floods six years later, which finally solved the problem. Much of the Frome is now intercepted at Eastville and taken underground to join the Avon at the Portway below Clifton Downs.

Drowning appears to form a leitmotif through the history of this corner of Bristol. Next to Eastville lies the district of Fishponds, whose name originates from two flooded quarry pits: one was drained in or around 1800 on the orders of Elizabeth Somerset, wife of the fifth Duke of Beaufort, after a small girl had slipped off the weir and drowned. In October 1844, William Tilly, who farmed eleven acres at Ashley Down, heard that his twenty eight year old daughter Hester was seeing a farmhand named Williams and banned her from his house. Distraught, she threw herself into a pond in her parents' orchard on 16th October, where she floated temporarily until 'her garments, heavy with their drink, pulled the poor wretch to muddy death' (8). Found guilty of suicide, her body was buried by torchlight just before midnight, as custom dictated, whilst bystanders struggled to prevent 'Williams throwing himself into the grave. Commentators likened her plight to that of Hamlet's Ophelia: 'hold off the earth awhile till I have caught her once more in my arms' (9).

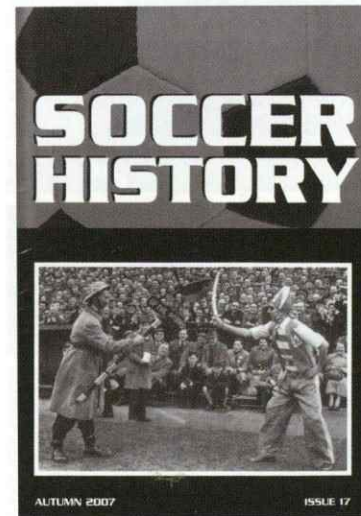
More central than any pond, though, was the ever flowing Frome and the ledbetteresque temptation to 'jump in the river and drown'. One fatality in late Victorian times was nineteen year old Frederick Foot who, whilst attempting to deliver bread from 'Williams' bakery of Lower Easton, was swept away by floodwater, along with his pony, from beside the railway bridge in Mina Road on 25th October 1882. Despite rescue attempts made by three locals and a policeman, both deliveryman and pony were drowned. On a lighter note, there is

newspaper evidence of the story of an unnamed spectator at Rovers' 5-3 win at home to Norwich City in the Southern League in March 1920, a match in which both Norwich's debutant defender George Dexter and Rovers' Tom Brandon had conceded own goals. Five minutes from time, in attempting to stop the ball as it flew out of play, the unfortunate man fell headlong into the murky waters of the river Frome, emerging safe and sound, but very wet and with his pride in ruins.

Footnotes:

- (1) Jamie Jackson, 'The Observer', 27th May 2007
- (2) www.wikipedia.org
- (3) Woody Guthrie (1912-1967), quoted in 1940 - Time magazine, 14th August 1950
- (4) Time magazine, 14th August 1950
- (5) William Wordsworth, 'Poems Dedicated to National Independence', ii, number 12
- (6) C.B. Fry, 30th August 1919
- (7) John Latimer, 'Annals of Bristol', publ. Latimer, 1893, p533.
- (8) Joseph Leach, 'The Church Goer, Rural Rides or Calls at Country Churches', Ridler, 1847, vol 3, p 125
- (9) William Shakespeare, 'Hamlet', Vi


A full version of this article first appeared in 'Soccer History', volume 17, Autumn 2007 edition. This quarterly is available from the editor Ian Nannestad at 52 Studland Road, Hall Green, Birmingham. B28 8NW. ....



**PHILLIPS Steve** 1  
David Langley & Co  
Commercial Property Solicitors  
Clive, Ann & Robert Farquhar




**GREEN Ryan** 2  
David, Cat, Evan & Ryan Williams  
Hargrave Gas  
Harley Thorne



**JACOBSON Joe** 3  
Nailsea Financial Services Ltd  
01075 852000  
Siobhan McLeod



**IGOE Sammy** 4  
BAS Bristol Ltd  
Bookkeeping & Accountancy Services  
Kevin Barry



**HINTON Craig** 5  
Brian Seymour-Smith  
Sky Sports  
Martin Witheyman




**ELLIOTT Steve** 6  
Everett King Accountants  
0117 9291186  
SMG Carpentry Ltd



**CAMPBELL Stuart** 7  
Timber Supplies  
www.timbersupplies.co.uk  
Goldring Timber & Board Merchants Ltd  
0117 9606813




**WILLIAMS Andy** 8  
Michael & Abigail Gane  
SMG Carpentry Ltd  
Laura Stuckey




**LAMBERT Rickie** 9  
Mike Fitzpatrick  
B&D Carter (Electrical) Ltd



**WALKER Richard** 10  
Webber & Spencer Ltd  
Curtains & Blinds  
Derrick & Sheila Gulwell




**CARRUTHERS Chris** 11  
Mike & Debra Diamond  
WDS Associates  
M. Cox



**GREEN Mike** 13  
That Agency-Recruitment, Tel: 9081327  
54 Filton Ave. Catering for all your needs  
Available for sponsorship




**PIPE David** 14  
Ken Masters  
Edd, Sarah, James, Zoe and Phoebe



**ANTHONY Byron** 15  
Councillor Steve Comer  
Lib Dem, Eastville  
Adam, Kyle & Laura



**COLES Danny** 16  
Ben, Lorraine and Clive  
Aylesbury Gas  
Available for sponsorship



**LINES Chris** 18  
Mr Gary Smith  
Jan Martin Kaufhold  
Die Rote Kurve-Hanover 96



**RIGG Sean** 19  
4-4-2  
Dodge Computing Ltd  
07976 272108



**DISLEY Craig** 20  
Wendy and Mike Loughlin  
Wembley Gas



**PARRINELLO Tom** 21  
Exel Sports and Social Club  
Gio's Barber Shop  
160A Muller Road, 0117 9518040



**PADDOCK Ryan** 23  
Available for sponsorship  
Available for sponsorship




**KITE Alex** 24  
Available for sponsorship  
Available for sponsorship



**GODSELL Tom** 25  
Available for sponsorship  
Available for sponsorship



**HALDANE Lewis** 26  
Victoria Diamond  
WDS Associates  
In memory of Mary Marks



**GROVES Matt** 27  
Available for sponsorship  
Available for sponsorship



**MAHDI Adam** 28  
Dean & Mandy Mitchell  
c/o Cover Up UK Ltd  
Available for sponsorship



**KLEIN-DAVIES Josh** 29  
Available for sponsorship  
Available for sponsorship



**REECE Charlie** 30  
Available for sponsorship  
Available for sponsorship



**CLOUGH Charlie** 31  
Available for sponsorship  
Available for sponsorship



**LESCOTT Aaron** 32  
Roger Munday  
Charfield Gas



**FRASER James** 34  
Available for sponsorship  
Available for sponsorship



# Boxing Day Highlights – Lucky 13?

**I would like to wish all supporters, players and management here today a very Merry Christmas.**

I hope you enjoyed yourself yesterday and I hope we are in for a festive goals feast this afternoon. Over the past decade Rovers have enjoyed themselves on Boxing Day, having suffered just one defeat on this festive day, at home to Northampton Town in 2003.

Since 1997 Rovers have sent their fans home happy, with five victories and three draws. Last season a trip to Hereford United ended in a goalless draw, which was the first on that day since 1989 when Birmingham were entertained at Twerton Park. The goalless day at Edgar Street was the first time since 1996 that Rovers had failed to score on Boxing Day. On that occasion, we suffered was a single goal defeat at Bournemouth.

Since entering the Football League, in 1920, Rovers have been involved in 66 matches on Boxing Day. The best win on this day was a 6-1 hammering of Bury in 1956 which was remarkable, as 24 hours earlier we had been on the end of a 7-2



Jim Eadie

hammering at Bury's Gigg Lane. Revenge was swift, and no doubt sweet, for manager Bert Tann and his team.

Rovers have never played Luton Town on 26th December, but the teams did meet on 27th December back in 1975, in a Second Division fixture played at Eastville, watched by 11,044 fans.

Rovers manager Don Megson had made three changes to the team beaten 3-0 at Southampton on Boxing Day, replacing Frankie Prince, Gordon Fearnley and Dave Staniforth with Trevor Jacobs, Alan Warboys and Andrew Evans. He also reintroduced two wingers to his team, in Kenny Stephens and 18 year old Evans, who both enjoyed good performances.

Luton included the Futchers twins, Ron and Paul, in their team. The latter's son is Ben Futchers, who has played against Rovers in recent seasons for Lincoln, Grimsby and Boston. Their left winger that day was John Aston, who was a member of the Manchester United side that won the European Cup in 1968.

The Hatters went away with a single goal victory brilliantly scored, just two minutes from time, by Andy King, the former Everton player and in more recent times, former Swindon Town manager. One notable absentee for Rovers was the commanding centre half Stuart Taylor, who was injured and missed both Christmas matches.

Fortunately Rovers other central defender, Graham Day, and goalkeeper Jim Eadie were both in tremendous form and made it very difficult for a commanding Luton side.

The two teams lined up as follows:  
**Rovers:** Eadie, Jacobs, Parsons, Bater, Day, Smith, Stephens, Williams, Warboys, Bannister, Evans.  
**Luton:** Barber, Ryan, Buckley, Chambers, Faulkner, Futchers (P), Husband, King, Futchers (R), West, Aston.

Rovers slipped from fifth to tenth position as a result of the two Christmas defeats and their record after defeat at the hands of Luton was, worryingly, just one win in their previous eleven matches.

As far as the Hatters were concerned, it was their sixth consecutive victory as they mounted a serious promotion challenge. They moved into sixth place following their win, but ultimately failed in their bid for a top three finish.

With Rovers having suffered at the hands of Luton in 1936, following a 12-0 record defeat at Kenilworth Road, I wonder what the odds are for Rovers avenging that defeat with a thirteen goal victory today! How about the following goalscorers; Lambert (4), Haldane (3), Williams (2), Walker (pen), Elliott, Campbell and Disley.

I'm sure it would really make every Gasheads' Christmas if it happened!



Graham Day

# Hope your Christmas was good!

**Good afternoon and welcome back to the Memorial Stadium, after what seems like an eternity, for our Boxing Day fixture against Luton Town.**

I would also like to extend a warm welcome to the Luton Town Directors, management team, players and supporters. I hope they all enjoy their afternoon with us, though I hope they understand when I say that I hope they leave empty handed!

I trust you all enjoyed a great day yesterday and that you all had the Christmas you hoped for. If any of you over indulged in terms of having too much to eat and drink, and are suffering from a hangover, then I'm sure the fresh air today will make you feel much better! Naturally, I took things very steady yesterday and don't have a hangover and I'm fit and raring to go!

This afternoon's Match Sponsor is Gerry Wotton, who says:

Good afternoon Gasheads, I hope you all had a great Christmas. I am pleased to be this afternoon's Match Sponsor. Having Keith Valle (the best comper in Bristol Rovers history) as my brother, meant that I was 'brainwashed' into following Rovers. We've all celebrated the good times, and been there for the bad ones, but once a Gashead, always a Gashead, and I'm proud to be one.

I've supported the Gas since I was 12 and, with my 50th coming up next August, there was nowhere else I wanted to celebrate other than in a box at the Memorial Stadium. With the move to Cheltenham looming for January, I decided an early celebration was called for and, along with my family and a few good friends (fellow Gasheads, needless to say), here we are eight months early, and no move to Cheltenham!

Happy New Year to Bristol Rovers fans all over the world, and please get behind our boys in 2008.

Our Matchball is sponsored by Alison Ward and her family, and I would also like to say a very big thank you to them. They are well known to us in the Uplands Suite, where they frequently book a meal before the game, and because they have undertaken a number of hospitality packages as well. I am reliably informed, by Liz Jack, that Alison has already booked one of our Executive Suites for the game against Port Vale. I hope that Gerry Wotton, along with Alison and her family, have a very enjoyable afternoon.

Our Commercial Mascot today is eight year old Samuel Clay, who lives in Barrs Court. He is a member of the Young Pirates, and attends Barrs Court Primary School where he is a Year 3 pupil. His hobbies are football, cycling and playing on his playstation. He plays football for Warmley Rangers U-8's as a defender, and his favourite players are Sammy Igoe, Stuart Campbell and Lewis Haldane.

With the New Year on the horizon, it's time for me to give you a date for your diaries. Our Annual Valentines Ball will be held at the Bristol Marriott Royal Hotel next year, as a major refurbishment will be underway at Jurys Hotel, our usual venue. When that's completed, I'm told that it will be the best banqueting suite in Bristol, so that's something to look forward to.

The date for the Valentines Ball is 23rd February 2008, and we are in the process of finalising all details. The cost per person will be £47.00, and I have already had several requests for tickets, as it is certainly the best night on the calendar, with



We were all extremely grateful to those who turned out to try to get the game against Swansea played. Former player Stuart Taylor was one of over thirty supporters who turned up at the Memorial Stadium to lend a hand. Stuart is pictured here alongside Robin Schols removing the surface water from the protective covers...



...While Uncle Albert concentrated on keeping dry!



Right: Our Commercial Mascot today is 8 year old Samuel Clay from Barrs Court.

most of the players and partners in attendance.

There are many more events planned in the months ahead, and I hope that you will be able to support us with your attendance.

Really get behind your team today, and cheer them on to three much needed points! C'mon ye Blues

....

## SOS GLASS & GLAZING LTD

Specialist Glazing Contractors

Specialists in Aluminium Commercial Windows, Doors, Shopfronts, Curtain Walling, Entrance Door Systems

Tel: 0117 9711488

3 Repton Road, Brislington

## BRISTOL ROPE & TWINE CO.

80 FEEDER ROAD, ST. PHILIPS MARSH, BRISTOL BS2 0TQ

Tel: (0117) 977 7033 (3 lines)

Fax: (0117) 971 7621



- Natural & Synthetic Ropes
- Cords & Twines
- Cargo & Safety Nets
- Wire Ropes
- Lifting Equipment
- Strapping – Machines – Accessories
- Hardware Sundries

## eagle coaches



*Sports clubs, company outings, schools, colleges, groups of girls, bundles of blokes*

*Football match, wedding, funeral, theatre, Paris weekend, seaside day trip, night club night trip*

*Up the club, down the road, mystery tour, continental cruising*

*you name it – we take you there*

Fireclay House, Netham Road, Bristol BS5 9PJ

Tel: (0117) 955 7130 & 955 6784 Fax: (0117) 941 1107

e-mail: any@eagle-coaches.co.uk





## From the Chair

**Four scheduled home games, combined with the worst rainfall, suffered by the area since the summer flooding not unexpectedly proved just too much for the poor old Mem pitch and caused the cancellation of home fixtures against Cheltenham and Swansea.**

Just as the referee trod onto a then quite reasonable

surface for the Cheltenham match inspection, the most incredible hailstorm lashed the ground and the already sodden pitch turned into an instant lake. The puddles soon disappeared, but the damage was done.

The Board then took the decision to hire in special waterproof covers to guard against the storms forecast before the following Saturday all ticket fixture with table topping Swansea. The forecasters were dead right with their predictions and a small army of volunteers ventured out onto the saturated covers just before noon to remove the tons of surface water. I can tell you it was really hard work and you cannot believe how much surface water had gathered in the four preceding hours. Unfortunately we were lashed with heavy storms and as fast as we removed it the quicker the rainwater was replaced. Referee Uriah Rennie only required a couple of covers removed but that, again, was incredibly hard work. Unfortunately all was to no avail as the pitch underneath was saturated and a second late postponement inside four days was inevitable. Fair play to Mr. Rennie, though, as he gathered all the volunteers together to thank everyone for their efforts and to explain the reasons behind his decision. A pity more refs don't publicly explain their reasonings! My thanks, anyway, to all those who did such fantastic work in terrible conditions and were eventually rewarded with hot sausages and chips but not three valuable points!

The following notes, a report of our recent AGM, were originally in the programme for the Swansea game. However, as many of you will not be aware of what transpired at the meeting, they are repeated this afternoon.

I wish every Gashead a belated Christmas present of three points this afternoon. Enjoy

Jim Chappell

## Trolls talks to the fans

**A update on the new stadium, the Colerne training facilities and even the shirts being too tight were all discussed at our AGM.**

Paul Trollope, Lennie Lawrence and club directors all gave full answers to a number of interesting questions from the floor following the formal business at last week's meeting.

**What is the state of the youth set-up?**

Paul Trollope said youngsters have not had the chance to feature yet this season in the Rovers line-up because of the success of the current players. He told the members that

both he and Lennie Lawrence were committed to the development of young players.

In reply to a question from the floor about the state of the youth set up at the football club, the chief coach replied that:

when he and Lennie joined, they were and are committed to youth team players coming through, and felt they: contrasted with previous managers Ian Atkins and Ray Graydon.

Lennie admitted he knew Graydon well and felt that:

he was only interested in managing the first team.

Trolls added that Chris Lines and Sean Rigg had not featured more because of the performances of Craig Disley and Stuart Campbell.

**Should we have signed Stuart Fleetwood?**

Another question related to Rovers' interest in former Hereford striker Stuart Fleetwood. Trolls said he was a very good player in a team that played a certain way, with Fleetwood scoring most of his goals through one-on-ones with the 'keeper.

He felt the cost of signing him was now prohibitive and that Forest Green would retain him until their cup run was over at least (they lost at Swindon last Saturday). Lennie said:

I had Fleetwood when he was at Cardiff, but he played one game and was injured subsequent to me leaving Cardiff before David Jones released him.

**What did they think of the Colerne facilities?**

Paul Trollope defended the recent criticism by Steve Phillips of the training facilities at Colerne by claiming:

the facilities are excellent in all respects other than the pitches at the moment, due to a maintenance machine breaking down and staffing issues which had both been resolved.

Trolls said he believed the goalkeeper's views were not shared by all and felt he had reacted on a day when a ball bounced up and hit him in the face!

**What is the latest on the stadium re-development?**

Director Ed Ware said they hoped the 106 planning agreement would be signed very soon and that the document was out for engrossment.

Club chairman Ron Craig confirmed that all the timescales were still ok and Geoff Dunford added that the delay in the 106 being signed has helped with focussing on areas where costs could be trimmed. For example the extent of excavations and the resulting level of spoil needed to be disposed of had been reduced and also some alterations in the



Referee for the scheduled game against Swansea, Uriah Rennie, pictured with the volunteers who turned out in an attempt to get the game played. Thanks to all who turned out on a truly awful day.

committee positions were terminated by the revised constitution.

They all continue

planning of areas within the stadium would make better use of the space available.

**Do we still plan to go to Cheltenham next season?**

Yes, nothing has changed, replied Mr Craig.

**Shirts too-tight?**

One member commented on what she felt was the ill-fitting Errea shirts which Barry Bradshaw and Steve Burns confirmed was due to the Italian styling (e.g. Spurs kit) and the European sizing but Steve said it was something they were looking at.

**Why did Richard Walker's appeal fail?**

Paul Trollope said the video tape of Rob Styles' decision didn't show the incident clearly because Swindon's Ifil was in front of the camera and he felt the FA closed ranks in those situations. Paul also expressed strong views to the meeting on Mr Styles' performance.

**What did they think of the Ryan Green situation?**

The question about Green was asked 'in the light of other injuries and suspensions at the same time.' Trolls said their was CCTV footage of the alleged perpetrator. Mr Craig said Green had told them he wasn't drunk and that Trolls believed him. Trolls said:

Ryan Green had an unblemished record to date, but I read him the riot act as a result of the incident, and told him he should not have been out so close to a following midweek match. Ryan was out celebrating a friend's birthday. Originally this would not have been a problem as the Orient home cup game had been scheduled for the previous Tuesday.

Earlier, chairman Jim Chappell had started the formal part of the meeting by saying a big thank you to Janet Wooster, Ralph Shaw and Pete Collins whose

to work for the club on matchdays and are also regular attendees at meetings on invitation from the Executive Committee.

**Financial report**

The end of year financial report had been posted on the website for the last two weeks and printed copies were handed to members as they arrived at the meeting. There were no matters arising from these.

**Election of the committee**

No external nominations having been received the following committee members offered themselves for re-election; Jim Chappell, David Brain, Sue Williams, Clive Farquhar, Dave Hewett and Dennis Payter. All were prepared to continue their positions as outlined so the Executive Committee will remain unchanged.

**Any other business**

It was asked why nominations for election needed to be made six months before the AGM as this must restrict application and people forget the deadline.

The problem has arisen due to the fact that the AGM has been held later each year. It is the intention of the committee to bring the date of the AGM forward. The deadline for nominations is set out in the constitution and the date of the AGM is governed by the auditing of our accounts.

Dave Perry wished to put on record his thanks for all the hard work undertaken by Supporters Club Staff and members, particularly in respect of ticketing arrangements and especially in respect of the two final at The Millennium Stadium and Wembley.

The chairman thanked him for this and stated that we certainly could not have coped without the large army of unpaid volunteers who helped out.

David Wilcox asked if there were any

plans for ticketing sales in Broadmead

Steve Burns stated that when we had an outlet in Broadmead, in the Bristol Rugby shop, tickets did not sell well though it is something that can be looked at again in the future but we do try to encourage people to book online now if they are unable to attend the shops.

James Packwood wanted to know if there were any plans to re-open '199' on an evening for the sale of tickets

Towards the end of our evening openings, we did a survey of the number of people attending the shop. Over a four week period, only six people attended and it was felt it was not worthwhile continuing. It is, however, something that we will look into in the future particularly if there are a lot of all ticket matches.

Gary Marks asked if there were plans to resurrect the regional fans meetings

Ken Masters reported there were, and that a meeting would be held at Weston-super-Mare next week.

Ken Masters stated that the football club are entering four categories in the Football League Awards for 2007.

- Fan of the Year
- Goal of the Year
- Community Initiative
- Programme of the Year.

The directors would like the supporters to nominate a contender for Fan of the Year, and also to pick the Goal of the Year from eight goals which have been selected (these were shown at the meeting).

There has been an extensive write up for the Community Initiative and Keith Brookman will choose which programmes to send in for Programme of the Year.

Chairman Jim Chappell recorded the sad passing of:-

- **Geoff Martin** our Vice President who was ill in hospital at the time of last year's AGM and passed away soon afterwards.
- **Ray Norman**, a lifelong supporter and regular attendee at both the Supporters Club and Football Club meetings, always with a tricky question to ask.
- **Martin Price**, a member of our Weston-super-Mare branch who died after a tragic accident.
- And finally, **Mary Marks**, another lifelong supporter and a great friend to everyone involved with the club. They are all sadly missed.

## SUPPORTERS CLUB OFFICIALS

**Chairman** Jim Chappell

**Director and Vice-Chairman**

Ken Masters

**Treasurer** Jane Browne

**Secretary** Sue Williams

**Director and Share Scheme**

**Chairman** David Brain

**Commercial Chairman**

Clive Farquhar

**Social Chairman** Dave Hewett

**Communications** Dennis Payter

**Matchday Chairman**

Taff Alexander.

**Committee members**

Janet Wooster, Pete Collins,

Ralph Shaw

## STAND TICKETS ARE AVAILABLE FROM:

THE MEMORIAL STADIUM

Ticket Office (Matchdays Only):

Tel: 0117 909 8848

and online @

www.bristolrovers.co.uk

PIRATE LEISURE

At the Memorial Stadium

Tel: 0117 909 6648

Fax: 0117 908 5530

BRFC SUPPORTERS CLUB

199 Two Mile Hill Road,

Kingswood, Bristol BS15 1AZ

Tel: 0117 961 1772

Fax: 0117 961 1773



**72 Clubs. The 'Coca-Cola' Football League.**



# Ahoy, shipmates!



Left: Father Christmas pictured with two Young Pirates at our recent Christmas party

## Good Afternoon, and welcome to the Young Pirates homepage.

This afternoon we would like to welcome Luton Town and all the Junior Hatters, who have made the long trip from

Bedfordshire, for our Boxing Day clash.

Having recently entered administration and losing ten vital points, the Hatters will be looking for three points today to haul themselves out of the relegation zone. So, Young Pirates, let's crank up the noise and hope that inspires the Gas to all three points!

Following our safe passage into the Third Round of the FA Cup, we have received a plum draw against Premiership strugglers Fulham.

We want to take at least two coaches to Craven Cottage, and bookings are now being taken. Our away co-ordinator, Baggie Sue, will be available today to take

your bookings, or alternatively you may be able to catch her on 01384 443777 or 0121 559 1774. We have already had a lot of interest, so early booking will be essential. The price is just £15.00 for both adults and children, and remember, we always have a raffle for signed memorabilia. At the time of writing we are also enquiring whether we can bring an away mascot. If this is the case then you have to be on one of our coaches to be in with a chance!

For those of you fortunate (or unfortunate depending on your taste) to endure Eastenders on Thursday 6th December, you would have been privileged to see our own Vice Chairman, Alan and three other Bristol Rovers fans upstage the usual characters in a pub scene.

Alan, in his first cameo role, (little more than 3 seconds) was easily recognisable by his distinctive haircut. He was heard to say afterwards that 'Phil Mitchell isn't half a big bloke, he is even taller than our own Steve Elliott!' Needless to say Alan's appointment at the opticians was last Thursday!

Just before we finish, the committee would like to take this opportunity to thank Paul Trollope for allowing the players to attend our Christmas Party, Dell who provided us with the entertainment for the final time, and especially all the Young Pirates who certainly made our Christmas Party a night to remember! Pictures and a full run down will be detailed in our next notes. It was a fantastic night and one not to be missed!

Finally, on behalf of both of us and our fellow committee members we would like to wish you and your families a very Merry Christmas (a little late, but we can blame it on the pitch!)

Young Pirates signing off...  
PS In case it gets rained off again, and to be on the safe side, a very Happy New Year too!

## TODAY'S MASCOT

Nine year old Sophie Hussey lives in Yate and attends Kingscourt Primary School. Her hobbies are ballet, brownies and swimming and she also plays football, as a defender, for Kingscourt Primary Girls team. Sophie has achieved up to Grade 2 in ballet, has her 200m badge in swimming and is a sixer in her brownie group.

Her favourite players are Steve Elliott and Steve Phillips and we hope that she enjoys being our mascot this afternoon.



## BIRTHDAYS

We would like to wish the following Young Pirates a very Happy Birthday.

Dec 25	ASHLEY SILSBURY	10
Dec 25	ADAM HULBERT	12
Dec 25	TAM SIN WOOSTER	8
Dec 27	JACOB BROUGH	7
Dec 27	DECLAN McGUICKIN	10
Dec 28	HOLLY BAILEY	12
Dec 28	LEWIS CROUCHER	6
Dec 28	GEORGIE TAYLOR	11

# Youth gets a chance

**The Christmas and New Year issues of The Pirate give us an opportunity to look at the progress being made by the youngsters attached to the club, from the Centre of Excellence, through to Filton College and the first team squad.**

This afternoon Head of Youth Kevin Hodges gives us an insight into the work being carried out, and on Saturday it will be the turn of Centre of Excellence Manager Stewart Naughton.

A great deal of work goes on behind the scenes in the youth set up, something that Kevin is well aware of.

I think everyone involved in our youth setup deserves a big pat on the back for the work they do and I hope they, along with their families, have enjoyed a very Happy Christmas.

I would also like to wish the parents of all of our younger players a Happy Christmas, as they travel to support their sons, in all winds and weathers and are fully supportive, and appreciative of our coaches.

We are fortunate to have so many people helping us, and they give up a lot of their own free time to spend with the young players. It's quite a commitment, as they are involved every Sunday and there is quite a lot of travelling for them as we play matches all over the south west.

It would appear, though, that their dedication is paying off, as there are a number of promising, and talented, youngsters coming through.

In all honesty I believe they are being rewarded. It's five or six years now since Stewart Naughton took on the role of Centre of Excellence Manager and we are now beginning to see the benefits of his hard work. There are some really good young players coming through, in all age groups, and I know that because I have spent a number of weekends watching their matches.

In fact, I'd go as far as to say that we are becoming a benchmark for all age groups, from U-9's through to U-15's. Whilst we don't really consider the results for those age groups to be all important, because we are essentially trying to develop them as players,

results do give you a bit of a marker.

If you were to look at the results of all age groups, then you would see that we are winning almost all of the games we play every weekend. That's pleasing and it's been consistent up until Christmas, now we want that to progress into the New Year. There's been a lot of hard work undertaken at that level, so well done to everyone, but we still have a long way to go and we are still looking to improve. We have a lot of catching up to do with our neighbours south of the river, but we are now beginning to see some benefits from the hard work put in by a number of people.

It's coming up to a crucial time for many youngsters, though, as decisions have to be made on their futures.

The groups I'm really looking at now, are the U-16 and U-18 sides as Lennie, Paul and I have to make decisions about them early in the New Year.

As far as our U-16's are concerned, they had a good start to the season but their form has dipped a little recently. However I'm aware that Stewart is making a few changes, and assessing the squad, as he's done with some of the younger groups as well.

To be honest, though, I've been a little bit disappointed with our U-18's, especially since they were knocked out of the FA Youth Cup. Defeat in that competition was a little bit of a disappointment and they don't seem to have recovered from that. It's something we need to address, because they are an important group and are our next intake.

Billy Clark has recently taken over as manager of the side, and I'll be liaising with him and working hard with that group of players. We have managed to get them to our training base, at Colerne, on a more frequent basis so we are moving in the right direction, but we are aware that improvements are required at that age level.

It might be that we move some of the younger players up to play for the U-18's, I'm not sure. We are aware that consistency levels fluctuate at that age, so we will be monitoring the situation very closely.

Time, though, is of the essence and



Kevin Hodges

with January and February fast approaching it can't be denied, there is a great deal of pressure on those players. The lads themselves are aware of that, and they have to be able to cope with pressure like that if they actually make it through to the pro ranks.

What is encouraging is that a number of players who have graduated through the Centre of Excellence and Filton, have joined the pro ranks and are pushing for a first team spot.

It's very rewarding to see some of the youngsters go on into the first team, and when you look at our squad, no fewer than twelve of them have come up through the ranks. Lewis Haldane, for example, has made over 100 league appearances and is one of the more senior members of the squad in terms of games played, which is tremendous.

Sean Rigg has just started to force his way into the team on a more regular basis, while Chris Lines has pushed on again and is almost a regular in the squad.

Tom Parrinello and Matt Groves both made their first senior appearance against Rushden & Diamonds, while Charlie Reece and Alex Kite have both been included on the bench, and it's been so rewarding to see so many of the younger players making an impression.

Now that they have had a taste of it, they have to continue their progress and keep learning and, hopefully, we will see one or two more pushing for a regular spot and, to be honest, that has to be the aim of all the youngsters.'

It's not only been a good experience for those involved, but for those who have yet to earn a first team call up.

Suspensions and injuries can mean that situations can, and do, change very quickly in football and I've always tried to make the point to our younger players that they are very much a part

of the squad. They are not here as apprentices, they are squad members, though it has to be said that they are playing catch up, because they haven't been used to this environment, and it's taken them two or three months to adjust.

It's tiring for them, and if I think back to when I was starting out as an apprentice, the day to day training was really tiring. Whenever I had a spare moment I was sleeping, and I'm sure some of our youngsters are doing that after training now.

Nowadays, what happens off the pitch is almost as important as what happens on it.

It's vital they look after themselves when they are at home, and that they eat the right food and take on board all the right fluids.

They should be well aware of the correct diet, as there is so much knowledge and information for them. However they have to remember that they have to be as dedicated off the field as they are on it, so it's very much

a learning curve for them.

Only now are they beginning to enjoy the rewards of their efforts, but they have to remember that they still have a lot to do. They have to keep working at their game and learning and, hopefully, by the end of the year we will have a lot more pluses than minuses.



## RESERVES - Pontins holidays combination FIXTURES 2007/08

AUG 20	Mon	PLYMOUTH ARGYLE	H	1-1	
SEP 12	Wed	EXETER CITY	A	0-1	
SEP 18	Tue	SWINDON TOWN	H	0-1	
SEP 25	Tue	CHELTENHAM TOWN	A	1-0	
OCT 3	Wed	FOREST GREEN ROVERS GFA	A	*1-1	
OCT 16	Tue	APC BOURNEMOUTH	A	2-1	
OCT 23	Tue	YEOVIL TOWN	H	0-2	
OCT 30	Tue	PLYMOUTH ARGYLE	2.00 pm	A	1-2
NOV 13	Tue	BRISTOL CITY	A	3-3	
DEC 17	Mon	APC BOURNEMOUTH	A	0-2	
JAN 9	Wed	YEOVIL TOWN	2.00 pm	A	
JAN 14	Mon	FOREST GREEN ROVERS	7.30 pm	A	
JAN 21	Mon	BRISTOL CITY	H		
FEB 4	Mon	CHELTENHAM TOWN	H		
FEB 13	Wed	SWANSEA CITY	A		
FEB 25	Mon	EXETER CITY	H		
MAR 18	Tue	SWINDON TOWN	2.00 pm	A	
TRA		FOREST GREEN ROVERS	H		
TRA		SWANSEA CITY	H		

Home games to be played at the Memorial Stadium, unless stated  
 PC = Pontins Cup  
 GFA = GFA Senior Challenge Cup  
 P = Friendly  
 KO 7.00pm unless stated  
 \*lost 3-2 on penalties

SEASON 2007/2008

## Centres of Excellence U16's South West - FIXTURES 2007-08

SEP 1	Sat	PLYMOUTH ARGYLE	H	1-0
SEP 8	Sat	APC BOURNEMOUTH	A	1-1
SEP 15	Sat	CHELTENHAM TOWN	H	1-2
SEP 22	Sat	OXFORD UNITED	A	2-2
OCT 6	Sat	SWINDON TOWN	H	4-0
OCT 13	Sat	EXETER CITY	A	4-0
OCT 20	Sat	SWANSEA CITY	A	4-2
OCT 27	Sat	WALSALL	H	1-2
NOV 3	Sat	APC BOURNEMOUTH	H	1-1
NOV 10	Sat	PLYMOUTH ARGYLE	H	3-0
NOV 17	Sat	OXFORD UNITED	H	3-0
NOV 24	Sat	EXETER CITY	H	3-4
DEC 1	Sat	CHELTENHAM TOWN	A	0-1
DEC 15	Sat	TORQUAY UNITED	H	4-1
JAN 12	Sat	SWANSEA CITY	H	
JAN 19	Sat	PLYMOUTH ARGYLE	A	
JAN 26	Sat	WALSALL	A	
FEB 2	Sat	APC BOURNEMOUTH	A	
FEB 9	Sat	TORQUAY UNITED	A	
FEB 16	Sat	CHELTENHAM TOWN	H	
FEB 23	Sat	CHELTENHAM TOWN	A	
MAR 1	Sat	OXFORD UNITED	A	
MAR 8	Sat	TORQUAY UNITED	H	
MAR 15	Sat	SWINDON TOWN	H	
MAR 22	Sat	EXETER CITY	A	
APR 5	Sat	WALSALL	H	
APR 12	Sat	SWANSEA CITY	A	
APR 19	Sat	EXETER CITY	H	
APR 26	Sat	SWINDON TOWN	A	

Home KO 10.30am Away KO 11.00am unless stated  
 PAYC = FA Youth Cup



## PUMA Youth Alliance U18's South West - FIXTURES 2007/08

AUG 25	Sat	HEREFORD UNITED	A	3-3	
SEP 1	Sat	YEOVIL TOWN	A	4-1	
SEP 8	Sat	CHELTENHAM TOWN	H	1-3	
SEP 15	Sat	COLCHESTER UNITED - PYA CUP 1	12.00noon	A	1-2
SEP 22	Sat	SWINDON TOWN - PYACUP 2	H	2-4	
SEP 29	Sat	YEOVIL TOWN - PYAC 3	11.00 AM	A	3-2
OCT 6	Sat	LEYTON ORIENT - PYA CUP 4	11.00 am	H	3-1
OCT 13	Sat	OXFORD UNITED - PYA CUP 5	H	2-0	
OCT 20	Sat	SOUTHEND UNITED - PYA CUP 6	12.00noon	A	1-2
OCT 27	Sat	GILLINGHAM - PYA CUP 7	11.00 am	H	1-2
NOV 7	Wed	CHRISTCHURCH - PAYC 1	A	3-1	
NOV 10	Sat	SWANSEA CITY	H	0-1	
NOV 17	Sat	EXETER CITY	A	1-1	
NOV 21	Wed	BRIGHTON & HOVE PAYC 2	7.30pm	A	0-3
NOV 24	Sat	COLCHESTER UTD - SOUTH CUP 2	H	0-5	
DEC 1	Sat	OXFORD UNITED	H	1-0	
DEC 8	Sat	PLYMOUTH ARGYLE	A		
DEC 15	Sat	SWINDON TOWN	A		
JAN 12	Sat	APC BOURNEMOUTH	H		
JAN 19	Sat	SWANSEA CITY	A		
FEB 2	Sat	EXETER CITY	H		
FEB 9	Sat	OXFORD UNITED	A		
FEB 16	Sat	PLYMOUTH ARGYLE	H		
FEB 23	Sat	SOUTH CUP 3	H		
MAR 1	Sat	SWINDON TOWN	H		
MAR 15	Sat	APC BOURNEMOUTH	A		
MAR 22	Sat	HEREFORD UNITED	H		
APR 5	Sat	YEOVIL TOWN	H		
APR 19	Sat	CHELTENHAM TOWN	A		
PYAC					
PYAC					

Home KO 10.30am Away KO 11.00am unless stated  
 PAYC = FA Youth Cup

For all the latest news,  
match reports  
and views...



...read the  
**EVENING POST**



Monday's

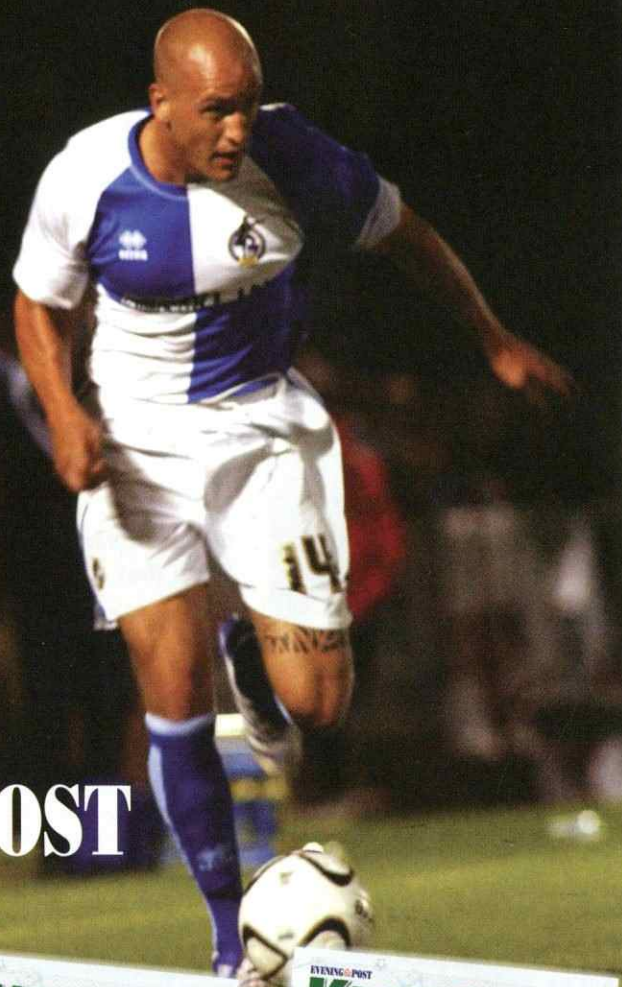


Tuesday's



Wednesday's

[www.thisisbristol.co.uk](http://www.thisisbristol.co.uk)



# The lengths some people go to!

**The Bristol Rovers squad have been fully supportive of the fund raising efforts of ten servicemen of 91 Supply Squadron, based at Hullavington, Wiltshire.**

The ten concerned recently swam the 1,351 lengths of the swimming pool at the club's training base at Colerne and first team coach Paul Trollope, along with skipper Stuart Campbell and central defender Steve Elliott are pictured handing over a cheque from the playing staff to Pete Williams, who organised the event.

We decided to raise money for two charities, said Pete, SSAFA, which helps servicemen, and their families, who have been affected by the conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan and the NSPCC, Calne.

Our swim took in 21 miles, which is the equivalent of swimming the English

Channel and we have so far raised in excess of £700, a figure that has now been boosted by a very generous donation from the Bristol Rovers squad.

We are very grateful for their kind donation and, in return, they have received one of our squadron plaques and if they ever need any help from us, we will be only too willing to assist.

Several of our guys have been down to watch them play, so they have gained some new supporters based in Wiltshire and we wish them every success for the remainder of the season.

Stuart Campbell said that the players were only too

willing to help swell the coffers of the two charities concerned.

We were delighted to be able to support the guys who did the swim and admire their efforts on behalf of their two charities.



ST PAULI ■ Kirsty Pugh 



## Links with Germany

**There were a few extra skull and crossbones on show around the Memorial Stadium for the recent home against Millwall - imported from Germany!**

The growing links between supporters of Bristol Rovers and Hamburg club St Pauli were underlined when a group of German fans came over to watch the Gas clinch a last-gasp 2-1 win over the Lions.

In return, a party of around 10 Gasheads made the journey to Hamburg to watch St Pauli's home game against Kaiserslautern.

Rovers fan Aidan Jones from Kingswood is one of those who makes regular trips between the West Country and the Millerntor Stadium in Hamburg.

Both clubs share the nickname of the Pirates - hence the skull and crossbones connection. St Pauli have now incorporated the motif - die Totenkopf in German - in much of their merchandising and souvenirs.

St Pauli are known as the pirate club of German football and Rovers are the Pirates, said Aidan.

A few Rovers fans went over to

watch a game about four weeks ago and met up with their lads, who agreed to come over for the Millwall match because St Pauli didn't have a game that weekend.

I go over between four or six times a year and there's a hard core of about five Rovers fans who usually make the trip.

While St Pauli may not be one of the better-known clubs in German football, they are certainly one of the most interesting - and there are more similarities between the two clubs than simply a nickname.

Like Bristol in the past, Hamburg is a major port and also a two club city. Hamburg SV - one of Kevin Keegan's former clubs - are seen as the larger of the two and are challenging near the top of the Bundesliga, the German equivalent of the Premier League.

Saint Pauli play in the division below - Bundesliga II - and, just like Rovers, won promotion last season.

While we are waiting to start work on a redevelopment scheme at the Memorial Stadium, the German club are in the middle of a ground expansion scheme

and although construction work has currently reduced their capacity from around 20,000 to just over 15,000, it should rise to 27,000 when the improvements are complete.

The reduction means virtually all home games are sell-outs with tickets hard to come by for the casual visitor, although Aidan explained:

Luckily the St Pauli fans we know are members of one or other of the various supporters groups, so tickets haven't been a problem.

Situated not far from the infamous Reeperbahn, in the red light area of Hamburg, St Pauli's reputation as a cult club has blossomed thanks to close links with the local working class community and a politically-active fan base. It has a strict anti-racist and anti-Nazi philosophy as part of its constitution and over the years has had links with the punk movement and other alternative sub-cultures.

While playing links between the two clubs may be virtually non-existent, there is one tenuous one. St Pauli defender Abdou Sall - who also had a spell at Forest Green Rovers - was sent off at the Memorial Stadium in April 2002 in Kidderminster's 2-1 defeat by Rovers.

## December 1971

“I WAS THE FIRST FOOTBALLER TO OWN A JAGUAR, THE FIRST TO SPORT A MEXICAN MOUSTACHE AND THE FIRST TO WEAR TRENDY SHIRTS AND KIPPER TIES”



Manchester City's Colin Bell graced the front cover of the December issue of Charles Buchan's Football Monthly, whilst Newcastle United's John Tudor was featured on the back cover.

Readers had voted for the top ten goalkeepers in the country, with Gordon Banks heading the list at number one, closely followed by Pat Jennings and Peter Shilton.

Derek Dougan was the subject of an in depth article in this issue. The Wolves and Northern Ireland international was also Chairman of the Professional Footballers association at the time and looked back on a career that had seen some controversial moments.

Sure, I've bucked the Establishment and been branded a rebel but, thank God, I've always been an original.

I was the first footballer to own a Jaguar, the first to sport a Mexican moustache and the first to wear trendy shirts and kipper ties. George Best and all the other young players around today are only doing what I did ten years ago.

Fans of Luton, then in the Second Division, and Third Division Rovers, were also

catered for in this issue.

The list of transfers show that the Hatters had signed Gordon Hinsdon from Newcastle and, underneath a photo of Don Givens was this caption.

No player likes leaving Manchester United, but Don Givens, who joined Luton, then in the Third Division, in April 1970, now has hopes of regaining First Division status.

He didn't make it at the end of the 1971/72 season, though, as Luton finished in sixth place.

Rovers interest centred around Alan Impey, a name to note according to the author.

The young Bristol Rovers centre forward has made a lot of progress since joining the Eastville club.

If Impey, who comes from Cardiff, reaches international level a few questions will be asked in the Welsh capital. Alan played in the Cardiff Boys team, but when Cardiff approached him they found he had already joined Rovers on a schoolboy form.

It is to the Bristol club's credit that they stepped in for Impey at such an early stage.

Unfortunately, Impey never progressed to League, let alone international, football!

## Alec Findlay

Born on this day

When the great Cliff Britton was missing from the Rovers side to face Norwich City in February 1930, manager David McLean replaced him with a 27 year old Scottish wing half.

His replacement was Alexander Findlay, born on Boxing Day 1902 in Wishaw, Stephen Hendry's home town. Findlay had spent three seasons with Musselburgh Rose before joining the delightfully-named Musselburgh Bruntonians in 1929. It was from this club that he signed for Rovers in a £35 deal shortly before his League debut. David McLean had himself played for several Scottish clubs and had been manager at East Fife, so Findlay was just one of a number of Scots given a break into League football at Eastville. Findlay's debut for Rovers resulted in a single goal defeat, inside-left Andy Thompson, the former Spurs forward, scoring the only goal after half-time. In 37 League games for Rovers, Alec Findlay scored nine times, including two against Thames Association on this day in 1931, his twenty ninth birthday.

During the summer of 1932, Findlay signed for Wrexham, for whom he scored four goals in 22 Third Division (North) matches over a period of three years. The final goal of his League career came at Southport in December 1934, and his final appearance was on this day seventy years ago, his thirty second birthday, when Wrexham lost 3-1 at Mansfield Town. Winding down his career at Cheltenham Town and Gloucester City, he settled in Bristol, where he died in October 1985, aged 82.

### Four goals against Rovers in the Football League

Jimmy Collins	4	Swansea 8	Rovers 1	15.04.22
Fred Dent	4	Exeter 4	Rovers 1	05.11.27
Fred Baron	4	Southend 6	Rovers 0	29.03.30
Billy Lake	4	Coventry 5	Rovers 1	21.03.31
Bill Ckayson	4	Torquay 8	Rovers 1	28.03.32
Joe Payne	10	Luton 12	Rovers 0	13.04.36
John Evans	5	Liverpool 5	Rovers 3	15.09.54
Tommy Briggs	7	Blackburn 8	Rovers 3	05.02.65
Adrian Thorne	4	Brighton 6	Rovers 1	27.08.60
Colin Lee	4	Spurs 9	Rovers 0	22.10.77
Keith Cassells	4	Mansfield 5	Rovers 0	31.01.87
Guy Whittingham	4	Portsmouth 4	Rovers 1	26.12.92

26th December 1992

## Portsmouth 4 Bristol Rovers 1

It was fifteen years ago today that an opponent last scored four times in a Football League game against Rovers.

Joe Payne famously scored ten times for Luton Town in April 1936, Blackburn Rovers' Tommy Briggs scored seven goals two decades after that and Liverpool's John Evans scored all his side's goals when Rovers crashed 5-3 at Anfield in Division Two. However, the ninth opponent to score four times in a league game, Portsmouth's Guy Whittingham, was on his way to a club record 42 goals in a season.

Lowly Rovers were forced into one change before kick off when Justin Channing was ruled out and Vaughan Jones returned to the side, with Richard Evans making his first appearance of the season when he played as substitute. Spurred on by their highest home crowd so far that season, 14,288, Pompey recalled the experienced trio of Warren Aspinall, Mark Chamberlain and Ray Daniel to their side. Despite a John Taylor goal, Rovers trailed 2-1 at half-time before Whittingham completed his third hat trick of the season. He scored all his side's goals in a 4-1 victory and his fortieth goal of the campaign, scored past Rovers' keeper Andy Beasley at Twerton Park in April, set a new club seasonal record. Pompey finished third, but missed promotion through the play offs, whilst Rovers finished bottom and were relegated.

On the same day in 1992, our visitors Luton Town were without a game, as their lunchtime kick off at home to Swindon Town succumbed to the inclement weather. Two days later, though, the Hatters were to draw 2-2 at West Ham in Rovers' division. After a goalless first-half, Ceri Hughes and John Dreyer scored for Luton, with two defenders, Julian Dicks (penalty) and Tim Breacker, responding for West Ham.

John Taylor



Richard Evans



Above:  
Nathan Ellington, who scored in the 2-2 draw against Reading on this day in 2000



Right: Rovers goalkeeper John Ellis, who conceded 12 goals against Luton in April 1936



Vaughan Jones



# Raindrops keep falling on our pitch...



**Good Afternoon and welcome again, I hope you had all a great Christmas and that Santa left many gifts under your tree from his sack of plenty!**

This afternoon we welcome our visitors, the Hatters of Luton, for a Boxing Day encounter so here's hoping the rainmakers have finished their work in BS7, the covers have served their purpose and that we can finally witness the blue and white quarters flying by to kiss that Bristol sky.

This afternoon's merriments centre on a snapshot of Rovers past Boxing Day performances, a Q & A with Radio Bristol's John Bennett and our festive winter warmers.

## Boxing Day Snapshot – the Good, the Bad and the Ugly

Over the last seventeen seasons we have been away on 10 occasions and have a record that reads won five, drawn four and lost eight. In the category of **Good** would be the 5-3 win against Orient in 2001, a proper Christmas cracker, the **Bad** a 2-1 home defeat at the hands of Northampton in season 2003

and the down right mother of all **Ugly** results a 4-1 reverse away at Portsmouth during season 1992/93. Let's hope today we have fruitful return and a Boxing Day success to cheer.

## Q & A with John Bennett of Radio Bristol

We caught up with John to check out some of his favourite sounds:

First single purchased?

'Altogether Now' by the Farm, I think I played it so much when I was a kid that I wore the tape out. In fact it was on the radio the other day and I realised that I still know all the words.

What Music do you play in the car on away trips?

I am a massive fan of the Charlatans, Ian Brown, Kasabian and the Editors so I always take their albums in the car with me on away trips. If Rovers fans spot the Radio Bristol car on the Motorway they'll probably notice me singing embarrassingly to 'Just When Your Thinking Things Over' by The Charlatans.

Any tunes that have a special place in your thoughts?

When it comes to Bristol Rovers 'Tote

End Boys' by Ben Gunstone bring back great memories. I travelled up to the amazing Hartlepool match last season with a mate of mine who's a massive Gashead and we were listening to that constantly on the long journey to Victoria Park. Whenever I hear it now after games it takes me back commentating on Rickie Lambert's header which put Rovers into the play-offs and the site of hundreds of Gasheads going mental in the away end.

Songs you chill out to?

Ian Brown's new album 'The World is Yours' is the current favourite for chilling out, he can do no wrong in my eyes, a proper legend.

Songs that give you a buzz/motivate?

I did the Bristol half marathon last year and 'Ali in the Jungle' by the Hours was the song that I always put on my I-Pod when I felt like giving up in training. I just about made it in the end! And if I need a bit of motivation before playing for my Sunday League football team anything by the Clash gets me in the mood - unfortunately though I still end up being rubbish. ◆◆◆

Christmas feel to it. This next classic track, its full artist credit reads as **John Lennon, Yoko Ono & The Plastic Ono Band with the Harlem Community Choir** performing **Happy Xmas (War is Over)** made four appearances in the charts between 1972 and 2003 its highest position No4.

Port Vale supporter **Robbie Williams** had a festive hit with **Angels** which peaked at No4 during December 1997 and finally a jolly festive offering from former YES bassist **Chris Squire** with his track **Run With Fox** this originally released in 1981 and now reworked for his current album **Chris Squire's Swiss Choir**.

Enjoy the Game ◆◆◆

# Lambo's eagle eye!

Rickie Lambert, with Stuart Campbell, at Kenilworth Road



## Times have certainly changed for both clubs since the Hatters last played here, in a Carling Cup tie on a balmy August evening in 2006.

Luton had just finished tenth in the Championship, having topped the table in the early weeks of the campaign in an excellent return to the second tier under Mike Newell. Rovers, meanwhile, were beginning their sixth consecutive season in the basement, having conceded five goals in the final two games of the previous term. When Luton took an early lead on that summer evening - with a goal that included almost as many as passes as Esteban Cambiasso's for Argentina against Serbia and Montenegro in that year's World Cup - who would have thought that just 16 months later, Rovers (at the time of writing) would be above them in the League?

Luton have rarely been out of the news since Newell was fined for an outburst against female assistant referee Amy Rayner in November 2006. The manager criticised the Kenilworth Road board after that game and blamed Luton's plight on the fact that he had been forced to sell the club's best players.

The former Everton and Blackburn striker remained a controversial figure in his time at Luton and also hit the headlines for his critical comments about

Vine, Carlos Edwards, Steve Howard and Kevin Nicholls.

Luton's nightmare became even worse last month, when the club went into administration. More than 50 charges were levelled against them and two directors stepped down as a result. The penalty was a crushing 10-point deduction, which sent Luton to the bottom of the table. However, just as Leeds appear to be doing, the Bedfordshire club have gained new strength in adversity, finding some very encouraging form of late, the highlight of which was an FA Cup victory over Nottingham Forest which has booked them a home tie with Liverpool in the Third Round. Boss Kevin Blackwell said after that success that he could now expect his players to be paid for the first time in six weeks.

With Rovers also at the wrong end of the table, this is clearly a huge game today, and we could all do with a start like the one provided by Rickie Lambert in the first meeting this season at Kenilworth Road. I have never seen a Rovers player score a goal like that in my life. Rickie kept an eagle eye on the ball as it dropped from the heavens, hitting a shot on the full from 30 yards so powerful and so accurate that Luton goalkeeper David Forde didn't stand a prayer.

Despite all he has achieved for the club since arriving from Rochdale, I still hear

people occasionally complain about Rickie's lack of pace. My reply is always simple: if he was quicker, he would not be with Rovers, or indeed playing at League One level. His touch and technique are of the highest quality, and he is arguably the best crosser at the club as well as being our top scorer. At Lincoln City in the play offs, he scored one and made three. And when was the last time a Rovers player struck a ball as he does? His penalties are a joy to watch, almost breaking the net.

Like Luton, Rovers also have the prospect of an FA Cup tie against Premier League opposition to savour. Within just five days, Rovers scored eight goals, six shoot-out penalties and saw the emergence of Hintonio as a new striking option, setting up a trip to Fulham on January 6th. Craven Cottage has been a lucky ground for me, having seen Rovers play there three times and win on each occasion. That was long before the arrival of al Fayed and his millions, of course, but I am not discounting an upset as Rovers lift their game very well against quality opponents these days, particularly on a good pitch.

However the game goes in West London, Paul Trollope can be proud of his record in the FA Cup. He has now won six of his eight FA Cup ties, five of which had seen Rovers drawn away from home. This equates to a 75% success rate in the competition, while very few Rovers bosses have signed off with greater than 50% success, one of them of course being Bert Tann, who led Rovers to two Quarter finals in the 1950s. Only Fred Ford has a better record under these criteria, as he won 80% of his ties in charge during a memorable run to the Fifth Round in his solitary season at the helm, 1968/69.

May I close by wishing everyone a happy, healthy and prosperous 2008, a year that we hope will see the stadium refurbishment go ahead as planned, and Rovers establish themselves in League One.

Come On You Blues! ◆◆◆

## TODAY'S PLAYLIST

PIRATE SOUNDS



We showcase three from **Phil Spector**, his 'wall of sound' brought a grand, ennobling passion to the teen love song, his compilation **A Christmas Gift For You** arrived in US stores on November 22nd 1963 the day President John F Kennedy was assassinated! From the album we feature **Darlene Love - White Xmas** and two from the **Ronettes - Frosty The Snowman** and **I Saw Mummy Kissing Santa Claus**.

Moving on to 1984 and the Band Aid project with **Do They Know Its Christmas** this release reached No1 in 84 and No3 the following year.

Now for the thoroughbred Xmas party hits, **Slade - Merry Xmas Everybody** was hit on five separate occasions between the years 1973 to 2006 its highest position number one. Also released in 73 was **Wizzard - I Wish It Could Be Christmas Everyday** this peaked at No4, these two tracks are essential floor fillers and will ignite any festive party atmosphere.

**Jona Lewie - Stop The Cavalry** made the chart in November 1980 and peaked at No3, this quirky number, its melody loosely based on a theme from Swedish Rhapsody No. 1, had a real

**Georgian**  
Georgian  
01761 451457  
\*\*\*

**PORTABLE TOILET HIRE  
ALL TYPES SUPPLIED**

\*\*\*

**WEEKLY SERVICING ON  
CONTRACT HIRES**

\*\*\*

**ON SITE SERVICING FOR  
OUTDOOR EVENTS**


\*\*\*

**TEL: 01761 451457  
FAX: 01761 451458**

South Rock Ind. Est., Chilcompton, Bath BA3 4LD

**CABARET NIGHT**  
AT  
**BRISTOL ROVERS, MEMORIAL STADIUM**  
**SATURDAY 12<sup>TH</sup> JANUARY**  
FEATURING

P  
H  
I  
L



C  
H  
A  
R  
L  
E  
S

**SUPERB COMEDIAN WHO ALSO SINGS BRILLIANTLY.  
NO HOLDS BARRED ADULT COMEDY  
GUARANTEED TO HAVE THE AUDIENCE IN STITCHES.**

**TOP CLASS CABARET  
& A BASKET SUPPER**

**TICKETS ON SALE NOW - £7.50 EACH**

**FOR MORE DETAILS & RESERVATIONS  
CONTACT TRISH - TEL 0117 9524004**

THE MEMORIAL STADIUM, FILTON AVENUE, HORFIELD, BRISTOL.

**Are you getting your share?**



**FootballFoundation**  
football's biggest supporter

The Football Foundation provides grants for kit, goalposts, pitches, floodlights, clubhouses, coaching and innovative projects that use football to deliver a wide range of community benefits. Since 2000, over **£500 million** worth of projects have been supported. If you are a football club, youth group, local authority, charity or a school, or have an idea for using football to tackle a local issue, contact the Football Foundation to get your share.

For more information visit  
[www.footballfoundation.org.uk](http://www.footballfoundation.org.uk)  
or call us on 0845 345 4555






**improving facilities • creating opportunities • building communities**



# A busy time ahead

**Well, by the time you read these notes, the festive season will be all but over, and I hope you all had a top Christmas.**

I am sure there will be a few sore heads around the place today, but I hope we don't let that spoil the atmosphere. I am sure we all put nine festive points at the top of our Christmas list, so I hope we have all been good people this year, and none of us ended up on the naughty list!

Christmas is one of the only times of year when I feel sorry for footballers. I am a huge fan of the festive period, and regress back to childhood at the first sign of fairy lights and tinsel. I love being able to go home for a few days, to eat, drink and be merry. I would hate to have to pass up that third mince pie and that sixth glass of champagne, to make sure I was fit for the next day.

And as for training on Christmas day - it would take a brave person to try and get me out of my pyjamas! Still, I am not one of these people who are in favour of a winter break, as the Boxing Day fixture is a big part of Christmas in our house, and even my father - who supports the

other side, is roped into coming to watch Rovers. I am sure festive fixtures are responsible for keeping a lot of families together, as it allows people to get out of the house for a bit of a breather.

Because of the printing deadlines, I am having to write these notes almost two weeks in advance, so we are going through a bit of a football drought at the moment. The two unfortunate postponements have left me with only television football to feed my addiction.

I must say I am looking forward to the sheer amount of football I have to look forward to in 2008. Something tells me that I will not be up in time to make the trip to the east coast on New Year's Day, so my first match of the New Year will be down at Fulham for the Third Round of the FA Cup. There have been mixed reactions to that draw, but for me I think it is a good one. Craven Cottage is one of those iconic grounds I have always wanted to visit, and Fulham is a team that we may just be able to beat. If we play to the best of our potential, we could just cause an upset on the day. Then as we head into February and March, there are plenty of league games to keep even the most dedicated Rovers fan happy. The two rearranged matches will slot into an already busy couple of

months, which will make or break our season.

New Year is a time for reflection, and in an ideal world, none of us would have wanted to be near the bottom of the table at Christmas, but I am still confident that we will finish well this season.

We got off to a flying start, as our momentum from the end of last season kept us pushing in the right direction, and I think a lot of people got carried away. There was talk of play offs, promotion and goals galore. But then reality hit, and it became obvious that life in League One was not going to be easy. We will have to fight hard to establish ourselves in this division, but I think we have shown that we are capable of digging in and getting results. You only have to look at our 5-1 win against Rushden and Diamonds, for proof that we have strength in depth, and a team that thrives on adversity. I think we have more than enough passion and talent to make it in this division. This season is all about consolidating and getting into the top half of the table, but I think after that, the world is our oyster. There is no reason why we cannot be plying our trade in the Championship before too long. We have a core of players with

enough skills to get us there, and more importantly keep us there. And with the new stadium on the way, we will not look out of place amongst some of the countries biggest clubs.

Next year will open an exciting new chapter for the club, as we head off to Cheltenham while our new stadium is built. It is going to be a massive adjustment for everyone, but 18 months down the line, we will have a home to be proud of. I think 2008 will be a good year for Bristol Rovers, and I hope it is also a good year for you. Happy New Year Gasheads.

.....  
"We have strength in depth and a team that thrives on adversity"





onal **Express**

## Win free travel on National Express to your next FA Cup away game.

Travelling together with your friends will help reduce your carbon footprint for the next round. Register at [carbonfootprint.com](http://carbonfootprint.com) for your chance to win free travel on National Express.

**carbonfootprint.com**

Places will be offered on a first come first served basis. Full Terms and Conditions can be found on the website.



**Weather permitting we enter one of the most crucial stages of the season, with three league games in the next seven days.**

Hot on the heels of trips to Yorkshire to face Huddersfield and Leeds are home fixtures against Luton today, and Carlisle on Saturday, with an away fixture at Southend on New Year's Day

It's one of the biggest times of the season, says midfielder Craig Disley, as there are a lot of games in a short space of time, and a lot of points up for grabs and it could be argued that it's a period that can either make or break your season. We're looking forward to a good holiday period, though, and if we do well then it will set us up for a good New Year and, hopefully, a big push up the table.

The postponement of the home games against Cheltenham and Swansea means that Rovers have games in hand on their rivals.

It was disappointing when those games were called off, but when you look at the table you will see that we haven't been caught or lost any ground. In all honesty, though, we would rather have played, and won, those games and have the points in the bag.

Whilst it's disappointing that the games were called off, there's nothing you can do about the weather. You still have to prepare in the right way, irrespective of the fact that the game might be called off. It's just one of those things. We still have those games in hand, and if we manage to get the right results when they are eventually played, our league position will be looking a lot better.

**“...IF WE CAN KEEP WINNING GAMES, THEN I THINK THERE'S ONLY ONE WAY WE CAN GO AND THAT'S UP THE TABLE”**

## Craig confident

Print deadlines meant that we were speaking before the Huddersfield and Leeds games, so it's to be hoped that we gained a reasonable points return in Yorkshire. By the time you read these notes, Craig and his colleagues will have spent a Christmas that's totally different to the one that most of us will have enjoyed.

Christmas is all about families, but it will be a quiet one for us. We will have trained on Christmas Day, and enjoyed a nice dinner at home, though we won't have had too much to eat, as we will all have been preparing for this afternoon's match which is another big game for us.

There should be a big crowd here and, in my time at the club, we have always done quite well on Boxing Day so, fingers crossed, it will be the same again this year.

The influential midfielder will be hoping to maintain his recent goalscoring form.

I scored in both of the FA Cup ties leading up to Christmas, and they were long overdue as I hadn't scored since the game against Crewe back in August. I think that's the longest time I've gone in my Rovers career, without scoring, but scoring in successive games makes my record look a little bit better again. As we speak, I've scored four so far this season, which isn't bad for this time of the year, so if I can kick on and score a few over Christmas then double figures might be a realistic target for me this season.

Looking back at the first half of the season, he believes that we should have more points on the board.

If I'm honest, it's been a little bit frustrating, because I feel we have

played a lot better than our league position shows. If we look at the games we've lost I think there have only been two, against Leeds and Bournemouth, when we got what we deserved. Away from home, I really don't think we've deserved to lose any at all.

I think that shows we are more than capable of adapting to this division and, if we can keep winning games, then I think there's only one way we can go and that's up the table.

Looking ahead, I think we have to be looking at a top ten finish at the very least. The play offs are quite an ambitious target at the moment, but we have to make sure we are looking up rather than looking down.

Personally, I think we are definitely good enough to be a top ten side in this division, but we have to keep working hard. You get nothing if you don't do that, so that's what we'll keep doing and, hopefully, we will get the results we think we deserve and ones that our performances merit.

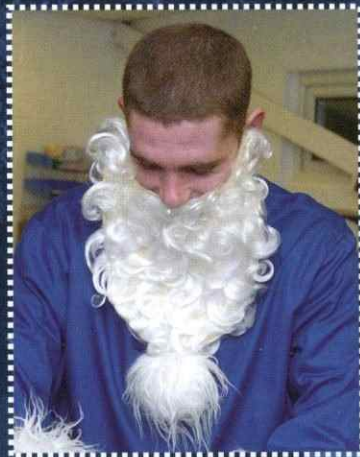
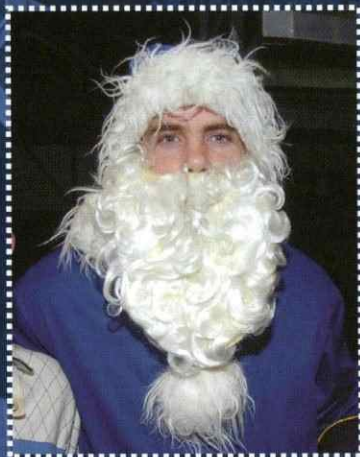
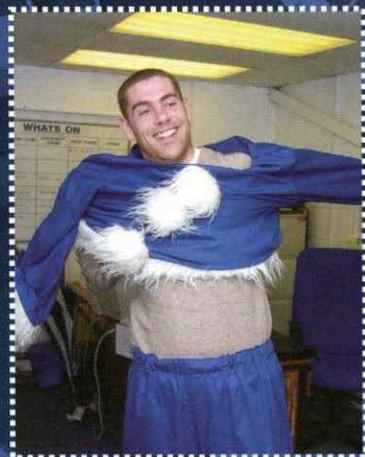
Following this run of three league fixtures, we then travel to Craven Cottage to take on Premiership side Fulham, in the Third Round of the FA Cup.

It's going to be a great occasion, and we have nothing to lose. It's also going to be a great day out and no doubt we will take a lot of fans to Craven Cottage, who will all enjoy the day. Fulham may not be one of the so called glamour Premiership clubs, but they are still a great side and have a lot of international players in their squad. It's going to be a day to enjoy but we'll still be working hard and hope to cause an upset.

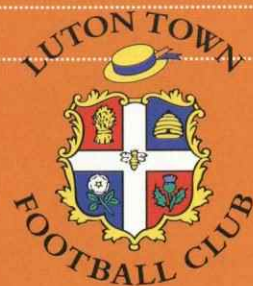




*The Board of Directors, Players and Staff of  
Bristol Rovers Football Club would like  
to take this opportunity of wishing  
all our Supporters  
a Very Merry Christmas and  
a Happy and Prosperous New Year*



# Welcome, LUTON TOWN



**The Hatters are enjoying a welcome distraction from their problems off the field as they savour the prospect of meeting Liverpool at home the weekend after next.**

The vital goal against Nottingham Forest which clinched the third round FA Cup meeting with the Reds came from **Calvin Andrew** who was born in Luton and progressed through the Hatters' youth set up. In the 2005/2006 season he went out on loan to Grimsby and Bristol City. The former Coventry, Watford, Chelsea, Birmingham and QPR striker **Paul Furlong**, 39, who was suspended for the Forest game, was replaced by **Darren Currie**, a close season signing from Ipswich. Had things turned out differently, **Currie** could have been playing alongside **David Beckham** for LA Galaxy. **Currie's** career has taken him from West Ham via Shrewsbury and Leyton Orient to Plymouth, Barnet, Wycombe and Brighton. He joined Ipswich late in 2004 and was released the end of last season after playing three friendlies for LA Galaxy in between loan spells at Coventry and Derby. Another

signing from the Tractor Boys, **Sam Parkin**, joined the Hatters in August 2006. He is a former Chelsea junior who had loan spells at Millwall, Wycombe, Oldham and Northampton before playing for Swindon and Ipswich. Injuries are likely to rule out **Parkin** and the Canadian international **Paul Peschisolido** this afternoon. **Peschisolido** was released by Derby at the end of last season after scoring the goal that ended our FA Cup run in January. His previous English clubs include Birmingham, Stoke, West Brom, Fulham and Sheffield United. **Drew Talbot** was a £250,000 signing from Sheffield Wednesday last January, shortly after three outings on loan for Scunthorpe. Former Northern Ireland international **Paul McVeigh** was released by Norwich in the summer after scoring three in eight games during a loan spell with Burnley. Young striker and Weetabix fan **Ryan Charles** has yet to make a senior appearance but aims to be the Hatter's top marksman.



## Meet the Manager Kevin Blackwell

**If you were asked to name football's most colourful characters the chances are that Ron Atkinson, Barry Fry and Neil Warnock would be high on the list.**

The man in the Kenilworth Road hot seat has worked with all three, most notably with Warnock whom he assisted at seven clubs. Kevin Blackwell was a goalkeeper under Atkinson at Cambridge United before combining non-league football at Bedford Town with work as a

bricklayer. Fry signed him for Barnet and he moved to Boston United before Warnock took him to Scarborough in November 1986.

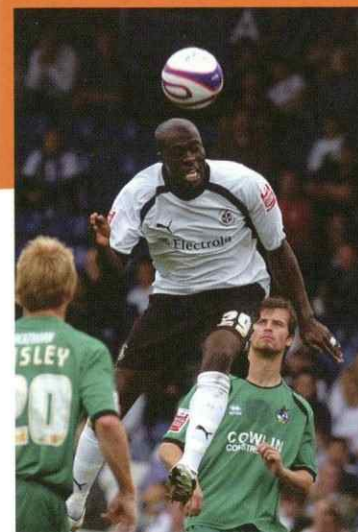
Blackwell followed Warnock to Notts County in 1989 and Torquay early in 1993. Later that year the pair were working together again, this time at Huddersfield, where Kevin's playing opportunities were few and far between

36 year old former Scottish international **Don Hutchison** was released by Coventry at the end of last season after missing the majority of the campaign with an ankle injury. He impressed **Kevin Blackwell** on a preseason tour of Norway and joined the ninth club of his career on a one year deal. **Hutchison** started his career with Hartlepool and has since turned out for Liverpool, West Ham (twice) Sheffield United, Everton, Sunderland and Millwall as well as the Sky Blues. He played 26 games for his country, scoring six goals including one against England in a Euro 2000 play-off. He injured a leg in last month's FA Cup win at Brentford.

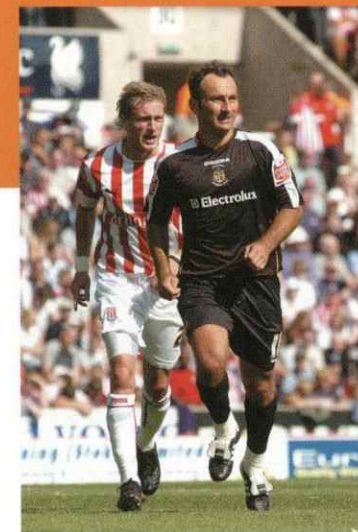
**David Bell**, voted Player of the Year for 2006/07 by junior Hatters' supporters, and the home grown **Keith Keane** are both Republic of Ireland U-21 internationals. **Bell** had trials for Middlesbrough before leaving his first club Rushden & Diamonds for Kenilworth Road in a £100,000 deal in January 2006. **Keane**, who has now recovered after a hernia operation, can play anywhere in defence as well as in midfield. His only goal in the 2006/07 campaign, against West Brom in the Championship in

but he also took on a coaching role. Blackwell's next move was to Plymouth, again under Warnock, as player/youth coach. Warnock moved on but Blackwell remained as assistant to Mick Jones. In 1998 Blackwell left Home Park when Kevin Hodges, now Rovers' Head of Youth, took over. Warnock later took Kevin to Bury and Sheffield United.

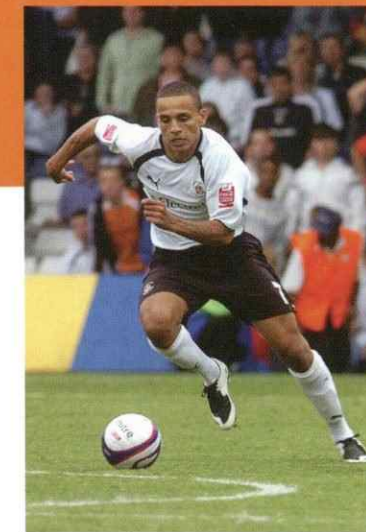
Blackwell progressed from coaching at Leeds to take over as caretaker boss after Eddie Gray's dismissal in 2004. His appointment was later confirmed and he led his side to the Championship final last year, losing 3-0 to Watford. After a poor start to the 2006/07 campaign, his contract was terminated in September and he studied training techniques in Europe before succeeding Mike Newell as Luton boss in March this year.



Paul Furlong



Ahmet Brkovic



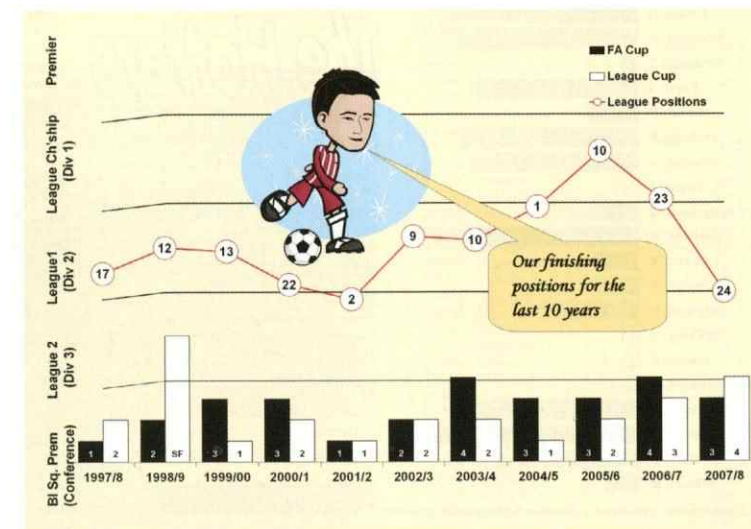
Dean Morgan

January, was voted the Hatters' Goal of the Season. **David Edwards**, **Kevin Blackwell's** first signing last summer, played against the Gas three times last season, for his previous club Shrewsbury. He scored six in 51 games for the Shrews, helping them to reach the League Two play-off final. He also captained the Welsh U-21 side in a 4-0 victory over Northern Ireland and was named in his country's full 26 man squad for the Euro 2008 qualifying games against the Republic of Ireland and San Marino. Jamaican international **Richard Langley** came through the ranks with QPR and spent three years with Cardiff before returning to Shepherd's Bush two years later. **Langley**, who signed for Luton in July 2006, has yet to appear in the current campaign after breaking a leg.

Last month the Hatters brought in loan signings **Marc Wilson** and **Anthony Grant**, from Portsmouth and Chelsea respectively. Republic of Ireland U-21 international **Wilson** had two loan spells with Bournemouth last season, scoring three in nineteen games in the first of them. **Grant**, an England youth international, made his senior debut for the Blues against Manchester United in May 2005 and played two games on loan for Oldham early last year. He spent the whole of last season on loan with Wycombe. **Matthew Spring** started his career at Luton before leaving for Leeds in July 2004. Twelve months and fifteen appearances later he joined Watford and helped the Hornets to reach the Premiership in 2006. **Stephen O'Leary**

joined the Hatters as a thirteen year old after being spotted playing for Barnet Schools. A Republic of Ireland youth international born in Barnet, **O'Leary** had ten senior outings during the 2006/07 campaign. He scored three times in 22 appearances for Tranmere Rovers during six months on loan at Prenton Park in 2005/06. Croatian midfielder **Ahmet Brkovic**, signed from Leyton Orient six years ago, went to Millwall on loan in October. **Dean Morgan**, whose 2006/07 campaign ended prematurely as a result of injury, joined Southend on loan last month. **Morgan**, a former Colchester United trainee, played for Reading before moving to Kenilworth Road in July 2005.

**Alan Goodall**, signed from Rochdale in June, spent three years at Spotland and was an ever-present for Dale last term. In four years at his previous club, Bangor City, he scored ten times in 91 games and played in the UEFA Cup. Former Spurs' defender **Chris Perry** had spent his entire career in London before leaving Charlton for West Brom in August last year. He started at Wimbledon as a trainee before a £4 million switch to White Hart Lane in July 1999. **Paul Underwood**, who spent 6½ years with Rushden & Diamonds, has not played this season and missed the whole of the 2006/07 campaign as a result of a knee becoming infected after a routine



# Luton Town



**Ground:** Kenilworth Road  
**Colours:** White shirts, black shorts, white socks  
**Year formed:** 1885

**Luton's league record as at 15/12/07**  
 P3551 W 1354 D 896 L 1301  
 GF 5410 GA 5144

**Best win:** 29/3/21 5-0 (H)  
**Rovers:** Whatley, Bethune, Panes, Howes, Sims, Steele, Walters,

Crompton, Boxley, Leigh, Palmer.  
 Goalscorers: Boxley (2), Crompton, Leigh, Palmer  
**Luton:** Bailey, Lennon, Semple, Bayliss, Higginbotham, Lamb, Hoar, Shankland, Simms, Mathieson, Bookman.

**Worst defeat:** 13/4/36 0-12 (A)  
**Rovers:** Ellis, Pickering, Preece, Wallington, Murray, Young, Barley, Harthill, Harris, Houghton, Crisp.  
**Luton:** Dolman, Mackey, Smith, Finlayson, Nelson, Godfrey, Rich, Martin, Payne, Roberts, Stephenson.  
 Goalscorers: Payne (10), Martin, Roberts

**Honours even:** 31/10/53 3-3 (H)  
**Rovers:** Anderson, Bamford, Watkins, Pitt, Warren, Sampson, Petherbridge, Leonard, Bradford, Bush, Watling.  
 Goalscorer: Bradford (3)  
**Luton:** Stretten, Dunne, Ahearne, Morton, Hall, Watkins, Davies, Downie, Pye, Cummins, Mitchell.  
 Goalscorers: Pye (2), Mitchell

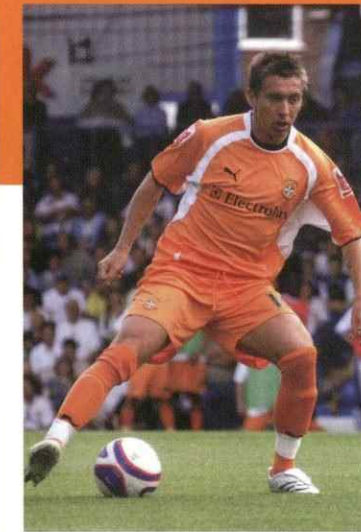
operation. **Richard Jackson's** last appearance for Derby was in our FA Cup defeat at Pride Park in January. **Jackson** made over 100 appearances in eight years with the Rams before his close season move to Kenilworth Road. Former Swindon trainee **Sol Davis**, who faced the Gas in the Carling Cup in August last year, has not played since April, having

suffered a calf injury. A loan spell at Peterborough earlier this season ended after one reserve game when **Davis** returned to Bedfordshire with a groin injury. **Lewis Emanuel** left his home town club Bradford City in July last year after six years at Valley Parade. The left sided defender was initially employed on the right in his first season at Kenilworth

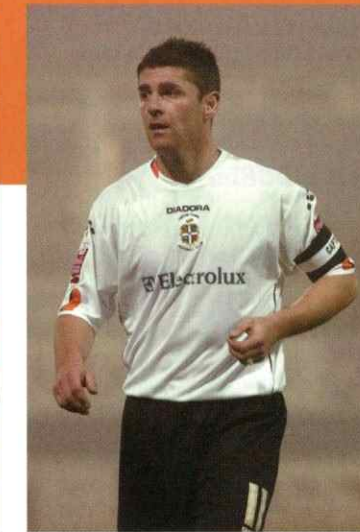
Road but moved to his more natural left to replace the injured **Davis**. His extended loan at Brentford was due to expire today. Club captain **Chris Coyne**, an Australian U-23 international, missed most of last season with a series of injuries but has been more fortunate this time round. He caught the eye of **Harry Redknapp**, then West Ham's manager, when he was



Chris Coyne



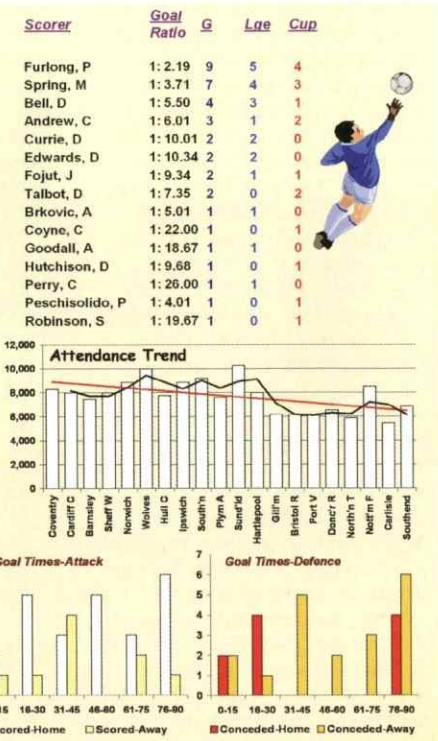
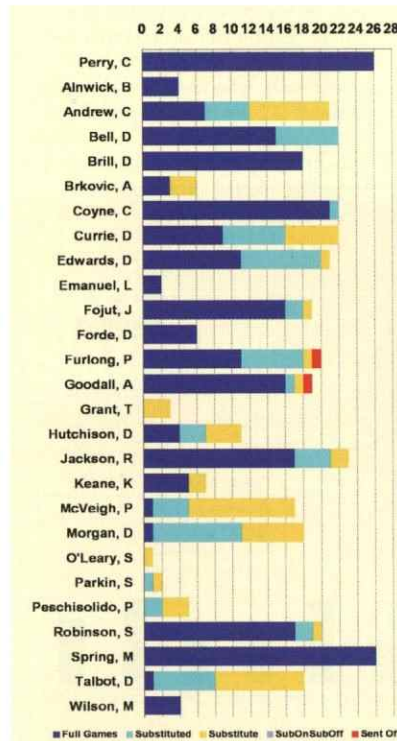
Darren Currie



Steve Robinson

selected for the Australian U-17 squad for the 1994 Youth World Cup. He made one substitute appearance in the Premier League for the Hammers and went to Brentford and Southend on loan before joining Dundee in March 2000. Eighteen months later he moved to Kenilworth Road in a £50,000 deal. 20 year old **Jaroslav Fojut** is on loan from Bolton until New Year's Day. The Poland youth international, who has made one substitute Premiership appearance for the Trotters, scored his first goal for the Hatters in last month's FA Cup win at Brentford, his second coming with the equaliser at Oldham. **Ed Asafu-Adjaye** has progressed through the Hatters' youth scheme and made the first team bench for three games under former

manager **Mike Newell**. Veteran keeper **Marlon Beresford** missed the last seven games of last season with a dislocated finger. The 38 year old went to Oldham on loan in mid-October but a hamstring injury saw him make a premature return to Luton. **Dean Brill**, who was born in Luton, was last season's Young Player of the Year. The much travelled **Beresford** seemed to be in favour with **Newell**, but **Brill**, who played eight games for Gillingham in a loan spell twelve months ago, is now **Kevin Blackwell's** first choice custodian. 19 year old **Zac Barrett** earned himself a professional contract on the strength of his performances for the Hatters' youth side in 2005/06.



Richard Jackson in action against Rovers in September

### Luton Town fixtures 2007-8

Date	Opposition	Score	Att	Comp
11-Aug	Hartlepool	W 2-1	8,013	Lge 1
14-Aug	Dag & Red	W 2-1	1,754	LC1
18-Aug	Swindon	L 1-2	7,520	Lge 1
25-Aug	Gill'm	W 3-1	6,178	Lge 1
28-Aug	Sund'ld	W 3-0	4,401	LC2
01-Sep	Leeds	L 0-1	26,856	Lge 1
04-Sep	North'n T	W 2-0	2,532	JPT(S)1
08-Sep	Bristol R	L 1-2	6,131	Lge 1
14-Sep	Tranmere	L 1-2	6,525	Lge 1
22-Sep	Port V	W 2-1	6,084	Lge 1
25-Sep	Charlton	W 3-1	4,534	LC3
29-Sep	Hudd T	L 0-2	9,028	Lge 1
02-Oct	Yeovil	D 0-0	4,848	Lge 1
06-Oct	Donc'r R	D 1-1	6,513	Lge 1
09-Oct	Gill'm	L 3-4	1,417	JPT(S)2
15-Oct	North'n T	W 4-1	5,881	Lge 1
20-Oct	Crewe A	L 0-2	4,490	Lge 1
27-Oct	Nott'm F	W 2-1	8,524	Lge 1
31-Oct	Everton	L 0-1	8,944	LC4
03-Nov	Brighton	L 1-3	5,317	Lge 1
06-Nov	Carlisle	D 0-0	5,462	Lge 1
10-Nov	Brentford	D 1-1	4,167	FAC1
17-Nov	Walsall	D 0-0	5,056	Lge 1
24-Nov	Southend	W 1-0	6,820	Lge 1
27-Nov	Brentford	W 2-0	2,643	FAC1(R)
04-Dec	Oldham A	D 1-1	4,251	Lge 1
08-Dec	Millwall	D -	-	Lge 1
11-Dec	Nott'm F	W 1-0	5,758	FAC2
14-Dec	Chelt T	L 0-1	3,702	Lge 1
22-Dec	Tranmere	-	-	Lge 1
26-Dec	Bristol R	-	-	Lge 1
29-Dec	Port V	-	-	Lge 1
01-Jan	Yeovil	-	-	Lge 1
05-Jan	Bournemouth	-	-	Lge 1
06-Jan	Liverpool	-	-	FAC3
12-Jan	Swansea	-	-	Lge 1
19-Jan	Leyton O	-	-	Lge 1
26-Jan	Leeds	-	-	Lge 1
29-Jan	Swindon	-	-	Lge 1
02-Feb	Hartlepool	-	-	Lge 1
09-Feb	Bournemouth	-	-	Lge 1
12-Feb	Gill'm	-	-	Lge 1
16-Feb	Leyton O	-	-	Lge 1
23-Feb	Swansea	-	-	Lge 1
01-Mar	Walsall	-	-	Lge 1
08-Mar	Southend	-	-	Lge 1
11-Mar	Carlisle	-	-	Lge 1
15-Mar	Oldham A	-	-	Lge 1
22-Mar	Chelt T	-	-	Lge 1
24-Mar	Millwall	-	-	Lge 1
29-Mar	Crewe A	-	-	Lge 1
05-Apr	North'n T	-	-	Lge 1
12-Apr	Brighton	-	-	Lge 1
19-Apr	Nott'm F	-	-	Lge 1
30-Apr	Donc'r R	-	-	Lge 1
03-May	Hudd T	-	-	Lge 1



**Football historian LEIGH EDWARDS profiles ten leading Luton Town managers**

### NED LIDDELL

Ned Liddell managed Luton Town to the Third Division (South) title in 1936/37. A former centre-half, he played for Whitburn, Southampton, Gainsborough, Clapton Orient, Southend United and Arsenal before rejoining Southend as manager in April 1919. He was appointed QPR's boss in April 1920 and guided them to the FA Cup quarter-finals in 1922/23, then scouted for Fulham before becoming their manager for two years in May 1929. After a period scouting for West Ham, he managed Luton from August 1936 until February 1938, then scouted for Chelsea, Portsmouth, Brentford and Spurs. He died in November 1969.



Allan Brown

### DALLY DUNCAN

Former Scotland international winger Dally Duncan managed Luton Town to the top-flight in 1954/55. Signing professional for Hull City in August 1928, he moved to Derby County in March 1932 and featured in their 1946 FA Cup Final success. He became Luton's player-boss in October 1946 and steered them to eighth place in the top-flight in 1957/58. Appointed Blackburn Rovers' manager in October 1958, he led them to the 1960 FA Cup final and remained in charge at Ewood Park until sacked in June 1960. He later scouted for Luton and ran a guest-house in Brighton, residing there until his death in January 1990.

### SYD OWEN

Long serving England international centre-half Syd Owen was both a player and manager at Luton Town. Signing professional for Birmingham City in October 1945, he moved to Luton in June 1947 and starred in their 1951/52 FA Cup run, 1952/53 promotion near miss and 1954/55 promotion success. He was voted Footballer of the Year as Luton were FA Cup Finalists in 1959 and netted three goals in 388 League games before becoming manager for a year in May 1959. Later Leeds United's chief coach



Alec Stock

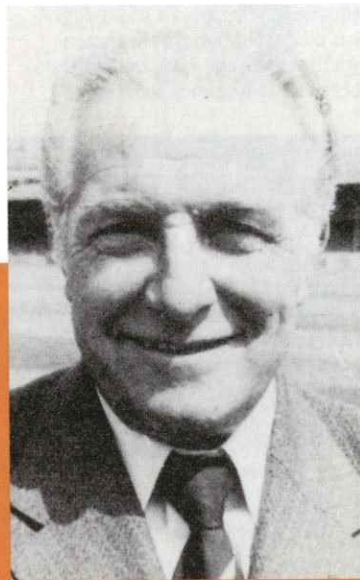
under Don Revie until October 1975, he then coached at Birmingham, Hull City and Manchester United. He died in August 1998.

### ALLAN BROWN

Ex-Scotland international inside-forward Allan Brown managed Luton Town to the Fourth Division title in 1967/68. He was a Scottish Cup finalist with East Fife shortly before joining Blackpool in December 1950 and moved to Luton in February 1957. Appearing in the 1959 FA Cup Final, he netted 51 goals in 151 League games for the Hatters prior to joining Portsmouth in March 1961. He helped win the Third Division title in 1961/62, then had a spell as Wigan Athletic's player-boss and was Luton's manager from November 1966 until December 1968, later managing Torquay, Bury, Nottingham Forest, Southport and Blackpool.

### ALEC STOCK

Alec Stock managed Luton Town to promotion in 1969/70. He was a forward with Charlton and QPR before becoming Yeovil Town's player boss, plotting their epic 1948/49 FA Cup run. Appointed Leyton Orient's boss in August 1949,



Harry Haslam

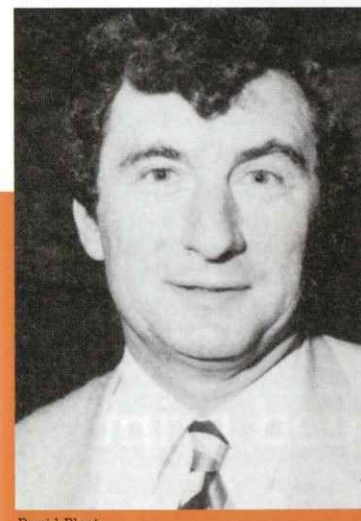
he led them to the FA Cup Sixth Round in 1953/54 and Third Division (South) title in 1955/56, returning from spells at Arsenal and Roma. He became QPR's boss in August 1959, taking them to the top flight and League Cup glory, then managed Luton from December 1968 until April 1972. Guiding Fulham to the 1975 FA Cup Final, he later managed AFC Bournemouth and died in April 2001.

### HARRY HASLAM

Popular manager Harry Haslam guided Luton Town back to the top flight in 1973/74. Initially with Rochdale, he played for Oldham Athletic, Brighton, Leyton Orient, Guildford City and Hastings United, then managed Eastbourne United, Barry Town and Tonbridge before becoming Fulham's chief scout. He assisted Alec Stock at Luton prior to succeeding him as manager in May 1972, remaining in charge of the Hatters until leaving in January 1978 to manage Sheffield United. He scouted for England under Bobby Robson and died in September 1986. His son Keith is now Mansfield's managing director.

### DAVID PLEAT

Articulate manager David Pleat managed Luton Town to the Second Division title in 1981/82. A former winger, he played for Nottingham Forest,



David Pleat



### JOE KINNEAR

Former Republic of Ireland international right-back Joe Kinnear plotted Luton Town's 2001/02 promotion success. Signing professional for Spurs in February 1965, he helped them win the FA Cup in 1967, League Cup twice and UEFA Cup in 1972. He moved to Brighton in August 1975, then coached overseas before assisting Dave Mackay at Doncaster. Joining Wimbledon as coach in September 1989, he became manager in January 1992 and led them to the semi-finals of both the FA Cup and League Cup in 1996/97. He left after a heart-attack, then managed Luton from January 2001 until June 2003 and later Nottingham Forest.

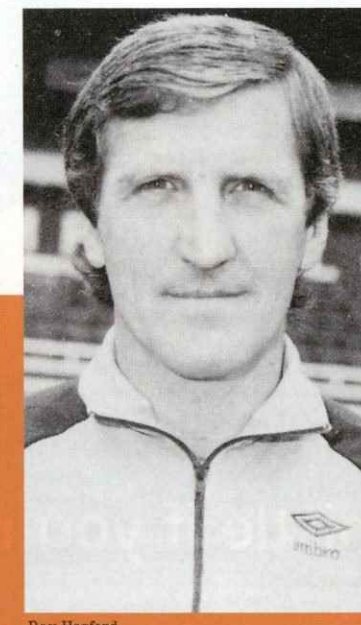
### MIKE NEWELL

Ex England U-21 striker Mike Newell managed Luton Town to the League One title in 2004/05. Initially with Liverpool, he moved via Crewe to Wigan Athletic in October 1983 and scored in their 1985 Freight Rover Trophy Final triumph. He played for Luton, Leicester City and Everton prior to joining Blackburn Rovers in November 1991, helping win promotion in 1991/92 and the Premiership title in 1994/95. Later with Birmingham City, he became Hartlepool's boss in November 2002, plotting their 2002/03 promotion success. He rejoined Luton as manager in June 2003 and remained in charge until sacked in March 2007.

Luton, Shrewsbury, Exeter and Peterborough before becoming Nuneaton's player-boss. He rejoined Luton as coach in July 1972 and became manager in January 1978, guiding the Hatters to the FA Cup semi-finals in 1984/85. Taking charge of Spurs in May 1986, he led them to the 1987 FA Cup Final, then managed Leicester City before rejoining Luton in June 1991. He took the Hatters to the FA Cup semi-finals again in 1993/94, leaving in June 1995. He is now working in the media.

### RAY HARFORD

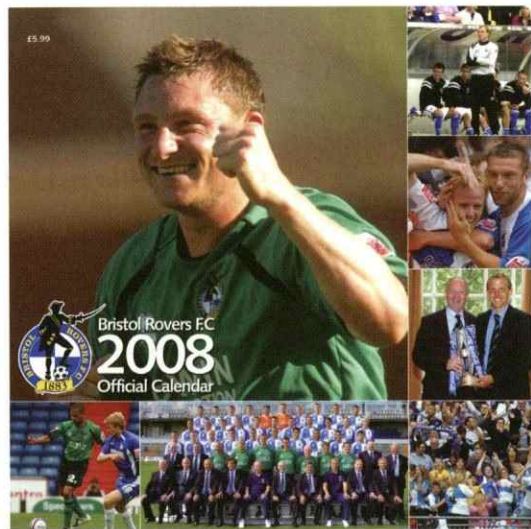
Ray Harford plotted Luton Town's 1988 Littlewoods Cup Final triumph. A centre-half with Charlton, Exeter, Lincoln, Mansfield, Port Vale and Colchester, he was appointed youth team coach at Layer Road. He joined Fulham in a similar capacity in June 1981 and was manager for two years before moving to Luton as assistant boss in July 1986. Becoming manager in June 1987, he also guided them to the Simod Cup final and FA Cup semi-finals in 1987/88, then the 1989 Littlewoods Cup final. Sacked in January 1990, he later managed Wimbledon, Blackburn Rovers, West Brom and QPR. He died in August 2003.



Ray Harford



Joe Kinnear



The official Bristol Rovers Calendar, featuring your favourite players, is now available from Pirate Leisure and '199' and costs just £5.99

[jeffdavis.co.uk](http://jeffdavis.co.uk)  
07764 579705

JEFF DAVIS PHOTOGRAPHIC LTD.



## 'Bird in Hand'

High Street, Saltford

Tel: (01225) 873335

[www.birdinhandsaltford.co.uk](http://www.birdinhandsaltford.co.uk)

Where you will find the unique atmosphere of an English country inn and the warm and friendly welcome that goes with it



We wish every success to  
Bristol Rovers Football Club for  
the 2007/08 season

## For the visitors...

# Suspense should be over

The postponement of the home games against Cheltenham and Swansea earlier this month kept **Steve Elliott** and **Richard Walker** on the sidelines for longer than expected after both players served three match suspensions after their dismissals at Swindon last month.

Hopefully their bans were completed at Huddersfield eleven days ago.

The central defensive positions have been a particular headache for First Team Coach **Paul Trollope**, whose problems started when the partnership of Elliott, formerly with Derby County and Blackpool, and Welsh U-21 cap **Byron Anthony**, who was released by Cardiff City at the end of the 2005/06 campaign, was disrupted by injury in October. Anthony broke his fifth metatarsal during the Johnstone's Paint Trophy defeat by Bournemouth, giving former Kidderminster Harriers' defender **Craig Hinton** the chance to return to the starting line up. Trollope turned to the loan market to bring in Hull City's **Danny Coles**, a former Bristol City trainee who played against Rovers when on loan at Hartlepool in October. During the defeat at Swindon **Elliott** saw red and **Coles** suffered a cheek injury in an incident unseen by the officials.

Four of those defenders should be available this afternoon, the exception being **Anthony** who hopes to be fit to face Fulham in the FA Cup at Craven Cottage next month. The only other recognised central defenders in Rovers' squad have no first team experience. They are **Ryan Paddock**, 19, who was once on Aston Villa's books, and **Alex Kite**, 18, an unused substitute in the FA Cup victory over Rushden & Diamonds early this month. **Kite** is the son of Rovers physio and former goalkeeper **Phil**.

The right back position has been occupied by ex-Hereford United defender **Ryan Green**, who suffered from a broken jaw in an incident last month, and **Aaron Lescott**, a former Stockport County midfielder. **Lescott** has also played at left back but we are more likely to see **Joe Jacobson** or **Chris Carruthers** in that



Steve Elliott

spot this afternoon. Welsh U-21 international **Jacobson**, whose loan move from Cardiff City in February was made permanent in the summer, and **Carruthers** have both been used in central defence in recent weeks. **Carruthers**, a former England youth international, initially joined Rovers on loan from Northampton Town on transfer deadline day in 2005. Local Filton College graduates **Tom Godsell**, 19, and 18 year old **Tom Parrinello**, are regular full backs for Rovers' reserves. **Parrinello** made his senior debut against the Diamonds.

Keeper **Steve Phillips**, Rovers' Player of the Season in 2006/07, made over 250 appearances for Bristol City before crossing the river in the summer of 2006, having spent the best part of ten years with the Robins after joining them from non league Paulton Rovers. His deputy, 19 year old **Mike Green**, has yet to make his senior debut. Goalkeeping coach **Steve Book**, the former Forest Green and Cheltenham keeper, has been registered as a player in case of emergency.

Skipper **Stuart Campbell** is a Scottish U-21 international who started his career with Leicester City. He had two outings as a substitute on loan for Birmingham before joining **Lennie Lawrence**, now Rovers' Director of Football, at Grimsby. Originally a right winger, **Campbell**, now in his fourth season with the Gas, operates in the centre of midfield alongside **Craig Disley**, a former Mansfield Town youngster who arrived at the Mem a few days after

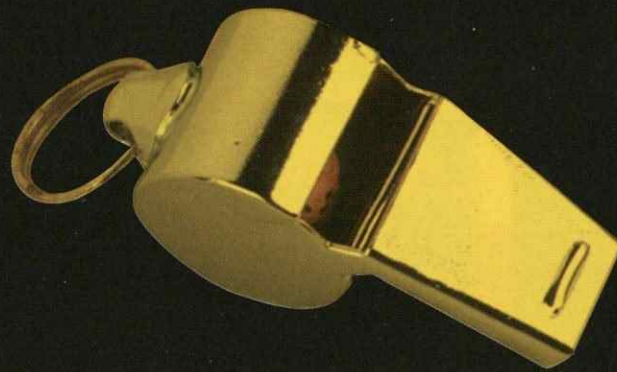
**Campbell**. Former Portsmouth, Reading, Swindon and Millwall midfielder **Sammy Igoe** is also at home in central midfield but gives **Trollope** another option on the right wing where Welsh international **David Pipe** has been playing since his summer signing from Notts County, apart from one game at right back. Filton College scholar **Chris Lines**, who had eight League Two outings last season, has started three games so far this term. He came off the bench to replace Welsh U-21 international **Lewis Haldane** in the FA Cup against Leyton Orient and Rushden. **Haldane** is a former Southampton schoolboy, whose pace is now usually employed on the flanks although he was originally a striker.

**Richard Walker**, a former Aston Villa trainee and last season's leading scorer, will be hoping to get back into the starting line up after serving his suspension. He came off the bench in the five games before his dismissal at Swindon, having scored four so far this term, all from the penalty spot. **Andy Williams**, a summer signing from Hereford, has been up front alongside Rickie Lambert in the absence of 19 year old Filton College graduate **Sean Rigg** with a torn hamstring. Another 19 year old College graduate, **Matt Groves**, made his senior debut against Rushden recently when he came off the bench to replace **Williams**. **Lambert** arrived from Rochdale in a £200,000 deal in August last year after **Junior Agogo's** move to Nottingham Forest. **Josh Klein-Davies**, who was released by Bristol City in the summer, has been on loan at Yate Town.

Rovers' management duo is keen to encourage the youngsters in the squad, who include England Schools and Colleges trialist **Charlie Reece**, 19, who spent eight years with Aston Villa and was on the bench against Leyton Orient last month. 18 year old **James Fraser**, a former Worthing midfielder and England Schools U-18 captain, was given a six month contract in August. **Charlie Clough**, 17, from the club's Centre of Excellence, has signed a two year deal and the left sided **Adam Mahdi**, 18, graduated to the professional ranks through the Centre of Excellence and Filton College.



TL Visuals Limited, Armstrong Way, Yate, Bristol, BS37 5NG  
Tel. 01454 319555 email: [julian.c@tlvisuals.com](mailto:julian.c@tlvisuals.com)



## Give us a whistle if you need print!

## MANAGERIAL RECORDS

<b>Paul Trollope</b> Played 101 Won 39 Drawn 25 Lost 37 For 115 Against 116 Av Pts/game 1.41 Biggest Win(s) Bristol Rvs 4 Accrington S 0 (23/12/2006). Biggest Loss(es) Northampton 4 Bristol Rvs 0 (19/11/2005).	<b>Kevin Blackwell</b> Played 26 Won 7 Drawn 6 Lost 13 For 26 Against 36 Av Pts/game 1.04 Biggest Win(s) Luton 4 Northampton 1 (15/10/2007). Biggest Loss(es) Luton 0 Sunderland 5 (06/05/2007).
--	--

## MANAGER HEAD TO HEAD RECORD

Played ..1	Paul Trollope .....1	Kevin Blackwell .....0
Draws ..0	Goals 2	Goals 1

### Player with the most...

**shots**

Richard Lambert 36

### shots on target

Richard Lambert 17

### shots off target

Richard Lambert 19

### assists

Stuart Campbell 3

### crosses

Stuart Campbell 62

### fouls

Lewis Haldane 27

### free-kicks-won

Lewis Haldane 35



### Player with the most...

**shots**

David Edwards 37

### shots on target

David Bell 17

### shots off target

David Edwards 21

### assists

Darren Currie 5

### crosses

Darren Currie 63

### fouls

Paul Furlong 45

### free-kicks-won

Paul Furlong 25

## GAMES SINCE

1	a win	1
0	a home win	0
3	an away win	2
0	a defeat	0
3	a home defeat	4
0	an away defeat	0
2	a score draw	2
12	a no score draw	5
0	conceding a goal	0
0	scoring a goal	1
0	conceding > 1	8
1	scoring > 1	3
6	keeping a clean sheet	1
3	failing to score	0
27	back to back wins	3
7	back to back defeats	8
1	gaining a point	1
0	losing a point	0
1	win by > one	3
7	loss by > one	8

## SHARP SHOOTERS

<b>Bristol Rvs</b>	<b>CCFL Cup</b>	<b>Tot</b>	<b>Luton</b>	<b>CCFL Cup</b>	<b>Tot</b>		
Richard Lambert	5	4	9	Paul Furlong	5	4	9
Richard Walker	4	0	4	Matthew Spring	4	3	7
Craig Disley	1	3	4	David Bell	3	1	4

## TEAM HEAD TO HEAD RECORD

Played ....43	Bristol Rvs wins.....18	Luton wins.....18
Draws .....7	Goals 70 (1.6 per game)	Goals 74 (1.7 per game)
0-0's .....2	Times failed to score 10	Times failed to score 10

### Biggest League win at Bristol Rvs for each team:

25/02/1961 Bristol Rvs 4-1 Luton  
27/12/1980 Bristol Rvs 2-4 Luton



## 2007/08 LEAGUE STATS

19	Position	24	19	Position	24
18	Played	19	18	Played	19
4	Won	6	4	Won	6
7	Drawn	5	7	Drawn	5
7	Lost	8	7	Lost	8
18	Goals For	20	18	Goals For	20
24	Goals Against	22	24	Goals Against	22
19	Points	13	19	Points	13

### Record Against Top Half of Table

W	D	L	RANK	W	D	L	RANK
0	5	3	23	3	4	3	6

### Record Against Bottom Half of Table

W	D	L	RANK	W	D	L	RANK
4	2	4	18	3	1	5	22

### Record When Scoring First

W	D	L	RANK	W	D	L	RANK
3	4	1	20	6	0	1	15

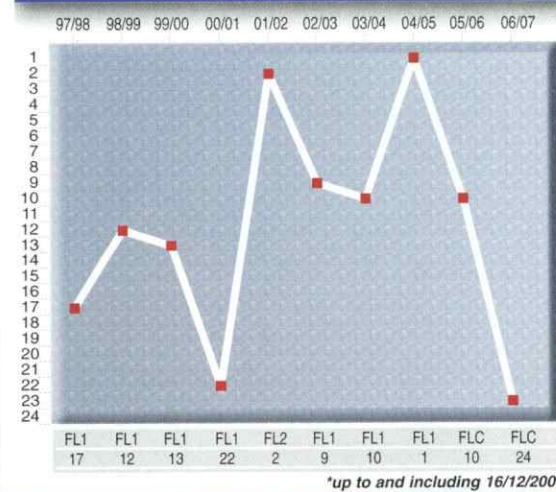
### Record When Conceding First

W	D	L	RANK	W	D	L	RANK
1	2	6	13	0	2	7	23

### Match Scores

<b>Wins:</b> 1-0[2], 2-1[2], <b>Losses:</b> 0-1[2], 0-2[1], 0-3[1], 1-2[1], 2-3[2], <b>Draws:</b> 0-0[1], 1-1[5], 2-2[1]	<b>Wins:</b> 1-0[1], 2-1[3], 3-1[1], 4-1[1], <b>Losses:</b> 0-1[2], 0-2[2], 1-2[3], 1-3[1], 0-0[1], 1-1[5], 2-2[1]
--	--

## LUTON - TEN SEASON RECORD



# Playing on plastic

One of the many excuses wheeled out as to why England failed to qualify for next year's European Championships was that, apart from the team itself not being good enough, we had to play on an artificial pitch for the 2-1 defeat in Russia.

That was the first time England had ever played an international on astroturf and the surface seems to be making a comeback in top level football as developments in synthetic pitch research make them ever more realistic in mimicking natural grass.

The Luzhniki Stadium is owned by Torpedo Moscow with perennial nomads Spartak also playing there as tenants, and features as one of UEFA's 27 prestige five-star rated venues - indeed it hosts this season's Champions League Final, although a grass surface will be laid for this game at the behest of president Michel Platini.

In inclement corners of the globe, durable artificial surfaces provide a lifeline to clubs otherwise at the mercy of Mother Nature and are commonplace in Scandinavia. Tromso and HJK Helsinki are two of the main clubs that use them, while further south Salzburg, Young Boys of Bern and Borussia Mönchengladbach also boast FIFA-accredited surfaces.

The hi-tech pitches you see nowadays are a far cry from the experimental 'plastic pitches' of the 1980s, something which today's opponents Luton Town were well-known for. Astroturf replaced grass at Kenilworth Road in 1985 and followed the lead of pioneers QPR, who laid Orniturf at Loftus Road in 1981.

In only their second season on the surface, QPR won the 1982/83 Second Division title by a massive 10 points and went on to finish fifth in the top flight the following year, qualifying for the UEFA Cup.

Unfortunately UEFA prohibited them from using their pitch in the competition and Rangers instead played at Highbury, although this did not seem to hinder them as they thrashed KR Reykjavik 4-0 and then Partizan Belgrade 6-2 there in the Second Round before crashing to a 4-0 defeat in the Yugoslav capital and going out on away goals.



Tim Parkin and Gary Penrice on Luton's astroturf pitch

Luton were already an established First Division side by the time their synthetic pitch went down, having won promotion in 1982, and their fortunes also improved on the new surface, with a ninth place finish in 1985/86 followed by seventh a year later - the club's best ever league position.

The pitch may not have been the only advantage they enjoyed at Kenilworth Road because away fans had been banned since a match against Millwall ended in a riot in 1985. This self-imposed ban saw Luton controversially omitted from the 1986/87 League Cup.

In 1987/88, the Hatters lost only three home games in 28 league and cup matches at the ground as they reached the Semi-Finals of the FA Cup, the Final of the Simod Cup (the JPT for the top two divisions while English clubs were banned from Europe) and won the League Cup, although they had to play their home Third Round tie against Coventry at Leicester's Filbert Street because of the issue over travelling supporters.

Oldham and Preston were the other two league clubs to convert to astro, both in 1986, a year after Luton. Boundary Park saw its 5.5 metre slope levelled to accommodate the new pitch whereas Deepdale went all plastic after the club sold the ground to the council, who wanted it used by the local community as well as the local team.

Once again the conversion seemed to

give the sides a huge advantage with Oldham ending the 1986-87 campaign in third just outside the Division Two promotion places, while North End were runners-up in Division Four.

QPR dispensed with their expensive turf in 1988 and reverted to grass before the authorities outlawed the use of artificial pitches in the top flight in 1991, when Oldham, who had just won promotion, and Luton were forced to rip theirs up.

Lower league Preston were given an extension to the deadline and the last match played on artificial turf in English football was the Third Division Play-Off Semi-Final against Torquay in May 1994, which North End won 4-1.

Aside from the competitive advantages of playing on synthetic pitches, both Oldham and Luton utilised their surfaces for enviable financial gain by hiring them out on non-matchdays without fear of them being in poor condition when Saturday came around, unlike the current pitch at the Mem.

The Hatters made in the region of £300,000 from their hard-wearing pitch during six years of astroturf - a lot of money in the mid-1980s - before circumstances forced their hand and the club gave most of the turf to nearby Whipsnade Zoo.



The Football League's Fans of the Future initiative is aiming to attract the next generation of supporters to watch live football at their local club  
Find out more at [www.football-league.co.uk](http://www.football-league.co.uk)



# A festive goal feast?

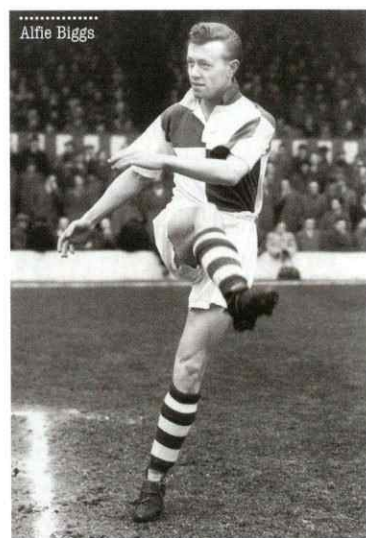
**Christmas has always been a great time to watch football, although several foreign managers of our Premiership teams moan that there are too many games played over such a short period of time.**

But fans like to get out as a family on Boxing Day for the fresh air after a day of over indulging, and maybe spending too much time in front of the television.

Yet people like Arsene Wenger would be horrified to know that at one time games were also played on Christmas Day (plenty of public transport in those days) with the return fixture just 24 hours later.

At one time Rovers would often play four games over a six day period at Christmas. In 1939 we drew 2-2 away at Torquay on 23rd December, lost 3-4 against Swindon Town at Eastville on Christmas Day (only 2,000 turned up because the War was on), drew 1-1 away to Swindon on Boxing Day and made it a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year by beating Bristol City 4-2 at home on 30th December.

The most incredible turn around in the back to back fixtures, I believe, was in 1956 when we got thrashed 7-2 against Bury in Division Two at Gigg Lane on Christmas Day, with Alfie Biggs and George Petherbridge getting our goals.



Alfie Biggs

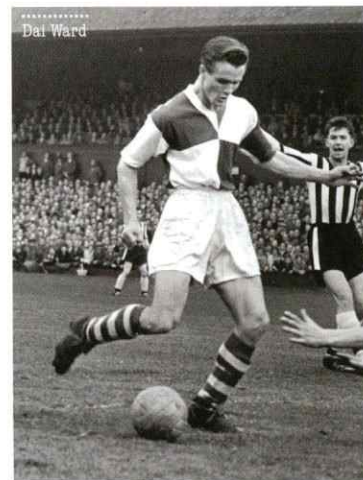
Rovers then faced a long trip home from Lancashire and the chance for revenge less than 24 hours later, with no time to lick their wounds or have any Christmas pudding. With no big squads in those days, Rovers only change for the second game was Norman Sykes replacing our Welsh international Dai Ward at inside-left.

But those tired Pirates came out fighting in front of a Boxing Day crowd of just under 20,000 to come out on top 6-1 with Peter Hooper (3), Barrie Meyer (2), and Biggs getting our goals. We had even played three days before that Christmas Day fixture, beating Doncaster Rovers 6-1 thanks to a Ward hat-trick.

Inevitably, the Christmas season always seemed to throw up high scoring games as the season of goodwill prevailed. The last time Rovers turned out on Christmas Day was in 1957 when we lost 6-4 at Swansea Town, as they were known then, with Ward, Biggs, Meyer and Peter Sampson netting for the visitors at the Vetch Field.

Yet again on Boxing Day we turned things around, beating the Welshmen 3-0 in front of 22,000 at Eastville thanks to goals from Petherbridge (2), and Meyer.

Christmas the following year was a busy time for Bert Tann's boys, who were faced with the long haul across country (no fixture computer to blame then!) to face Ipswich Town on Boxing Day. But the long journey didn't affect our boys as we pulled off a 2-0 win at Portman Road



Dai Ward

with goals from Hooper (penalty) and Geoff Bradford. We drew the return game the following day 1-1 (Ward), in front of just over 20,000.

The harsh winter of 1962 meant that Rovers did not take the field between December 15th (lost 5-2 at Hull) and February 9th, when we beat Brighton 4-1 at Eastville with goals from Biggs (2), Keith Williams and Bobby Jones.

Players worked hard over the festive season, but also tried to let their hair down. One story that is still often recalled by those veterans Bill Roost and Josser Watling, who can still be seen at the Mem on matchdays, revolves around a reserve team game (yes, even the stiffs played on Christmas Day). Bill was being sent off after disputing a goal at Brighton, but Josser is alleged to have told the ref:

He's deaf, how will that look in the papers tomorrow if you send a deaf player off on Christmas Day.

Bill said the ref showed some Christmas spirit and called him back. Bill said:

Every time there was a corner or free kick after that, the ref would look at me, holding the whistle up and pointing at it, asking 'all right number nine?' I was glad when the game was over.

Probably the most historic Christmas Day football was when troops fighting in the trenches during 1914 in the First World War put down their arms for 24 hours, exchanged food and drink, then several games of football were staged against the Germans before fighting resumed the next day.

The first recorded Christmas match was in 1860 when a local derby took place between Hallam FC and Sheffield FC. It is goes without saying that it is the oldest local derby and is still played every year on the same Hallam ground.

We first played today's opponents, Luton Town, in the Southern League in 1900 (won 1-0) but for some reason we have never played the Hatters on Christmas Day or Boxing Day before today although we have twice met on December 27th.

In 1975 we lost 1-0 and in 1980 we were again beaten, this time 4-2, with both matches staged at Eastville. The Gas are due their revenge today and we will wish them a Merry Christmas afterwards.

♦♦♦♦



Left: Programme cover, Treharris, 6th May 1953

Centre: Programme cover, Tournai, 16th August 1966

Right: Programme cover, Tranmere Rovers, 20th May 1990, Playoff Cup Final

## Past Pirates

**I hope you all had a good day yesterday and are feeling ok after the excesses that Christmas Day always seems to bring. Let's hope for a late present of 3 points today!**

### Club by Club

As our last two games, (Cheltenham and Swansea) have been postponed the sequence for this page has been thrown into chaos. The teams covered within those programmes were; Part 3 of Torquay United, and Tottenham Hotspur. Rest assured that these will be reproduced whenever these games are played. In the meantime I will carry on with as if those games had taken place. So we now come to:-

### Tour of Thailand

At the end of our 1973/74 promotion season the team went on a tour of Thailand. After a huge amount of time trying to find a mention of the tour on the world wide web (well alright, 10 minutes!) I have come up with a big fat nothing. Can anyone remember this being mentioned in the press? Even better do you know what teams we played? And, best of all, I would love to know if there were any programmes issued. Please get in touch if you know the answer.

### Tournai

Now called RFC Tournai, the Belgian club are currently in 17th place (out of 19) in the Second Division, having been promoted in first position last season. If

you would like to check out their website, it can be found at [www.rfct.be](http://www.rfct.be) Mind you, I couldn't understand a word of it! We played them at Eastville on 16th August 1966, in a public practice match.

### Tractor Depot

This was a wartime friendly played at Eastville, in September 1917.

### Tranmere Rovers

Apart from two, all the games we have played with Tranmere have been league encounters and have taken place within a relatively short space of time.

The first was a Division Three game at Prenton Park in November 1967 and we continued to meet until our promotion to the Second Division in 1974.

It was to be the end of the 1980's before our paths crossed again and during 1989/90 the two Rovers sides battled it out for a place at the top.

As far as we were concerned, the right Rovers managed to win the title and move up to Division Two, while the Rovers from Merseyside failed at the last hurdle and lost in the play off final. They did, however, win promotion the following year to join us in the newly named Division One. Unfortunately we were relegated at the end of the 1992/93 season and that was the last time we met them in a league encounter, though we will resume our rivalry, at Prenton Park on 11th January next year.

As previously mentioned, there have been two other games with Tranmere. The first of these was in the Second

Round of the FA Cup, in December 1931, when 13,200 fans witnessed a 2-0 win for the club from the Wirral.

The other game was seen by a lot more people than that, as over 48,000 fans made the trip to London to see the lads run out at Wembley for the very first time in May 1990. Sadly, we lost 2-1, but it was a day that those of us who were there will never forget.

### Treharris

Once again I have to say thanks to someone for providing me with a copy of the front cover of this programme. Trouble is I can't remember who it was, sorry! The game was staged at the Commercial Ground in Treharris on 6th May 1953, and the programme cost 3d. Now if that kind person is reading this, what we all want to know is; How big was it, and how many pages did it have? Please get in touch.

Do you need to find a lot of programmes, or just one? Whether you're a Rovers or an Luton fan, then I can be contacted **c/o Pirates Programmes, 199 Two Mile Hill Road, Kingswood, Bristol, BS15 1AZ** or via [jamiegas@blueyonder.co.uk](mailto:jamiegas@blueyonder.co.uk) There are also two websites for you to try [www.geocities.com/piratesprogs](http://www.geocities.com/piratesprogs) and [www.bristolroversmemorabilia.co.uk](http://www.bristolroversmemorabilia.co.uk)

We have programmes from just about every League team, including the Premiership, plus many Non League clubs and other sports as well. So try us, you never know!

# Bristol Rovers

## Adult and Junior Savings Accounts



SAVE FOR THE FUTURE AND SUPPORT BRISTOL ROVERS



FREE match ticket with every savings account opened

To receive your free match ticket simply open a Bristol Rovers Save and Support Account or Captain Gas Junior Saver Account (terms and conditions apply)

### Bristol Rovers Savings Accounts

#### What's in it for Bristol Rovers fans?

- Adult and Junior accounts available
- Only takes £100 to open an adult account and £1 to open a junior account
- Attractive interest rates with instant access and unlimited withdrawals
- An exclusive Bristol Rovers passbook
- Fantastic Bristol Rovers offers including 5% discount at the club shop on production of your passbook
- An annual share of profits through Britannia Membership Reward, subject to scheme rules and qualification period



#### What's in it for Bristol Rovers?

- Bristol Rovers receives an annual bonus from Britannia of up to 1% of the value of the daily average balances held in all Bristol Rovers Savings accounts, which helps contribute to the success of the club

To find out more



Call free on 0800 132 304\*



Visit [www.britannia.co.uk/brfc](http://www.britannia.co.uk/brfc)



Talk to Britannia branch staff

\*Lines open Mon-Fri 8am-8pm and Sat 9am-12noon. Telephone calls may be recorded and/or monitored. Calls from landline phones are free, however mobile providers may charge.

**Britannia**  
BUILDING SOCIETY

Britannia Building Society, Britannia House, Leek, Staffordshire Moorlands ST13 5RG

Britannia undertakes to comply with The Banking Code, copies of this Code are available on request. Britannia Building Society is authorised and regulated by the Financial Services Authority.

#### Terms and Conditions

1. One ticket per account holder regardless of the number of accounts held. The ticket will either be for one adult or for one child depending upon the type of account opened. Please note: Children should be accompanied to the game by an adult. 2. Tickets issued by Bristol Rovers Football Club. 3. Subject to match availability. 4. Subject to normal account opening terms and conditions, see product leaflets for full details.

10892/01/2007

A number of our first team squad visited the Children's Ward at Frenchay Hospital in the build up to Christmas and they are pictured here with some of the youngsters unfortunate enough to be in hospital at this time of the year.



With James Baker



With Beth, Charlie, Kevin, Luke, John and Sophie Manning



With Breman Ford and Dominic Ellis



With Hannah Hull



With Megan Pott



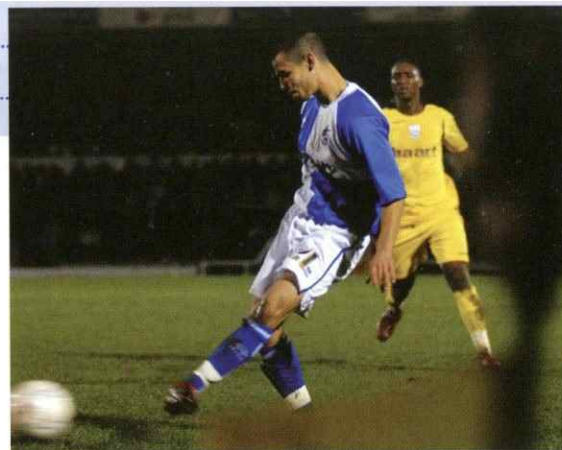
With Megan Summers



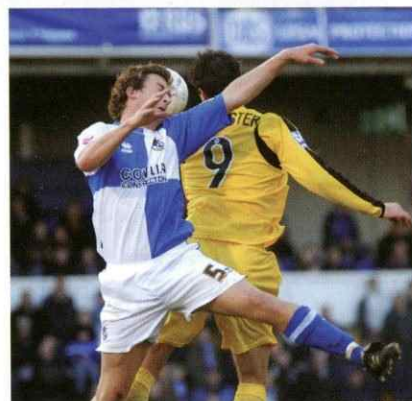
# Congratulations to all our winners

On behalf of everyone connected with the Presidents Club I extend our seasonal good wishes to all the Gas wherever you are. Also our warmest of good wishes to everyone here today from Luton.

Recent winning members in the 200 Club draw are Roger Hynam, Gary Pinker, Graham Dibble, Colin Howlett and Edward Ware who all won £100. Winners of £50 include Gill Whatley, Ken Willcox, Phil Cracknell, Ronnie Birch, Chris Jones, Kevin Jennings, Sam Wiltshire, Edward Condon, Steve Burge and Don Elsdon. Congratulations to you all. It is thanks to the funds raised through the 200 club that we have a representative attending the Football Club Board meetings on our behalf. It seems ages since we were last watching a match at the mem so let us hope today we see an entertaining game and three points for the Gas.



Above: Tom Parrinello, who made his senior debut against Rushden & Diamonds



Right: Craig Hinton, the Presidents Club Man of the Match against Rushden & Diamonds

♦♦♦♦

# Bearing fruit

Over the second half of November, The Football League called all member clubs to one of a series of information sessions regarding the newly formed Football League Trust. We were originally invited to attend a session at Wycombe but, realising the number of clubs with comparatively long distances to travel from the West and South Wales, an additional event was held here in Bristol.

I admit to having jumped the gun a bit a few weeks earlier. Mark Arthur, who is the Chief Executive at Nottingham Forest, had been elected Chairman of the Trust in October. Knowing Mark reasonably well, I made my way to the City Ground to meet with him and to get some first hand information from him. I also took the opportunity to express some concerns that we had here at Bristol Rovers with particular reference to organisational structure, support from the League and funding. I have to say that Mark dealt with our concerns very well and that answers to my questions were further reinforced very satisfactorily at the Bristol meeting.

The Support Unit for the funding of Community activities ceased with effect from 30th November. This came about as a result of press release in July when The Premier League announced a solidarity package with The Football League. The new mechanism is to ensure that a proportion of Premier League income is redistributed down the professional football pyramid.

The funding structure will facilitate Football League Youth Development and individual League Club's youth investment to include Football in the Community. On the organisation and support side, the Trust is presently recruiting ten regional managers, five of whom will support Youth Development and five of whom will support Football in the Community. Each regional manager will be allocated to in the order of twelve to fifteen clubs.

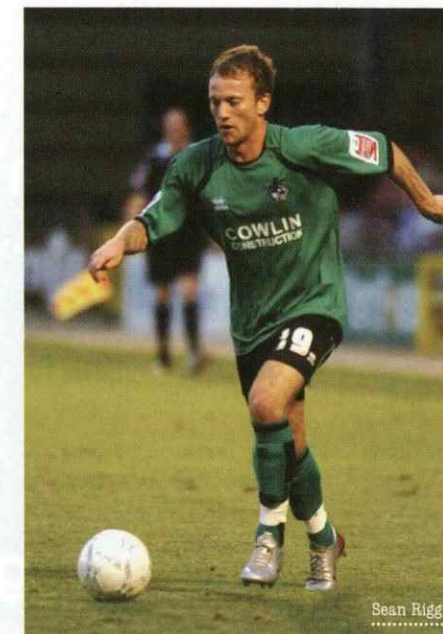
There is no doubting the emerging success of our Youth Development programme over recent years. It is fair to say that past managers have seemed

reluctant to bring our own Bristol and surrounding area young players through into the first team. Lennie Lawrence, as Director of Football at the club, is responsible for the direction issues to take the club forward in this vitally important area. I can assure you that Lennie is not backward in coming forward when putting his proposals and concerns on these matters to the Board. Lennie comes across, to me, as a football professional who believes in youth development and in giving home grown younger players their chance.

Kevin Hodges, as Head of Youth, and Stewart Naughton the Centre of Excellence Manager, are strongly committed to the task. It is good to see Chris Lines and Sean Rigg being given their chance with Tom Parrinello, Matt Groves and Charlie Reece also beginning to feature on first team sheets. Kevin reports to the Youth Management Group on a monthly basis. The Group has ultimate responsibility to ensure the internal management systems and the overall monitoring of the programme is dealt with appropriately. All proposed policy, practices and procedures are presented to the Management Group who in turn make recommendations to the Board.

Stewart Naughton is responsible for the day to day management and administration of the programme. Stewart joined Bristol Rovers from Southampton some four to five years ago and the hard and diligent work that he has put in is beginning to show, and is clearly bearing fruit. The schoolboy coaching programme takes place at the Wise Complex, New Road Filton on three nights of the week and matches take place at Golden Hill, Horfield on Saturday mornings. The sports hall and other indoor facilities at Filton are very good indeed.

It is the view of Stewart, our Management Team led by Lennie and the Board, that clubs like Bristol Rovers must develop their own players and bring them on into the professional game. Stewart will tell you that he is not in a results orientated business and that he is much



Sean Rigg

more interested in individual and team performance. However, I must tell you that all eight teams from U-9 to U-16 have played 100 matches so far this season between them against the likes of QPR and Brentford to the east, Swansea to the west and Plymouth to the south. In all, the results recorded show defeats in single figures; some going, in any standard of football.

Very well done and thank you to Stewart, his team of coaches, and to the boys and their parents. Rovers fans in general are made welcome at Golden Hill at all times when matches are being played. Please get along if you can to support the boys and to appreciate the good work that is going on in our Centre of Excellence.

On December 6th Stewart, Jim Chappell and myself went along to the Weston super Mare Supporters Club Branch AGM. Weston Gas have raised over £1,000 in each of the past two years to sponsor firstly the U-18's and, this year, the Rovers Centre of Excellence. This gesture from our fans in Weston is tremendous and gratefully received. We were very pleased to take questions from the floor about our Youth Development programme and other Bristol Rovers matters. We were made very welcome and the evening was most enjoyable. Thank you to Wilf and all at Weston, very much indeed.

♦♦♦♦

the perfect partnership

www.erre.it    www.erre sport.co.uk



Regional Distributor - Errea South West - Tel 01275 340304


italian technical sportswear **erre**

## haven't you heard?

listen to **ben moss** every saturday from 3pm for all the footy updates and have your say on the game!

**gwrbristol**  
96.3FM - DAB - ONLINE

gwr bristol are proud to support bristol rovers as they take on league one



## NEXT GENERATION clubs

Come to Next Generation and you'll find your very own 'contemporary country club'. It's whatever you want it to be; a place to work out, a place to wind down, a place to bring the family. The choice is yours. One thing that's sure, it's the place to be. You may just be minutes away from the centre of Bristol, but you'll feel like you've entered another world.

Facilities include: Indoor and Outdoor Swimming pool, tennis, badminton, squash, gym, aerobics, spin, kid's gym, sauna, steam, spa, lounge, crèche.

For membership information call now on 0117 959 7142

**Thanks to twelve year old Codey Frowen, a Gashead from Chepstow, who has sent us this poem.**

When we walk into the ground,  
Blue and White is all around,  
As they run on, we all sing  
Come on Rovers, win, win, win.

Bristol Rovers are the best,  
Stuart Campbell and the rest,  
Byron Anthony, on he goes,  
Defending well, as everyone knows.

Steve Phillips diving about,  
Whilst us Gasheads cheer and shout,  
Down the wing Sammy Igoe does run,  
Looking like he's having fun.

Passing the ball and scoring a goal,  
For Richard Walker is such a stroll,  
Yes, Bristol Rovers are the best,  
Stuart Campbell and the rest.

**Thanks, also, to Chris Hastings, from Clevedon, who has written in regarding his German friends who will be here today and again on Saturday.**

Please find enclosed two articles from German football journals re the Gas at Wembley, written by Hardy Grune.

I met Hardy on the coach to Macclesfield last season. He has been a fanatical 'German Pirate' for at least fifteen years, since visiting Twerton Park.

He has links to the club on his website [www.hardy-grune.de/rezis-futbalista.htm](http://www.hardy-grune.de/rezis-futbalista.htm) and both he and his partner Burte (who took most of the photos which illustrate his article on Rovers) are coming over at Christmas and are travelling with us to Leeds, watching the games against Luton and Carlisle and are also going to Southend en route back to Germany.

He does not support St Pauli, as some Gasheads do (see the article elsewhere in this programme) but follows Gottingen 05, who play in the equivalent league to the Blue Square Southern, so he's a real grass roots fan!

Hardy's website reveals that he first saw Rovers play back in 1991, when Peterborough visited Twerton Park, and he's been an exiled Gashead ever since. His account of our day at Wembley is also on his website and we hope that he and Burte enjoy the games they take in over the festive period.



**Rachael**  
The Railway Horse

[www.rachaeltherailwayhorse.com](http://www.rachaeltherailwayhorse.com)

**Many of you will recall the prints we had made of Eastville some years ago. Well, they came from an original painting by local artist Ian Cryer, who has recently issued a new series of books about Rachael the Railway Horse.**

The books are about a horse that worked for the Great Western Railway during the 1930's. Rachael has to hold her own in an increasingly mechanised world in a stable of much larger cart horses and is hampered by the dastardly rival Carman McNess of the LMS.

Lavishly illustrated by Ian, you can order your copies online at [www.rachaeltherailwayhorse.com](http://www.rachaeltherailwayhorse.com)

The books are an ideal present for young boys and girls.

**I'm not one who would normally purchase a copy of 'Scootering', a monthly magazine for those who enjoy getting around on two wheels, so I'm grateful; to Gary Thomas for sending me a copy of the January 2008 edition.**

There, on page 134 is a Bristol Rovers themed Lambretta, which features,



among others, Bruce Bannister and Alan Warboys, better known as Smash and Grab. An extract from the accompanying editorial reads as follows:

The name of the scooter is a tribute to legendary Rovers strike partnership Bruce Bannister and Alan Warboys, their nicknames Smash and Grab, a tag that summed up their prolific and deadly style of goal poaching. Needless to say they were a product of an era that has now, and for some time, sadly departed from English league football.

The scooter project was that of Richard Harris, a scooterman and successful businessman and a proud supporter of his local team, Bristol Rovers, from the north side of the south west's largest city.

**Safety Officer Dave Harper has asked me to draw the following matter to your attention.**

I have received a letter from the City Council pointing out that Horfield Common is being used on matchdays as an unofficial car park. This is contrary to statutory bylaws.

The council suggest that we can work together to eradicate the problem but one specific paragraph in the letter is worth noting by fans. It says:

It is clear to us that the issue has come to a head and that public opinion is that the city council should take some kind of enforcement action, but I am hoping that through a joint effort we can avoid the use of enforcement or using wheel clamping contractors.

### OBITUARY

**We were saddened to learn of the recent death of one of our former stewards, Dave Morgan, who passed away on 1st December.**

Dave was a steward for the club until recently and served in that capacity for some thirty years at Eastville, Twerton Park and The Memorial Stadium. He was totally reliable and an ever present, attending whenever asked to work at ancillary events such as Fun Days, ticket sales, and reserve games at Yate. His last matchday position with us was to look after the inner car park inside the Memorial Gates and many supporters will remember him.

Our thoughts are with Dave's family and friends at this sad time. ■■■■

## GIACOMO LICATA

Gentlemen's Barber Shop Est. 1986

- Open 6 days a week 9am-6pm
- OAP rates £4.50
- Ear Piercing
- Hair Products available
- No appointments needed

Thanks to our existing clients and a warm welcome to new ones

374 Filton Avenue, Horfield, Bristol  
Telephone (0117) 923 6663  
www.giacomolicata.co.uk



## matki

SHOWERING



BATHROOM SOLUTIONS  
BRISTOLS PREMIER BATHROOM SHOWROOM  
Over 50 Bathroom and Shower Settings on display in our Bristol Showroom

Also visit our Exclusive Tile Showroom  
(open 9 to 5 Monday to Saturday, closed Sunday)  
54 Redcliffe Street, Bristol BS1 6LS  
Tel: 01179 299227. Fax: 01179 872098



## AB FLUID POWER LTD

HYDRAULIC & PNEUMATIC COMPONENTS & SYSTEMS

# Rexroth Bosch Group

TEL (0117) 986 6169  
FAX (0117) 986 6170

UNITS 6 & 7, PIXASH BUSINESS CENTRE  
PIXASH LANE, KEYNSHAM, BRISTOL BS31 1TP  
email: sales@abfluidpowerltd.co.uk

# THULE<sup>®</sup> SWEDEN

## CAR RACK SYSTEMS

Roof Racks ● Ski Racks

● Cycle Carriers ●

● Windsurf Holders ●

Roof Boxes ● Ski Boxes

Units 4 & 5, Concorde Drive  
5C Business Centre, Clevedon  
Bristol. BS21 6UH

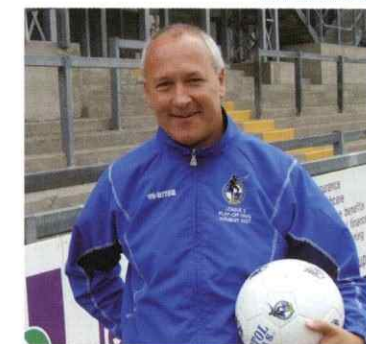
Telephone: (01275) 340404

Fax: (01275) 340686

www.thule.com

# Me and my mate Bruce!

Paul Molesworth



Hi everyone, I hope you are all enjoying the Christmas festivities and that you all receive an extra present in the form of three points against my former club, Luton Town, today.

I'd like to thank Kevin Blackwell personally for the tickets he obtained for our visiting scout a few weeks ago, after the administrators claimed they had sent an email saying that no visiting scouts could have complimentary tickets for the foreseeable future. I'm not sure if the other 20 or so other scouts got in, but we never received such an email!

Off the pitch Luton are not enjoying a very good time, but on it they are still a very tough proposition and a good footballing side.

If they can hang on to their players and, hopefully, come through these

difficult times, I'm sure they will be up there in the play off positions come next May. They also have a fantastic FA Cup tie with Liverpool to look forward to.

After watching the game between Leeds and Huddersfield recently, I spent the time on the train back to Birmingham with Liverpool legend Bruce Grobbelaar. He was on his way to Bristol, to play for Liverpool old stars against a combined Rovers and City old stars team at Yate and, of course, he wanted to know all about the Gas!

Seriously, he was genuinely interested in the club. Nicky Tanner was picking him up at Parkway, I believe, and a great crowd of over 2,000 turned up to watch the game the following day.

We have had Luton watched at home and away, and today's game should be a good one to watch. Both teams will pass the ball and try to play, from back to

front. Hopefully, with injuries and suspensions now mainly behind us, I expect us to start moving on in an upwards direction.

If we can get our home form right, then with the games we have in hand, we can mount a serious challenge ourselves.

Enjoy today. C'mon the Gas. ....

## First Team Squad 2007/08

PLAYER	No.	BIRTHDATE	SEE NOTES	ROVERS CAREER				THIS SEASON				Prev Club								
				League		Cup		League		Cup										
				Total	Apps+SubGoals	Apps+SubGoals	Ratio	Total	Apps+SubGoals	Apps+SubGoals	Ratio									
Byron ANTHONY	15	20/09/1984		46	33	3	1	10	-	2	1:15.00	13	10	-	1	3	-	-	1:13.00	Cardiff C
Stuart CAMPBELL	7	09/12/1977		160	109	18	3	31	2	-	1:51.13	24	18	-	-	6	-	-	-	Grimsby
Chris CARRUTHERS	11	19/08/1983		122	88	10	1	22	2	-	1:118.04	18	11	1	-	6	-	-	-	Northampton T
Danny COLES	16	31/10/1981	1	6	5	-	-	1	-	-	-	6	5	-	-	1	-	-	-	Hull City
Craig DISLEY	20	24/08/1981		164	117	18	18	28	1	5	1:6.86	21	17	-	1	4	-	3	1:5.25	Mansf'd
Steve ELLIOTT	6	29/10/1978		174	144	1	11	28	1	-	1:15.76	21	17	-	2	3	1	-	1:10.34	Blackpool
Ryan GREEN	2	20/10/1980		56	44	4	-	7	1	-	-	14	12	-	-	2	-	-	-	Sheffield Wed
Matt GROVES	27	11/12/1988		2	-	1	-	-	1	-	-	2	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
Lewis HALDANE	26	13/03/1985		161	85	51	15	13	12	2	1:8.25	23	14	4	1	3	2	-	1:21.02	-
Craig HINTON	5	26/11/1977		137	99	11	-	25	2	2	1:66.36	10	4	2	-	3	1	2	1:4.51	Kidd'r
Sammy IGOE	4	30/09/1975		83	51	16	4	14	2	2	1:12.84	17	5	8	-	2	2	-	-	Millwall
Joe JACOBSON	3	17/11/1986		32	22	6	1	3	1	-	1:29.69	19	11	4	1	3	1	-	1:17.35	Cardiff C
Rickie LAMBERT	9	10/02/1982		73	46	11	14	14	2	5	1:3.62	24	15	3	5	5	1	4	1:2.52	Rochdale
Aaron LESCOTT	32	02/12/1978		136	103	8	-	23	2	-	-	10	6	-	-	4	-	-	-	Stockport Co
Chris LINES	18	30/11/1985		18	6	7	-	2	3	-	-	5	1	-	-	2	2	-	-	-
Tom PARRINELLO	21	11/11/1989		1	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-
Steve PHILLIPS	1	06/05/1978		83	65	-	-	18	-	-	-	24	18	-	-	6	-	-	-	Bristol City
David PIPE	14	05/11/1983		21	13	3	2	5	-	-	1:10.01	21	13	3	2	5	-	-	1:10.01	Notts County
Sean RIGG	19	04/02/1988		38	5	25	2	3	5	-	1:14.05	13	4	6	-	2	1	-	-	-
Richard WALKER	10	08/11/1977		164	118	19	50	22	6	12	1:2.52	19	12	3	4	2	2	-	1:4.34	Blackpool
Andrew WILLIAMS	8	14/08/1986		23	6	11	1	4	2	2	1:6.24	23	6	11	1	4	2	2	1:6.24	Hereford

NOTES:

1. On loan from Hull City

# Playing for the Gas

## RAY SEATHERTON

Centre-forward Ray Seatherton played for Bristol Rovers during the 1955/56 campaign. Initially with hometown Tiverton, he joined Minehead in July 1954 and was a prolific scorer in the Western League. He moved to Eastville Stadium in February 1955 and netted twice on his debut for Rovers reserves against their Reading counterparts, then a hat-trick in the 3-0 victory over Aldershot reserves. Scoring in both his League games, a 3-0 win over Lincoln and 1-1 draw with Barnsley, he lost his place after a knee injury and rejoined Minehead in July 1956, then played for Taunton. He is now a retired motor engineer in Tiverton.

## RICKY SHAKES

Trinidad & Tobago international winger Ricky Shakes had a loan spell at Bristol Rovers during the 2004/05 campaign. A former Bolton Wanderers trainee, he scored on his first-team debut in their FA Cup Third Round replay defeat at home to Tranmere six months before turning professional in July 2004. He was loaned to Bristol Rovers in February 2005 and his solitary League appearance was as a substitute in that month's 2-1 defeat at Macclesfield. Also loaned to Bury that season, he joined Swindon in August 2005 and made his international debut against Iceland in February 2006. He helped them win promotion last season.



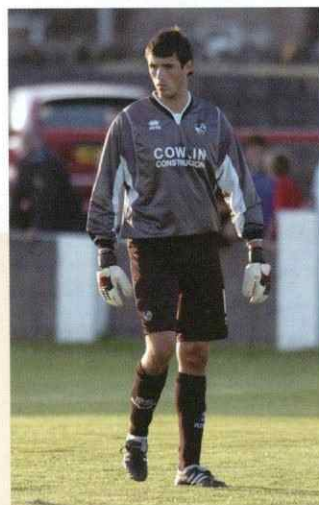
Ricky Shakes

## MARTIN SHAW

Teenage midfielder Martin Shaw briefly appeared for Bristol Rovers during the 1978/79 season. Locally born, he attended Whitefield School in Fishponds and became an apprentice at Eastville Stadium. He turned professional in September 1978 and was given his League debut as substitute in Rovers' 1-0 defeat at home to Preston in May 1979. Also playing in that month's 1-0 victory at Wrexham, he failed to make any further first team appearances and followed Stuart Taylor to Bath City in July 1980. He was one of several former Rovers players at Tiverton Park, later playing for Forest Green Rovers and Banbury United.

## SCOTT SHEARER

Scotland B international goalkeeper Scott Shearer missed just one match for Bristol Rovers in 2005/06. Initially with Tower Hearts, he joined Albion Rovers in July 2000 and moved to Coventry City in July 2003. He failed to maintain a regular first-team slot and was loaned to Rushden & Diamonds before joining Bristol Rovers in July 2005. Displaced Steve Phillips last season, he was loaned to Shrewsbury Town in October 2006 and starred as they reached the League Two play off final but was denied the



Scott Shearer

**Football historian LEIGH EDWARDS traces every Bristol Rovers player from 60 post war league seasons.**

chance to appear against Rovers which was a condition of his deal. He moved to Wycombe Wanderers in July 2007.

## DICK SHEPPARD

Goalkeeper Dick Sheppard was ever present for Bristol Rovers in 1970/71. Signing professional for West Brom in February 1963, he played in the 1967 League Cup final and moved to Eastville Stadium in June 1969. He starred as Rovers reached the League Cup Fifth Round in two consecutive seasons and won at Manchester United in the 1972/73 League Cup Third Round replay. Also featuring in the 1972 Watney Cup final triumph, he made 151 League appearances until suffering a head injury in January 1973. He played for Weymouth, Portway Bristol and Paulton Rovers, residing locally until his death in October 1998.

## JEFF SHERWOOD

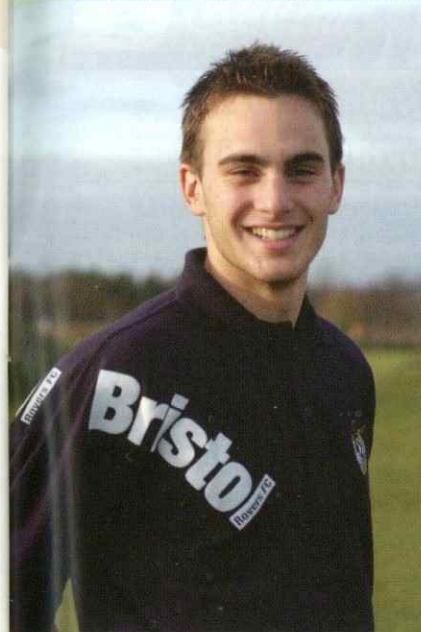
Right back Jeff Sherwood contested a first team slot with Neil Slatter while at Bristol Rovers. Locally born, he played for Minehead, Taunton Town and Bath City before moving to Eastville Stadium in June 1982. He was given his League debut in Rovers' 2-2 draw at Preston three months later and made 19 Third Division appearances prior to rejoining Bath City in September 1983. Moving to Yeovil Town in August 1987, he featured in their 1987/88 Isthmian League double triumph and joined Gloucester in November 1990. He returned to Yeovil in August 1992, then played for Clevedon, Bath, Brislington and Trowbridge



Dick Sheppard

# Kite flying high!

“PLAYING FOR THE RESERVES IS A BIG STEP UP FROM YOUTH TEAM FOOTBALL, AND MAKING IT THROUGH TO THE FIRST TEAM IS ANOTHER BIG STEP TO TAKE”



**The FA Cup ties against Leyton Orient and Rushden & Diamonds saw a number of the younger members of the squad included in the first team squads.**

Central defender Alex Kite was on the bench for the Second Round tie, had had been close to making the squad for the replay against Orient just a few days earlier.

His name was included in the list of 18 players on duty for that game, and although he eventually missed out on a place in the final 16, it was a big day for the young central defender.

It was a fantastic feeling. When I first went into the dressing rooms at Colerne, I wasn't really expecting anything. I knew there were a few injuries and suspensions, but to walk in and see my name in the squad for the game was a great experience and I was buzzing from then on.

Then, when I walked into the dressing room on the night of the match it was a little bit strange to see a shirt with my name on hanging from the peg. It was a fantastic feeling. I didn't make the 16, but that wasn't a problem because the experience of going out on to the pitch, warming up with the lads, and being involved in front of a decent crowd was just a great experience. I wasn't disappointed in the slightest that I wasn't in the actual squad, as just being involved was a great feeling.

It was a totally different feeling to the

one you get when appearing for the reserves at the Memorial Stadium. For a start, there was a much bigger crowd and it's a fantastic feeling to walk out on to the pitch and hear them cheering. Everyone is buzzing, and it gives you a tremendous lift.

Naturally, those feelings were even greater when he made the bench for the Rushden game, when he was one of four substitutes who had never made a senior appearance. I'm sure someone will correct me if I'm wrong, but I doubt that there's ever been a younger, or more inexperienced, bench than that one. It shows that, at last, we do have young players coming through the ranks who have a genuine chance of making it through to the first team.

For those of you who are unable to get along to our reserve team games, Alex has been associated with the club since he was 12 years old.

I joined the Centre of Excellence then, and went on to Filton College and played for the U-18 side. I think I did reasonably well, but I picked up a few injuries. I came back, though, and did well again and was fortunate enough to be offered a pro contract in the summer. Since then I've kept my head down and worked hard, and have been playing regular reserve team football.

We have been fortunate in that, unlike last season, we have been able to play games on a regular basis as Kevin Hodges has been successful in arranging friendly fixtures when we haven't had league games. That's important, as it enables you to maintain your fitness levels and helps you to improve as a player.

He's the first to admit that the senior pros at the club have been a big help.

In the reserves, I've played alongside Craig Hinton a number of times, and he's been fantastic. He's been helping me through every single game, giving

me advice and he's been absolutely brilliant.

Aaron Lescott has also been a big help, as he passes on advice about positioning and, to be honest, all of the senior pros are great about helping the younger players.

Making the transition from youth team player to full time pro is difficult, but, he says, it gets easier as time passes.

It was quite difficult at the beginning, because your body isn't used to training every day. It's been a fantastic experience, though, and I just love training and coming in every day and it has become easier as I've got used to it.

He's not been short of advice, as his father Phil, a former Rovers goalkeeper and now the club's physio, has always been there for him.

He's always supported me and helped me along and his football background has been a great help. He's helped me since I was very young, and continues to help me now. He lets me get on with things, but still gives me pointers now and again, for which I'm very grateful.

He's already played a number of strikers who have had first team experience with their clubs, including Bristol City's Lee Trundle and Enoch Showunmi.

That was a good test, but I felt I did alright against them and the experience can only help improve my game.

Having had a taste of what it's like to be involved with the first team squad has made him even more determined to make it a regular happening, though he knows it's going to take a lot more hard work.

Playing for the reserves is a big step up from youth team football, and making it through to the first team is another big step to take. Everything changes, and the players around you have more technical ability, but I'm willing to give it everything to get the chance.



## Past...

**Rovers and Luton's first meeting in the Football League came on 1st January 1921, and today is the 78th league fixture between the clubs.**

Rovers have won 19 of their home games against the Hatters, have drawn 12 and lost seven. In September this year, Rovers won for the sixth time at Kenilworth Road, where they have drawn nine games and lost 24, a figure which includes the 12-0 defeat on Easter Monday 1936. At that time, it was the joint biggest win in Football League history, though it has since been surpassed by Newcastle's 13-0 victory over Newport in 1946. Every time Rovers have won at Kenilworth Road, they have gone to complete the double over the Hatters and go into today's game with hopes of completing their first double of the current campaign.

## Present...

**Luton's last game before we went to print was a 1-0 defeat at Whaddon Road, Cheltenham, where Andy Lindegaard scored after only two minutes.**

Speaking on Luton's official website, manager Kevin Blackwell said:

"We have dominated a team away from home and we haven't got anything yet again. I wish we were playing tomorrow, because we would have won that game nine times out of ten. Cheltenham were lucky tonight and it would be nice if we could have a bit of it at the moment."

## Future...

**It's a hectic few days for Rovers as we take on Carlisle United, here at the Mem, on Saturday (ko 3.00pm) then travel to Southend for a New Year's Day fixture (ko 1.00pm).**

That's followed by a trip to Craven Cottage on Sunday 6th January for the FA Cup Third Round tie against Fulham (ko 2.00pm)

## TUESDAY 4TH DECEMBER

Goals from Jason Scotland (2) and Darren Pratley gave Swansea a 3-0 home win over Northampton, which maintained their two point advantage at the top of the table.

Second placed Carlisle also registered a 3-0 home win, thanks to goals from Joe Anyinsah (2) and Joe Garner, against Swindon who had youngster Ben Tozer sent off. Leyton Orient and Nottingham Forest slipped to third and fourth place respectively following single goal defeats. Zak Whitbread scored the only goal of the game at Brisbane Road, for Millwall, while at the Bescot Stadium Michael Ricketts scored the goal that enabled Walsall to secure a home win over Forest.

Leeds moved into fifth place following their 3-0 home win over Port Vale, with goals from David Prutton, Jermaine Beckford and Tore Andre Flo. Defeat for Vale left them stranded at the bottom of the table, a point behind Bournemouth who were beaten 2-1 at Yeovil, where Terry Skiverton and James Walker were on target for the home side.

Luton moved up to third from bottom following a 1-1 draw at Oldham, Jaroslav Fujot equalising for the Hatters after Craig Davies had put the home side ahead.

Elsewhere, Chris Dickson scored twice for Gillingham, who came from behind to win 3-2 at Crewe, Hartlepool were 3-1 home winners over Tranmere while Doncaster and Brighton played out a goalless draw at the Keepmoat Stadium.

Willing volunteers try to get the pitch ready for the game against Swansea, but they were fighting a losing battle



## WEDNESDAY 5TH DECEMBER

Southend moved into sixth place following their 4-1 win over Huddersfield. Alan McCormack (2), Mark Gower and Nicky Bailey were on target for the Shrimpers, while Huddersfield finished the game with ten men following the dismissals of goalkeeper Matt Glennon and defender Frank Sinclair.

## THURSDAY 6TH DECEMBER

Talks regarding a possible takeover at Swindon Town broke down, leaving the Wiltshire club facing a bleak future.

## FRIDAY 7TH DECEMBER

Despite finishing with 10 men, following the dismissal of Sammy Clingan, Nottingham Forest moved into second place in the table following their 2-0 win at Brighton. A double from Nathan Tyson secured the points for Forest.

## SATURDAY 8TH DECEMBER

Although their game against Rovers, here at the Memorial Stadium, was called off Swansea held on to top spot. However they remained ahead of Leyton



	P	W	D	L	F	A	GD	Pts	Form (← latest)					
Swansea	19	5	3	2	13	6	1	20	10	17	37	WWWLWD		
Carlisle	19	7	1	1	16	3	3	5	2	15	12	16	36	WDWDW
Not'm F	19	5	4	1	17	6	4	3	2	14	6	19	34	DWLWWW
Leyton O	20	5	2	3	14	15	5	2	3	14	13	0	34	LWLWDD
Leeds	20	9	1	0	24	5	6	2	2	15	9	25	33	DWMLVW
Southend	20	6	1	3	20	11	4	1	5	11	17	3	32	LWMLLD
Yeovil	20	5	2	3	12	11	4	2	4	10	11	0	31	WWWLWD
Brighton	20	4	3	3	15	12	4	3	3	11	8	6	30	WLDDDD
Walsall	20	3	4	3	10	10	4	4	2	11	8	3	29	DdWWD
Donc'r R	20	4	3	3	14	9	3	4	3	13	13	5	28	LdWdW
Tranmere	20	4	3	3	14	9	3	4	3	8	9	4	28	dWLLdL
Hartlepool	20	5	3	2	18	10	3	0	7	11	16	3	27	WLWLLD
Hudd T	20	5	2	3	14	10	3	0	7	5	23	-14	26	WLWLWW
Oldham A	19	2	3	4	8	10	4	3	3	13	10	1	24	WDWDDW
Crewe A	20	5	2	3	12	10	1	4	5	8	18	-8	24	LdLWVW
Swindon	19	5	2	3	18	10	1	3	5	9	15	0	23	LWLWLD
Gilling	20	5	3	2	15	12	1	1	8	6	24	-15	22	LLWLLD
North'n T	20	4	2	4	13	11	1	4	5	10	19	-7	21	DDLLLL
Bristol R	18	1	4	3	9	14	3	3	4	9	10	-6	19	LLWLLL
Millwall	19	4	1	5	14	14	1	3	5	5	15	-10	19	LWMLDL
Chelt T	19	3	5	2	10	11	1	1	7	6	17	-12	18	WLWDDL
Port V	20	2	2	6	8	13	2	2	6	8	16	-13	16	dWLLDL
Bournemouth	20	1	2	7	6	19	3	2	5	13	15	-15	16	WLLLDL
Luton	19	6	2	1	16	8	0	3	7	4	14	-2	13	LDWdSL

Orient only on goal difference.

Goals from Adam Boyd and John Melligan gave Orient a 2-0 home win against Cheltenham, while Carlisle missed the opportunity to take over at the top of the table. Instead, the Cumbrians slipped to fourth place after twice forfeiting the lead in their 2-2 draw at Northampton. Bradley Johnson scored a last minute equaliser for the Cobblers, after Marc Bridge-Wilkinson and Joe Garner had twice put Carlisle in front.

Leeds, who registered their 5,000th league goal, remained in fifth place after Jermaine Beckford scored twice in a convincing 4-0 home win over local rivals Huddersfield. Mark Gower scored a last minute winner for Southend, who stayed in sixth place, as they came from behind to beat Swindon 2-1 at Roots Hall.

Port Vale lifted themselves off the bottom of table after coming from behind to beat Gillingham at the Priestfield Stadium for the first time since November 1958. A Simon King own goal gave them a 2-1 victory and contributed to Gillingham's 1,300th league defeat.

Bournemouth slipped to the bottom of the table after losing 3-1 at Tranmere, below Luton on goal difference. The Hatters were without a game as their match against Millwall was called off.

Elsewhere, Yeovil beat Hartlepool 3-1 at Huish, thanks to goals from Terry Skiverton, Marcus Stewart and Lloyd Owusu, while James Hayter netted a last minute penalty in Doncaster's 1-1 draw at Oldham. Crewe and Walsall played out a goalless draw, the first between the clubs at Gresty Road since March 1923.

## Southend

Tuesday 1st January 2008  
(ko 1.00pm)

**For this Coca Cola League One fixture at Roots Hall, Supporters Club coaches leave the Memorial Stadium and Kingswood at 7.00am and Eastville at 7.15am.**

**Coach Fare:** £16.00

**Matchday Programme:** £3.00

**Matchday Prices** (All seats)

Adults: £22.00  
65+: £15.00  
Students: £14.00  
U-16's: £11.00

Please note a reduction of £2.00 is available on all tickets purchased in advance, with the exception of U-16 tickets where there is a reduction of £1.00.

**By Car:** Take the M4 East until the M25, then take the M25 North Circular and exit at Junction 29 (s/p Romford, Basildon, Southend A127). After 19 miles, at roundabout by Tesco's, turn right (s/p Town Centre). Roots Hall is another 0.5 miles on the right.

## Helpline...

■ Martyn Radnedge

**This time last year, as we entered the Festive Season, we had played 23 of our 46 League games. Due to the bad weather this year we will be playing catch up with fixtures and this is going to demand a greater effort from the players as well as the supporters wallets.**

Not only regular League games but a possible extra game or two in the FA Cup, starting with a trip to Fulham early in the New Year, is in view.

Talking of FA Cup games, members of Helpline will know, from the bigger gates this season, that due to their Helpline membership they get priority tickets at All Ticket games. Just one

## Fulham

Saturday 6th January 2008  
(ko 2.00pm)

**For this Coca Cola League One match at Brunton Park, Supporters Club coaches will leave the Memorial Stadium and Kingswood at 7.00am and Eastville at 7.15am**

**Coach fare:** £15.00 (Members)  
£17.50 (Non-members)

Please note that there will be no parking at the Memorial Stadium as there is a rugby match that day.

**Matchday Programme:** £3.00

As far as **tickets** are concerned, we have been allocated 7,000 and they are priced as follows.

Adults: £15.00  
\*Concessions: £10.00  
U-16's: £5.00  
\* Concessions are for 65+ & Young Persons aged 17 - 20

**By Car:** Take the M4 towards London and exit on to the M25 to the A3 turn off. Continue on the A3 following signs to Central London, for 15.6 miles, and exit at Tibbets Corner (s/p Westminster, West End, Putney A219). At roundabout turn left (1st exit, s/p West End A304, Westminster A3212, Putney, Fulham) onto A219. After 1 mile, at junction with the South Circular Road (A205), go straight on (s/p West End A304, Westminster A23) into Putney High Street. Putney Bridge is 0.4 miles straight ahead. Go over the bridge and after 0.1 miles go straight on at junction/lights by the Pharoak & Firkin (s/p The West, West End). At roundabout, after 0.1 miles, by the Kings head, go straight on (s/p The West A4, West End A4, Oxford A40) into Fulham Palace Road. After 0.2 miles turn left into Bishop's Park Road to ground.

more benefit of joining Helpline.

Hopefully everyone has had a fill of Christmas pudding and will be in good voice for this afternoon's match.

When it's over, give a thought to joining Helpline for the New Year. Give Kate a ring on **01454 321191** for details.

# CONSTRUCTION AND GAS

Looking to start a career in Plumbing, Brickwork, Carpentry, Plastering, Gas or Electrical? Then look no further with our fast-track intensive suite of courses in the construction trade.

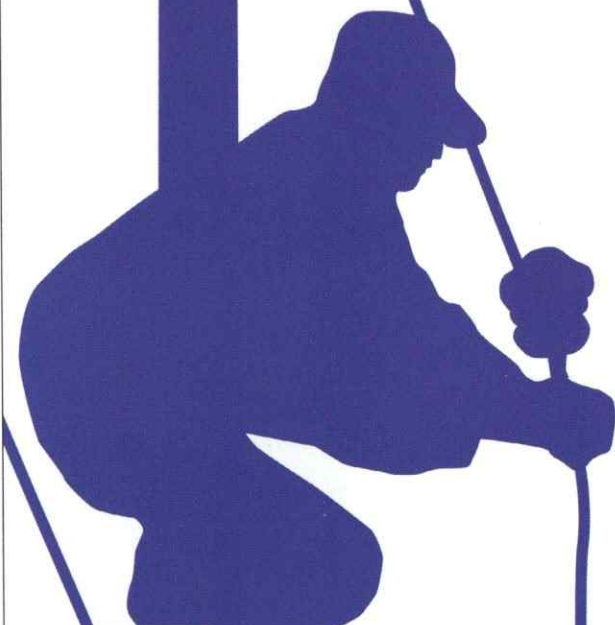
We offer Taster courses in Plumbing, Brickwork, Carpentry, and Plastering. Part-time one evening over 6 weeks.

Gas Engineering  
Filton College offers gas training and re-training for skilled workers at technician and engineer levels in the gas industry, providing courses at NVQ2 and NVQ3. Our Centre of Vocational Excellence builds on its experience in the training of gas service fitters and gas service engineers and updating the skill and qualifications of those who are in employment or with an associated trade background to meet the standards of the Accredited Certification Scheme

Sue Love – Construction on  
0117 909 2268  
Debbie Iles - Gas on  
0117 909 2254

Visit our Professional  
Development evenings  
6.30pm- 8.30pm Advice and  
Guidelines, Facility Tours, and  
Financial Support.

12th December 07  
27th February 08  
2nd February 08  
Wednesday 30th April 08  
Wednesday 4th June 08  
Wednesday 25th June 08



## The top ten games

**Gerard Butler looks at the ten key games which have helped to shape the League One promotion race so far.**

The promotion race has brought a few surprises, with Leeds United's 15 point deduction not hindering their progress into the promotion picture. Nottingham Forest and Swansea have figured as expected, after going close in recent seasons, whilst Doncaster, Carlisle, Yeovil, and, unexpectedly, Leyton Orient, have featured too.

**1) Saturday 25th August, Nottingham Forest 1-2 Leeds**

Less than ten years ago, this would have been a top flight game, but, in any case, there was a huge crowd, as Leeds claimed their fourth successive win in all competitions. Tresor Kandol put the visitors ahead in the first half, but Kris Commons levelled for Forest, before Jermaine Beckford struck with just a minute left. For Forest, their promotion challenge would take time to emerge, but the visitors had already chipped away at that points deduction.

**2) Friday 14th September, Swansea 2-1 Carlisle**

After just missing out on the play offs last season, despite a strong finish under Roberto Martinez, this win marked the start of a run of just one defeat in 11, and was United's first away defeat, although they stayed third. Danny Graham looked to have put the Cumbrians on track for victory, but goals in the last nine minutes from Daryl Duffy and Paul Anderson earned the Swans a priceless victory.

**3) Saturday 22nd September, Leeds 2-0 Swansea**

This was a highly significant result, being City's only loss in an 11 match spell, whilst it meant United maintained a 100% league record, with seven wins from seven, equalling a club record from the Don Revie era in the process, as they moved from -15 points to six points in credit. Jermaine Beckford and David Prutton scored the goals which kept the Swans just outside the top seven as United's momentum showed no signs of slowing.

**4) Saturday 6th October, Leyton Orient 0-5 Swansea**

The O's led the table, but were well beaten by the Swans, who were proving to be far more dominant on the road than at the Liberty Stadium. Tom Butler scored twice, with other goals from Paul Anderson, Darren Pratley and Warren Feeney, as City moved up to fourth spot and into the heart of the title race, whilst Orient's third defeat of the season knocked them off the top of the table.

**5) Saturday 27th October, Southend 0-1 Carlisle**

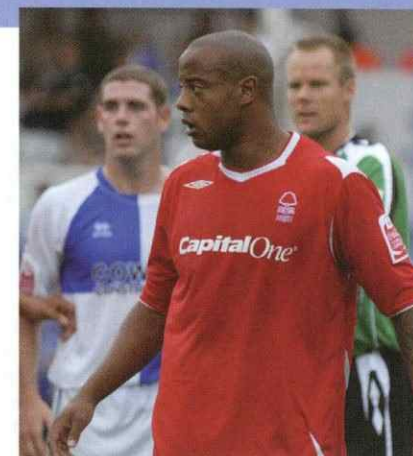
Southend were doing well after last season's relegation, whilst John Ward had kept Carlisle in the heart of the promotion race following his move from Cheltenham at the start of the month. Joe Garner scored the goal which took the Cumbrians to the top of the table, but even after that defeat, the Shrimpers were still only two points behind, despite their fifth spot, in an extremely congested top six.

**6) Saturday 3 November, Carlisle 3-1 Leeds**

At this stage, Leeds United were still unbeaten, and 11 wins from 13 had taken them into the top six, but it was Carlisle who were leaders, and they handed the visitors a 3-1 defeat. Jermaine Beckford gave the visitors an interval lead, which was only cancelled out on the hour by Simon Hackney. Joe Garner put the home side in front, whilst Marc Bridge-Wilkinson added another in stoppage time, as the Cumbrians maintained a one point lead at the top of the table.

**7) Tuesday 6th November, Nottingham Forest 4-1 Southend**

Forest had eased their way into contention after a modest beginning, and hammered one of their closest rivals to underline their title aspirations, moving into second spot ahead of the Shrimpers. However, it could have been different as Mark Gower gave the visitors a third minute lead, but Ian Breckin levelled and Nathan Tyson put Forest in front in the second half, shortly before Peter Clarke was dismissed; the hosts taking advantage through a Junior Agogo brace.



Former Rovers striker Junior Agogo, who scored twice against Southend, pictured at the Mem earlier this season

**8) Tuesday 4th December, Walsall 1-0 Nottingham Forest**

Quietly moving into play off contention, thanks to one of the best defensive records in the division, the Saddlers showed their status as promotion contenders, as Michael Ricketts' goal just after the break meant Walsall were only outside the play off zone on goal difference. Forest's second away defeat of the campaign, against a side they have not defeated since 2000, saw them in fourth spot.

**9) Saturday 15th December, Carlisle 1-0 Leyton Orient**

Continuing the theme of excellent results in the crucial games, the Cumbrians moved above both Nottingham Forest and Orient into second spot thanks to Joe Garner's goal early in the second half, with the striker second in the scoring charts. It left the O's in fourth spot with identical home and away records, as consistency continued to elude them, despite their lofty position, whilst United celebrated a seventh home win from nine league matches.

**10) Sunday 16th December, Doncaster 1-2 Yeovil**

Both of these sides had worked their way into contention after slow starts, justifying the views of those who expected them to be in the promotion shake up. This fourth away win of the season left the Glovers just one point outside the top six, whilst Rovers drifted behind Brighton in the pecking order. Darren Way opened the scoring for the visitors, and Marcus Stewart doubled the lead, before being sent off in a stoppage time period which also saw an own goal yield the hosts' consolation.

# Carlisle United

The final match of a truly memorable year provides the opportunity to pit our wits against promotion candidates from Cumbria and a few familiar faces.

In charge will be our former management team from the Twerton Park days of John Ward and Dennis Booth. They have largely travelled their separate ways for over a decade since leaving the West Country but were reunited when Ward took charge at Brunton Park in October. On the pitch we should expect to see striker Kevin Gall and defender Richard Keogh.

Kevin has often been warming the bench this term due to the competition he faces from three summer signings, Joe Garner, Danny Graham and Danny Carlton, but he usually gets the chance to bring his pace in to the attack at some stage. Teenager Garner heads the scoring chart following his move from Blackburn Rovers. Graham, recruited from Middlesbrough, has been the most preferred partner in the starting eleven but was edged out by Carlton who made his first Football League start at Brighton last month. In May he scored the decisive goal for Morecambe in the Conference Play off Final at Wembley.

Keogh had only just returned to Bristol City after playing ten games on loan at Huddersfield Town when he agreed a further temporary move to Carlisle until New Years Day. He arrived at Ashton Gate from Stoke City two years ago and last season captained the Republic of Ireland U-21 international team and was voted City's Young Player of the Year.

## On this day in history...

Last five League & Cup matches on 26th December

2002	LDS	Swansea City	A	W 1-0	Tait
2003	LDS	Northampton Town	H	L 1-2	Carlisle (pen)
2004	LGE2	Leyton Orient	H	D 1-1	Forrester (pen)
2005	LGE2	Shrewsbury Town	H	W 2-1	Disley, Agogo (pen)
2006	LGE2	Hereford United	A	D 0-0	

## Today's other fixtures

AFC Bournemouth	v	Leyton Orient
Doncaster Rovers	v	Northampton Town
Gillingham	v	Southend
Hartlepool United	v	Leeds United
Huddersfield Town	v	Crewe Alexandra
Millwall	v	Brighton & Hove Albion
Oldham Athletic	v	Nottingham Forest
Port Vale	v	Walsall
Swansea City	v	Cheltenham Town
Tranmere Rovers	v	Carlisle United
Yeovil Town	v	Swindon Town

# Season 07/08 Match STATS

**2** Played • Number indicates goals scored  
**S** indicates player was substituted  
**00** Used Substitute • Number indicates Player replaced  
**00** Played • Booked and sent off

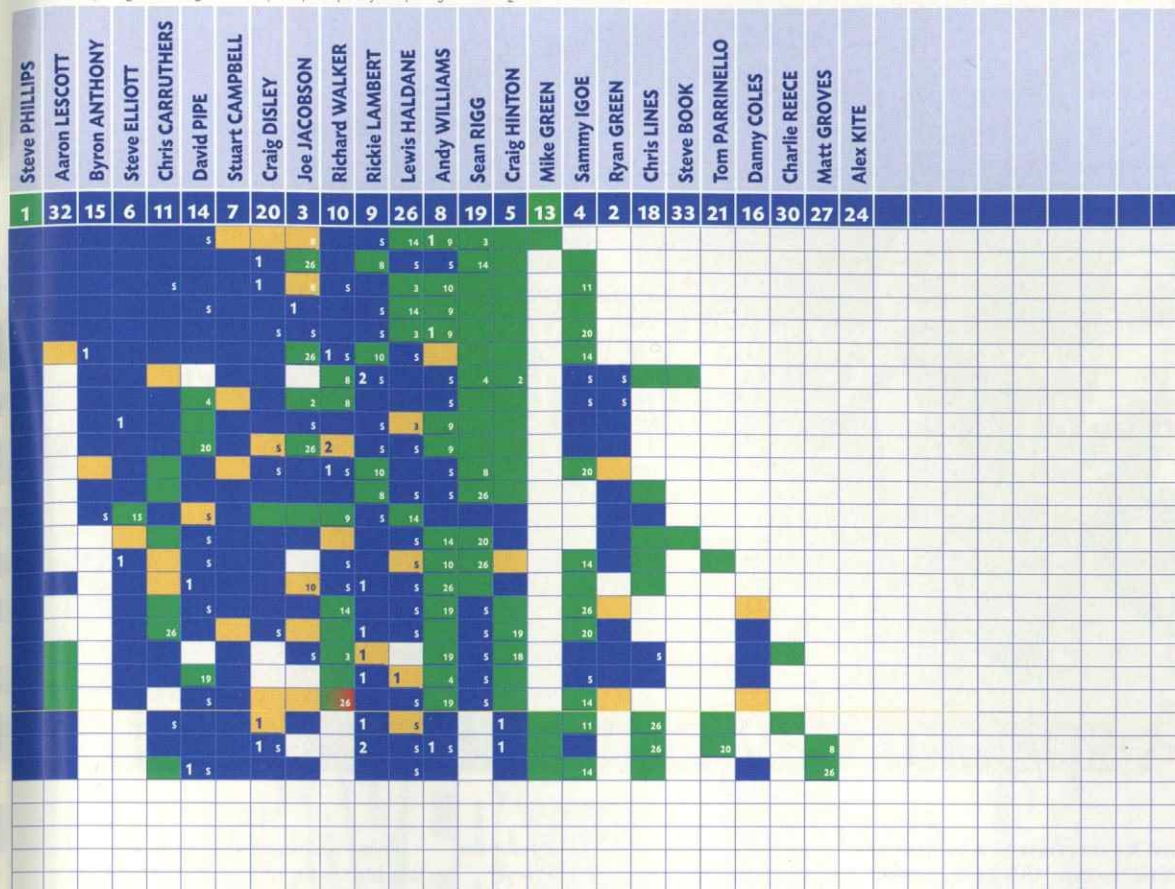
	VENUE	F-A	H-ATT	-A	POS
AUG 11	SAT	PORT VALE	A	1-1	6,808 1,770 7
AUG 14	TUE	CRYSTAL PALACE CARLING CUP RD1	H	1-1*	5,566 719 7
AUG 18	SAT	CREWE ALEXANDRA	H	1-1	7,750 287 14
AUG 25	SAT	OLDHAM ATHLETIC	A	1-0	5,348 500 9
AUG 28	TUES	WEST HAM UNITED CC RD 2	H	1-2	10,831 1,463 9
SEP 1	SAT	NOTTINGHAM FOREST	H	2-2	9,080 1,191 8
SEP 8	SAT	LUTON TOWN ko 12noon	A	2-1	6,131 564 6
SEP 14	FRI	LEEDS UNITED	H	0-3	11,883 1,195 7
SEP 22	SAT	CARLISLE UNITED	A	1-1	6,106 345 9
SEP 29	SAT	LEYTON ORIENT	H	2-3	7,181 404 14
OCT 2	TUE	SOUTHEND UNITED	H	1-1	5,762 295 12
OCT 6	SAT	BRIGHTON AND HOVE ALBION	A	0-0	5,826 610 15
OCT 9	TUE	AFC BOURNEMOUTH JPT RD 2	H	0-1	3,313 193 15
OCT 12	FRI	HARTLEPOOL UNITED	A	0-1	4,963 143 15
OCT 20	SAT	YEOVIL TOWN	H	1-1	7,726 927 17
OCT 27	SAT	GILLINGHAM	A	2-3	5,333 215 19
NOV 3	SAT	AFC BOURNEMOUTH	H	0-2	6,405 407 19
NOV 6	TUE	NORTHAMPTON TOWN	A	1-0	5,126 284 18
NOV 10	SAT	LEYTON ORIENT FAC RD1	A	1-1	3,157 453 18
NOV 17	SAT	MILLWALL	H	2-1	6,991 449 17
NOV 24	SAT	SWINDON TOWN	A	0-1	9,342 2,096 18
NOV 27	TUE	LEYTON ORIENT FAC RD1 replay	H	3-3†	3,742 135 18
DEC 1	SAT	RUSHDEN & DIAMONDS FAC RD 2	H	5-1	4,816 215 18
DEC 15	SAT	HUDDERSFIELD TOWN	A	1-2	8,118 275 19
DEC 22	SAT	LEEDS UNITED	A		
DEC 26	WED	LUTON TOWN ko 3.00pm	H		
DEC 29	SAT	CARLISLE UNITED	H		
JAN 1	TUE	SOUTHEND UNITED ko 1.00pm	A		
JAN 6	SUN	FULHAM FAC RD 3 ko 2.00pm	A		
JAN 11	FRI	TRANMERE ROVERS	A		
JAN 19	SAT	WALSALL	H		
JAN 23	WED	DONCASTER ROVERS	H		
JAN 26	SAT	NOTTINGHAM FOREST / FAC RD 4	A		
JAN 29	TUE	CREWE ALEXANDRA	A		
FEB 2	SAT	PORT VALE	H		
FEB 5	TUE	CHELTENHAM TOWN	H		
FEB 9	SAT	DONCASTER ROVERS	A		
FEB 12	TUE	OLDHAM ATHLETIC	H		
FEB 16	SAT	WALSALL / FAC RD 5	A		
FEB 23	SAT	TRANMERE ROVERS	H		
FEB 26	TUE	SWANSEA CITY	H		
MAR 1	SAT	MILLWALL	A		
MAR 4	TUE	NORTHAMPTON TOWN	H		
MAR 8	SAT	SWINDON TOWN	H		
MAR 15	SAT	CHELTENHAM TOWN	A		
MAR 22	SAT	HUDDERSFIELD TOWN	H		
MAR 24	MON	SWANSEA CITY ko 3.00pm	A		
MAR 29	SAT	YEOVIL TOWN	A		
APR 5	SAT	HARTLEPOOL UNITED / FAC SemiFinal	H		
APR 12	SAT	AFC BOURNEMOUTH	A		
APR 19	SAT	GILLINGHAM	H		
APR 26	SAT	BRIGHTON AND HOVE ALBION	H		
MAY 3	SAT	LEYTON ORIENT	A		

\* AET, Rovers won 4-1 on penalties  
 † AET, Rovers won 6-5 on penalties

COCA COLA APPEARANCES  
 COCA COLA GOALS  
 CUP APPEARANCES  
 CUP GOALS  
 TOTAL APPEARANCES  
 TOTAL GOALS

All Saturday matches  
 KO 3.00pm unless stated.  
 All evening matches  
 KO 7.45pm unless stated.  
 FAC = FA Cup  
 CC = Carling Cup  
 JPT = Johnstone's Paint Trophy

18	6	10	17	11(1)	13(3)	18	17	11(4)	11(4)	15(3)	14(4)	6(11)	4(6)	4(2)	5(8)	12	1	5	0(1)	
6	4	3	3(1)	6	5	6	4	3(1)	2(2)	5(1)	3(2)	4(2)	2(1)	3(1)	2(2)	2	2(2)	0(1)	1	0(1)
24	10	13	20(1)	17(1)	18(3)	24	21	14(5)	13(6)	20(4)	17(6)	10(13)	6(7)	7(3)	7(10)	14	3(2)	0(1)	6	0(2)
			1	2	2	4	1	4	9	1	3	2								



## Seasons Greetings

Good afternoon and Seasons Greetings to all at the Memorial Stadium for this Boxing Day fixture with Luton Town.

We extend a special and very warm welcome to the supporters of the Hatters. We understand your plight as football fans and wish you well for the year ahead. Sincere thanks to Bristol Rovers supporters for what has been a truly memorable 2007.

A very Happy Christmas and a safe journey home after the game.

Ken Masters

## BRISTOL HOSPITALS BROADCASTING SERVICE

The service broadcasts live commentaries on Rovers games to hospitals throughout the region. If you would like to sponsor a season, contact John Kay at the Press Box or on 01225 872981. We would like to thank the following sponsors:

- Bristol Rovers Presidents 200 Club
- Bristol Rovers Supporters Club
- The Bird in Hand, Saltford Tel: (01225) 873335
- Pro5 Soccer
- Edward Ware Homes
- Sitech TC Ltd
- Brooking, Ruse & Co. Chartered Accountants Tel: (01934) 622466
- McWhirter Air Conditioning
- Bath & West Securities
- Proper Cornish Pasties

## CCTV

The Stadium is equipped with CCTV installed with the help of a grant from THE FOOTBALL TRUST

## SMOKING

Please note that smoking is not permitted anywhere inside the Memorial Stadium.



# A special day out at Blackpool

**Most Rovers fans of a certain age will remember this goal, scored by Paul Nixon, at Blackpool.**

Rovers had clinched promotion to the Second Division just a few days earlier, on 2nd May 1990, with a 3-0 win against Bristol City in front of a crowd of 9,831.

The win set up an intriguing final day of the season and on 5th May, Rovers travelled to Blackpool knowing that a win would clinch the Third Division title. More than 5,000 Rovers fans made the trip to Bloomfield Road, and as the official attendance was only 6,776, Blackpool could have been forgiven for thinking they were the away side!

David Mehew gave Rovers the lead after 28 minutes with his 21st goal of the season, and Phil Purnell made it 2-0 two minutes before half time. The second half, described in one newspaper report as 'one long party' remained goalless until the final minute when Nixon, on as a second half substitute, scored a third with a sensational volley.

As you can see, from the photo, Rovers supporters were already on the

touchline waiting to mob the team at the end of the ninety minutes, and this is how the final act in an outstanding season was described in the local press;

When Paul Nixon fired in the third goal in the 89th minute, Rovers fans couldn't contain themselves any longer. They poured on to the pitch hugging their heroes, each other and even the Blackpool players, who could only look on bemused. The Division Three title was theirs and they were loving every minute of it.

**Rovers:** Parkin, Alexander, Yates, Twentyman, Jones, Mehew, Holloway, Reece,

Purnell (Nixon), White, Saunders. Substitute (not used): McClean

**Blackpool:** Wood, Morgan, Methven, Matthews, Davies, Eyres, Gouch, Groves (Garner), Sinclair, Brook, Owen (Bradshaw)

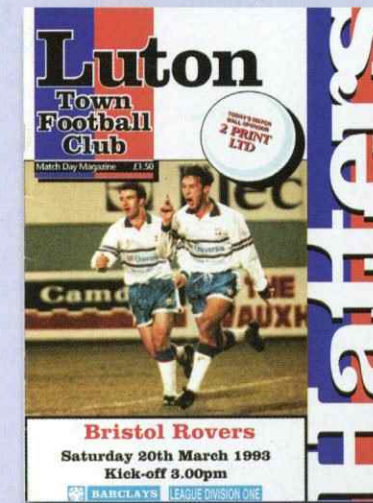
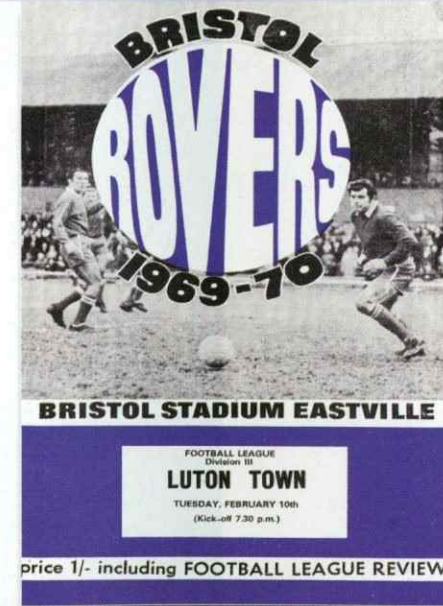
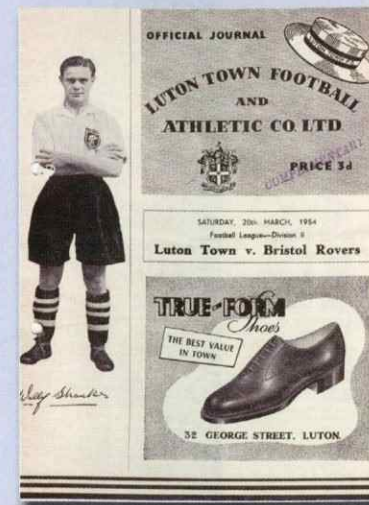
The goal was only one of six scored by Nixon in just over two years with the club. His only appearance in 1988/89 came against Northampton, when he was used as a substitute. In the promotion season, he appeared in 27 league games and there were another 16 appearances in 1990/91.

Prior to joining Rovers Nixon, who was born in the north east, had played as a part time professional in New Zealand and won six full international caps for the Kiwis. On leaving the club he moved abroad again, and played football in Hong Kong.

The finale to that memorable season is best summed up in Stephen Byrne and Mike Jay's book 'Bristol Rovers - The Definitive History'. Of that day in Blackpool, this is the opening paragraph of their take on season 1989/90.

Thirty seven years after topping Division Three (South), Rovers were crowned Division Three Champions in 1989/90 with a club record 93 points. It was a momentous achievement for Gerry Francis. 'Ragbag Rovers' at their temporary home outside Bristol. The elusive promotion was achieved on a glorious if tense Wednesday night when Bristol City were defeated at Twerton Park. Then, with the Championship secured, Rovers could enjoy the icing on the cake provided by the club's first ever appearance at Wembley Stadium.

♦♦♦♦



1 Luton Town 1 Bristol Rovers 1  
Football League Division Two  
20th March 1954

2 Bristol Rovers 3 Luton Town 0  
Football League Division Three  
10th February 1970

Bristol Rovers 3 Luton Town 2  
Nationwide Division Two  
15th February 1992

Luton Town 1 Bristol Rovers 1  
League Division One  
20th March 1993

3

4



## THE SQUADS



### Bristol Rovers

Coach PAUL TROLLOPE

Steve PHILLIPS (GK)	1
Ryan GREEN	2
Joe JACOBSON	3
Sammy IGOE	4
Craig HINTON	5
Steve ELLIOTT	6
Stuart CAMPBELL	7
Andy WILLIAMS	8
Rickie LAMBERT	9
Richard WALKER	10
Chris CARRUTHERS	11
GASHEADS	12
Mike GREEN (GK)	13
David PIPE	14
Byron ANTHONY	15
Danny COLES	16
Chris LINES	18
Sean RIGG	19
Craig DISLEY	20
Tom PARRINELLO	21
Ryan PADDOCK	23
Alex KITE	24
Tom GODSELL	25
Lewis HALDANE	26
Matt GROVES	27
Adam MAHDI	28
Josh KLEIN-DAVIES	29
Charlie REECE	30
Charlie CLOUGH	31
Aaron LESCOTT	32
Steve BOOK (GK)	33
James FRASER	34



**COVER SHOT:**  
Our Three Wise Men (!) Ryan Green, Chris Lines and Lewis Haldane, send you festive greetings from the Far East (of Bristol!)

Wednesday 26th December 2007

Kick off 3.00pm



### Luton Town

Manager KEVIN BLACKWELL

1	Dean BRILL (GK)	
3	Alan GOODALL	
4	Don HUTCHISON	
5	Chris PERRY	
6	Chris COYNE	
7	Dean MORGAN	
8	David BELL	
9	Sam PARKIN	
10	Darren CURRIE	
11	Paul PESCHISOLIDO	
12	Richard JACKSON	
14	Steve ROBINSON	
15	Stephen O'LEARY	
16	David EDWARDS	
17	Lewis EMANUEL	
18	Ahmet BRKOVIC	
19	Drew TALBOT	
20	Calvin ANDREW	
21	Keith KEANE	
22	Richard LANGLEY	
24	Paul UNDERWOOD	
25	Matthew SPRING	
26	Sol DAVIS	
28	Paul MCVEIGH	
29	Paul FURLONG	
31	Jaroslav FOJUT	
32	Ryan CHARLES	
33	Marc WILSON	
34	Anthony GRANT	

### Next up...

#### At the Mem

Carlisle United  
Saturday 29th December 2007  
Kick off 3.00pm

#### On the road

Southend United  
Tuesday 1st January 2008  
Kick off 1.00pm

## Match Officials



**REFEREE**  
ANDY HALL  
West Midlands



**ASSISTANT REFEREES**  
IAN HAMILTON  
Gloucestershire



ANDY HENDLEY  
West Midlands



**FOURTH OFFICIAL**  
STEVE CREIGHTON  
Berkshire

## Today's Sponsors

**MATCH SPONSOR**  
GERRY WOOTTON

**MATCHBALL SPONSOR**  
ALISON WARD & FAMILY

**BOX NETS SPONSOR**  
ROGERS & TOWNSEND  
DECORATORS 01793 827629



## The Pirate

The Official Match Programme of

### BRISTOL ROVERS FOOTBALL CLUB

Programme Editor: KEITH BROOKMAN  
Additional & archive photography  
NEIL BROOKMAN & ALAN MARSHALL  
Video production: SCREEN SOCCER  
Programme designed & produced by  
ANN WALTER  
Printed & published by  
TL VISUALS LIMITED  
Yate 01454 319555