



OFFICIAL MATCH DAY MAGAZINE 15p

SWINDON TOWN FOOTBALL CLUB

SWINDON TOWN
v

TRANMERE ROVERS

Swindon Town Football Co Limited

Registered Office County Ground
Swindon

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WOULDN'T A PINT GO DOWN WELL TONIGHT?



Bits and Pieces

Two cricket clubs, Belmont and Lyndhurst Wanderers, were instrumental in the formation of Tranmere Rovers back in 1883. Before joining the newly formed Third Division North in 1921, the club competed in the Cheshire League.

In the 1920's Tranmere unearthed two locally born goalscorers who both went on to play for England. The first went by the name of William Ralph Dean, but came to be known as 'Dixie'. He made his debut for Rovers during the 1923-24 season and after scoring 27 goals in as many games the following year, he made the short trip across the Mersey to sign for Everton in a £3,000 deal - then a sizeable fee - and he was only seventeen at the time. A few seasons later Tom 'Pongo' Waring scored 22 goals in 24 games for Tranmere before being the subject of a £4,700 transfer to Aston Villa in 1927. He returned to give the Rovers a further two years service in 1936.

In 1935 Tranmere won 1 - 0 at Sealand Road, Chester to win the Welsh Cup - and if that sounds strange, during the previous season the Rovers had also got to the Welsh Cup Final but, with Chester again being the venue, lost 0 - 3 in a replay - to Bristol City!

On Boxing Day of 1935, Tranmere defeated Oldham Athletic by 13 goals to 4 - the highest aggregate ever recorded in a Football League game. Nine of Rovers' goals in that match were scored by centre-forward Bob 'Bunny' Bell, who made the same journey as Dean to Everton at the end of that season, after hitting a club record 104 goals in only 114 games.

Tranmere Rovers won the championship of the Third North in 1938, but the following season proved disastrous. A total of 31 League games were lost - a Second Division record - and only seventeen points were gained in all, fourteen behind Norwich City, the other club to be relegated.

After the war the Tranmere half-back Harold Bell began a career that was to extend for a club record 595 League games, the first 401 of which were consecutive. No other player has ever completed more League games without a break, although the Town's John Trollope would almost certainly have done so had he not broken an arm in August 1968 when on the 360 mark.

On November 22, 1952 Tranmere beat Ashington 8 - 1 in the F.A. Cup, with Harold Atkinson scoring six of the goals. Tottenham Hotspur was the side to knock the Rovers out of the competition that season. After a 1 - 1 draw at Preston Park, Spurs romped home by nine goals to one in the replay.

Another two players to have worn an England shirt since leaving Tranmere are Roy McFarland, who left there in 1967, and Steve Coppell, who finished the 1974/75 season as joint top League scorer for the Rovers although playing his last game for the club on February 22.

Steve Peplow, the former Town forward, is still with Tranmere and in fact scored twice in the Rovers' recent 4 - 1 victory over our neighbours Oxford United. He came on loan to Swindon for the 1970/71 season and later joined manager Dave Mackay at Nottingham Forest.



STEVE PELOW

Liverpool	1969/70	2 apps.	
Swindon T (loan)	1970/71	11 apps.	4 gls.
Swindon T	1971/72	5 apps.	
	1972/73	24 apps.	7 gls.
Nottm. Forest	1973/74	3 apps.	
Mansfield (loan)	1973/74	4 apps.	3 gls.
Tranmere R.	1973/74	18 apps.	2 gls.
	1974/75	17 apps.	3 gls.
	1975/76	46 apps.	11 gls.
	1976/77	32 apps.	3 gls.
TOTAL		162 apps.	33 gls.
		(to end of last season)	

Fact finder

..... TRANMERE ROVERS

CURRENT FORM - LAST FIVE SEASONS :

	DIV.	P	W	D	L	F -	A	Pts	Posn.	Cup Round Reached		Average Home Lge. Gate	TOP LEAGUE GOAL-SCORER(S)
										F.A.	F.L.		
76-77	: 3	46	13	17	16	51 -	53	43	14th	1st	2nd	3,251	Russell Allen 16
75-76	: 4	46	24	10	12	89 -	55	58	4th	1st	1st	3,879	Ronnie Moore 34
74-75	: 3	46	14	9	23	55 -	57	37	22nd	3rd	2nd	2,803	Steve Coppell, Paul Crossley 10
73-74	: 3	46	15	15	16	50 -	44	45	16th	2nd	3rd	4,215	Paul Crossley 9
72-73	: 3	46	15	16	15	56 -	52	46	10th	2nd	1st	5,615	Eddie Loyden 19

COMPLETE FOOTBALL LEAGUE RECORD :

DIV.	PLD	W	D	L	F -	A	Pts
Second	: 42	6	5	31	39 -	99	17
Third	: 552	174	162	216	728 -	803	510
Third North	: 1240	506	255	479	2073 -	1987	1267
Fourth	: 320	157	63	100	583 -	441	377
TOTAL	: 2154	843	485	826	3423 -	3330	2171

(To end of last season)

Talk of the Town

By the Chairman

We wish you all a Happy 1978 and today's game against our friends from Tranmere is our opening match to 1978.

With the Xmas festivities behind us and at the time of writing these notes before I know the results of our home game against Plymouth and our away result at Gillingham, I can only comment on our performance at Oxford on Boxing Day. What a thrilling finish after being three goals down at the interval and we could very easily have come away with both points in the end. Although we started disastrously giving away the first two goals, no one allowed these mistakes to upset them and it showed character to fight back right through the team.

Our local derby with Oxford usually provides fireworks not only on the field but off and it was good to see that apart from a few skirmishes the younger element behave very well.

Although Oxford must have been very disappointed to lose such a lead the eight and a half thousand people who attended the game certainly had value for their money with six goals shared.

The transfer of Trevor Anderson to Peterborough United will be a disappointment to many people who have enjoyed his skills and we all wish him well with his new club. Football is a funny business because it is so unlike any other normal business where one can keep its assets even if not using them, but with football we are dealing with personalities and Managers have to take decisions that affect careers, hence the transfer market is so objectionable to some peoples way of thinking and yet, no other solution to the problem has come up.

The involvement of some of our top players and even management with overseas clubs has brought further confusion and conjecture to our game and when one reads of salaries, tax free, being offered it is little wonder that there is an exodus from our clubs, but this will eventually find its own level, and I am certain that there is enough natural talent to be found in this country to more than supply our needs.

A Club Youth Policy is more important for the future of the game than at any time in our history, in spite of the doubt that some clubs have due to the new concept caused by the Freedom of Contract which could

mean and no doubt will mean in many cases, clubs with more money than principle tempting young boys produced through the lower divisions to join them.

A Youth Policy is not simply running an extra team with the hope of producing lads competent of competing for a first team place, although this of course is the ultimate. Several Clubs have tried unsuccessfully to manage with one team squad and relied on keeping the staff not playing in the team fit by normal training routines with the odd game now and then, when injuries came along.

A successful team has to have competition and only a few years ago the senior staffs were comprised of almost a duplication of senior players and in those days the apprentices had little chance of progress in the first team, but because of the high costs of keeping large playing staffs most clubs just keep a squad of about fifteen experienced players and hope they can add a couple of apprentices to this list during the course of time, and it is in this way that we have been fortunate. Over a period we have produced through our Youth Policy, Ken Stroud, David Moss, Jim Allen and of course John Trollope all at present in the First Team and David Syrett at present in Mansfields Team. In the old days of

larger squad members the reserve team was composed of senior players mainly, but today the reserve teams are made up of chiefly apprentices and therefore their progress to the senior team is helped.

One cannot say that each year, the Youth Team will produce a first team candidate, it is a case of hard work, practice and having faith in ones judgement. Many lads have had a lucky break through circumstances in their favour, while others get passed over without an opportunity to prove their worth.

Oxford, through Fred Ford, have pursued a policy similar to our present one, encouraging schoolboys at an early age so that by the time they leave school, they have had a couple of years to develop and show the potential so necessary. Fred has had a couple of years start on Jack Smith and is already proving the system is right and I can only hope that we at Swindon will have the patience and the finances to continue this forward looking policy. John Trollope has proved that loyalty can bring success and happiness and as our senior member of the staff sets an example second to none.

Hoping you will enjoy today's game and also of course we look forward to our cup tie on Saturday next.



Two of Swindon's goalscorers Chris Guthrie and Chris Kamara join forces to challenge for a high cross during the Town's victory over Plymouth at the County Ground.

POOLS OFFICE!

THE NEW MOONRAKER LOTTERY

This Lottery will be launched in February and will take place each fortnight.

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The draw each fortnight will take place at various venues and the winning number published in the local press and on our weekly winners lists. People who have purchased winning tickets will have 28 days to claim their winnings from the Pools Office.

This is a tremendous step for all concerned at the County Ground because the income derived from such a competition could help the club to compete with the best in the land. In conclusion I appeal to any of you who could help, to fill in the form after these notes and return to me at the Pools Office, County Ground, Swindon. Tel: 31510.

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DIVISION THREE LEAGUE TABLEup to and including Tuesday December 27, 1977

No. of League goals scored in brackets

	Home				Away				Pts	Lge. Pos This Season			Home Lge. Gates			Best Top Goalscorer
	P	W	D	L	F-A	W	D	L		F-A	High	Low	Avg	Best	Top	
Wrexham	22	9	3	0	25-10	3	3	4	13-14	30	1st	18th	7696	10589	*Dixie McNeil 14(11)	
Gillingham	23	6	4	1	19-10	4	5	3	19-18	29	1st	15th	5937	9811	Danny Westwood 14(12)	
Tranmere R	23	6	2	2	25-11	3	4	4	12-11	28	1st	6th	4231	6215	Ronnie Moore 11(11)	
Cambridge U	22	9	1	1	28- 7	2	4	5	12-21	27	4th	24th	4738	6236	Alan Biley 17(14)	
Preston N E	22	8	2	1	22-10	1	7	3	5- 9	27	4th	19th	7237	10342	Alex Bruce 14(12)	
Peterborough U	22	5	6	0	12- 6	4	3	4	5- 9	27	2nd	22nd	5950	10156	Tommy Robson 8(7)	
Colchester U	22	6	4	1	20- 7	3	3	5	12-14	25	1st	10th	4841	5840	Robby Gough 13(9)	
Shrewsbury T	23	6	3	3	26-13	3	3	5	13-18	24	1st	11th	3995	6116	Chic Bates 9(8)	
SWINDON TOWN	22	8	3	1	28-10	0	4	6	10-21	23	2nd	17th	7314	9732	DAVE MOSS 13(8)	
Bury	22	4	6	1	13-10	3	3	5	11-19	23	2nd	14th	5028	6769	Andy Rowland 8(7)	
Exeter C	22	6	1	4	16-12	3	3	5	12-16	22	2nd	20th	5200	6722	Tony Kellow 11(9)	
Walsall	22	5	3	3	17-11	2	5	4	10-16	22	9th	17th	4790	5502	Alan Buckley 12(12)	
Chester	22	6	4	0	16- 8	0	6	6	7- 22	22	7th	18th	4275	9514	Paul Crossley 7(3), Mike Kearney 6(4)	
Oxford U	23	6	3	1	16- 9	1	4	8	17-26	21	2nd	14th	5554	8746	Peter Foley 12(11)	
Carlisle U	22	4	5	2	17-13	2	3	6	12-17	20	13th	23rd	5059	10323	Bill Rafferty 15(9)	
Rotherham U	22	4	4	3	12- 9	2	4	5	17-23	20	2nd	16th	5154	6599	Trevor Phillips 10(6)	
Chesterfield	22	6	3	2	13- 6	2	1	8	8- 18	20	1st	19th	4565	6484	Steve Cammack 6(5), Stuart Parker 6(5)	
Bradford C	22	5	4	2	20-14	1	3	7	5-19	19	11th	23rd	5165	12857	Don Hutchings 8(7)	
Port Vale	22	2	7	2	12-13	1	5	5	10-20	18	12th	23rd	3871	5136	Ken Beamish 6(3), Jeff Hemmerman 6(5)	
Plymouth A	22	3	4	4	15-14	2	4	5	11-17	18	8th	19th	7033	12399	Terry Austin 9(9)	
Heraford U	22	5	4	2	13- 9	0	4	7	3-16	18	14th	24th	4742	5655	†Billy Holmes 9(7)	
Lincoln C	22	3	4	4	13-15	2	3	6	9-17	17	17th	24th	4801	6463	Peter Graham 7(7)	
Portsmouth	22	2	7	2	16-16	1	4	6	7-21	17	13th	24th	10377	13152	Dave Kemp 20(15)	
Sheffield W	22	4	4	3	10- 7	0	3	8	9- 22	15	13th	24th	11548	18803	Tommy Tynan 13(8)	

DIVISION 3 1977/78

FOOTBALL COMBINATION

Date	Opponents	Ground	Score	Scorers	Attendance
1977					
Aug. 13	League Cup (1) Swansea City	A	3 - 1	11 - 3 - 9	5878
Aug. 16	League Cup (2) Swansea City	H	2 - 1	7 - 11	5415
Aug. 20	Sheffield Wednesday	A	1 - 1	8	12095
Aug. 23	Peterborough United	H	2 - 0	9 - 10	7117
Aug. 27	Portsmouth	H	3 - 1	8 - 10 - 7	9396
Aug. 31	League Cup 2 Cardiff City	H	5 - 1	9 11(2) 7 10	8919
Sept. 3	Walsall	A	0 - 2		4717
Sept. 10	Chesterfield	H	2 - 1	9 - 12	6847
Sept. 13	Preston North End	A	1 - 1	11	6014
Sept. 16	Bury	H	1 - 1	9	8139
Sept. 24	Wrexham	A	1 - 2	7	8002
Sept. 27	Cambridge United	A	2 - 5	7 - 10	4423
Sept. 30	Shrewsbury Town	H	5 - 0	8-5-7-9-3	6809
Oct. 4	Bradford City	H	0 - 1		7569
Oct. 8	Lincoln City	A	1 - 3	9	4852
Oct. 15	Port Vale	H	1 - 1	5	6132
Oct. 22	Chester	A	0 - 1		3539
Oct. 25	League Cup 3 Portsmouth	A	1 - 1	7	14955
Oct. 29	Exeter City	H	4 - 0	7 - 10 - 11(2)	7021
Nov. 1	League Cup 3 Portsmouth	H	4 - 3	8 - 11 - 7 - 10	9378
Nov. 5	Gillingham	H	3 - 2	5 - 7 - 11	7080
Nov. 11	Colchester United	A	0 - 2		4788
Nov. 19	Rotherham United	H	2 - 0	10 - 9	6008
Nov. 26	F.A. C. 1 Boreham Wood	A	0 - 0		2242
Nov. 29	Replay Boreham Wood	H	2 - 0	7 - 10	7016
Dec. 3	Hereford United	A	1 - 1	10	4547
Dec. 7	League Cup 4 Wrexham	A	0 - 2		10015
Dec. 10	Carlisle United	H	2 - 2	7 - 4	5889
Dec. 17	F.A. Cup 2 Brentford	H	2 - 1	6 - 10	8447
Dec. 26	Oxford United	A	3 - 3	8(2) - 9	8746
Dec. 27	Plymouth Argyle	H	3 - 1	7 - 9 - 8	9732
Dec. 31	Gillingham	A			

Date	Opponents	Ground
1978		
Jan. 2	Tranmere Rovers	H
Jan. 7	Peterborough United (3)	A
Jan. 14	Sheffield Wednesday	H
Jan. 18	League Cup 5	
Jan. 20	Portsmouth	A
Jan. 28	Walsall (4)	H
Feb. 4	Chesterfield	A
Feb. 8	League Cup SF	
Feb. 10	Bury	A
Feb. 15	League Cup SF	
Feb. 18	Wrexham (5)	H
Feb. 25	Shrewsbury Town	A
Mar. 4	Lincoln City	H
Mar. 7	Preston North End	H
Mar. 11	Port Vale (6)	A
Mar. 17	Chester (LCF)	H
Mar. 22	Exeter City	A
Mar. 25	Plymouth Argyle	A
Mar. 27	Oxford United	H
Mar. 28		
Mar. 31	Tranmere Rovers	A
April 4	Cambridge United	H
April 8	Colchester United (SF)	H
April 15	Rotherham United	A
April 22	Hereford United	H
April 26	Bradford City	A
April 29	Carlisle United	A
May 6	F. A. Cup Final	

These fixtures are the copyright of The Football League Limited.

FOR THE RECORD

Dec 17th F.A. Cup v Brentford

Allan, McLaughlin, Trollope, Kamara, Aizlewood, Ford, Prophett, Moss, Stroud, Guthrie, McHale, Cunningham.

Dec 26th Football League v Oxford United

Allan, McLaughlin, Trollope, Kamara, Aizlewood, (Carter), Prophett, Stroud, Guthrie, McHale, Cunningham

Dec 27th Football League Plymouth Argyle

Allan, McLaughlin, Trollope, Kamara, Ford, Prophett, Moss, Stroud, Guthrie, McHale, Cunningham.

Date	Opponents	Ground	Score
1977			
Aug. 20	Birmingham	H	1 - 1
Aug. 23	Fulham	A	P
Aug. 31	Reading	A	1 - 2
Sept. 3	Ipswich Town	H	0 - 3
Sept. 10	Luton Town	A	2 - 1
Sept. 13	Crystal Palace	H	1 - 0
Sept. 20	Orient	H	0 - 0
Sept. 24	Oxford United	H	0 - 1
Oct. 4	Queens Park Rangers	A	1 - 8
Oct. 8	Bristol Rovers	H	4 - 3
Oct. 15	Tottenham Hotspur	A	1 - 3
Oct. 22	Cardiff City	H	2 - 1
Oct. 26	Chelsea	A	0 - 2
Nov. 12	Norwich City	H	2 - 2
Nov. 16	Crystal Palace	A	1 - 4
Nov. 19	West Ham United	A	0 - 3
Nov. 26	Leicester City	H	0 - 5
Dec. 3	Plymouth Argyle	H	1 - 1
Dec. 10	Hereford United	A	P
Dec. 13	Bristol City	A	3 - 1
Dec. 17	Southampton	A	0 - 4
Dec. 31	Fulham	H	P

Date	Opponents	Ground
1978		
Jan. 17	Reading	H
Jan. 21	Ipswich Town	A
Feb. 4	Luton Town	H
Feb. 7	Arsenal	H
Feb. 11	Orient	A
Feb. 14	Birmingham City	A
Feb. 18	Oxford United	A
Feb. 25	Chelsea	H
Mar. 7	Bristol Rovers	A
Mar. 11	Tottenham Hotspur	H
Mar. 15	Cardiff City	A
Mar. 25	Southampton	H
Mar. 27	Arsenal	A
April 1	Bristol City	H
April 5	Norwich City	A
April 8	Leicester City	A
April 15	West Ham United	H
April 22	Plymouth Argyle	A
April 25	Queens Park Rangers	H
April 29	Hereford United	H

First Team Appearances and Goals 1977-78

Totals include subs (Goals in parentheses)

	Total	League	F.L.C.	FAC
1. Allan	29	21	5	3
2. McLaughlin	30	22	5	3
3. Trollope	31(2)	22(1)	6	3
4. Stroud	30(1)	21(1)	6	3
5. Aizlewood	29(3)	20(3)	6	3
6. Prophett	30(1)	22	5	3(1)
7. Moss	30(13)	21(8)	6(4)	3(1)
8. Kamara	29(7)	20(6)	6(1)	3
9. Guthrie	25(10)	18(8)	4(2)	3
10. McHale	31(10)	22(6)	6(2)	3(2)
11. Anderson	27(9)	19(4)	6(5)	2
12. Ford	21(1)	15(1)	4	1
13. Cunningham	6	4	1	1
14. French	4	3	1	
15. Gilligan	2	2		
16. Roberts	2	1	1	
17. Lewis	2	1	1	
18. Carter	2	2		

Dec 17th Football Combination Southampton

Lymer, Reilly, Walker, Kelly, Lewis, Gilligan, Brinkworth, Durbridge, Carter, Hatter, Collicut, Barry.

IN TOWN TODAY

DICKIE JOHNSON (Goalkeeper)

Apart from missing a short spell last season because of injury, Dickie has been Rovers' goalkeeper for more than four years. He developed in the junior teams and made his first League appearance in 1971/72.

League record: Tranmere 194 aps.

LES PARRY (Defender)

Les turned professional with the club in August 1972 and got his chance in the first-team the following season. For the past two seasons he has been a regular member of the senior squad.

League record: Tranmere 77(3) aps., 1 gl.

RAY MATHIAS (Defender)

Another local discovery, Ray has played both in defence and in mid-field over the years, though he is now the regular right-back. He first came into the side in 1967/68.

League record: Tranmere 386 (5) aps., 5 gls.

DAVID PHILPOTTS (Defender)

David made a few First Division appearances for his first club, Coventry City, and while with them he was loaned out to Southport in 1973/74. Tranmere signed him for £8,000 in 1974 and he has been a permanent member of the side.

League record: Coventry 3 aps.; Southport (loan) 8 aps.; Tranmere 150 aps., 5 gls.

EDDIE FLOOD (Defender)

Eddie began his career with Liverpool but, with the big stars playing so superbly in the first-team, there seemed little future for him at Anfield. In 1972 he signed for Tranmere and he has been part of their squad for most of the while since.

League record: Liverpool nil aps; Tranmere 182(1) aps., 5 gls.

CLIVE EVANS (Midfield)

Clive was introduced to the side against Northampton last May and hasn't missed a match since. He was still an apprentice when he made his debut and he turned professional in July.

League record: Tranmere 23 aps., 2 gls.



TRANMERE ROVERS

Back Row: L to R D. W. Russell (Secretary), S. Eaton, J. Kerr, J. Bramhall, L. Parry, R. Johnson, G. West
R. Moore, R. Tynan, D. Philpotts, D. Postlewhite, R. Stubbs, E. Robertson (Trainer/Coach)

Front Row: L to R E. Flood, R. Allen, C. Evans, J. A. King (Manager), E. Cliff, J. James, S. Peplow

MARK PALIOS (Midfield)

Mark has scored six goals this season and that includes a hat-trick in their 5-0 success over Chester in September. Yet another of the club's home grown players, Mark was blooded in the League team in 1973/74.

League record: Tranmere 133(10) aps., 22 gls.

BOBBY TYNAN (Midfield)

Bob served his apprenticeship at Prenton Park and was capped for the England youth team. Tranmere introduced him to their League eleven in 1972/73.

League record: Tranmere 168(2) aps., 19 gls.

RONNIE MOORE (Forward)

Two seasons ago Ronnie was the country's joint top scorer with 37 goals - including three four-goal hits and a hat-trick. He didn't do so well last term but he had scored eight times this season as the holiday games approached.

League record: Tranmere 197(1) aps., 55 gls.

STEVE PELOW (Forward)

Steve made a couple of appearances in the First Division for Liverpool but it was after joining Swindon in 1970 that he enjoyed his first real success.

League record: Liverpool 2 aps; Swindon 37(3) aps., 11 gls; Nottm. For. 3 aps; Mansfield (loan) 4 aps., 3 gls; Tranmere 127(6) aps., 21 gls.

RUSS ALLEN (Forward)

Russ was Tranmere's leading scorer with nine goals in the run up to Christmas. He was top scorer last term when he hit 16. Russ was a junior with both Arsenal and Wolves but turned professional with W.B.A.

League record: W.B.A. nil aps; Cambridge (loan) nil aps; Tranmere 114(19) aps., 39 gls.

JOHN JAMES (Forward)

John has been permanent substitute this season. Once with Port Vale, where he was twice top scorer, he signed for Chester in 1973 and joined Tranmere two seasons ago.

League record: Port Vale 201(7) aps., 40 gls; Chester 97(1) aps., 40 gls; Tranmere 54(12) aps., 22 gls.

JOHN WARD TALKS TO CHRIS KAMARA

Chris Kamara is in his third season in League football but he's still only 19. Although his father comes from Sierra Leone in West Africa his mother is from Middlesbrough, where Chris was born and grew up and where his parents still live, father having left the Navy. Indeed his voice which is very soft, has a distinct North East accent. At school he played every game that was going but was best at football. He captained the school team for three years, played for Middlesbrough School-boys and trained at Middlesbrough's ground during the summer holidays. But Middlesbrough decided not to sign him and he followed in father's footsteps, joining the Navy for a six months trial period, in fact he never went to sea, the Navy kept him playing sport the whole time. His father had not been at all keen on Chris becoming a footballer but when the six months were up Portsmouth offered him a contract. The Navy wrote a letter to his father saying that Chris had been such a success that he could go back to them at any time, father came round and Chris became a professional footballer.

Whether he's on the right of the mid-field, right wing or centre forward Chris doesn't mind, as long as he's in the team. If he gets dropped after a bad game he accepts this readily. If he thinks he's been unfairly treated he's up there knocking on the manager's door (he knocks at an imaginary door for emphasis). Playing football and playing well is what counts to him as a professional footballer, the money being very much in second place. Chris would of course like to play in the First Division. He has set himself the target of getting

there by the time he's 23. "If we get in the Second Division at the end of this season it would be a help!"

Chris has taken to the Swindon fans just as they have to him. He clearly appreciates the way they chant his name if he's on the substitutes' bench. It doesn't worry him when opposing spectators single him out for treatment because he's black. "It shows they've noticed what I'm doing. If anything it gets me going". I asked if he had strong views about colour prejudice. He shook his head. "my father was worried how I'd get on but now I've made the grade obviously being black won't be a disadvantage".

Not knowing much about how transfer deals are made I asked how he had come to Swindon. "One week during the summer there were whispers that Chester had made an offer for me. The Saturday afternoon we had a friendly at home against Millwall. After the game the manager asked me to come up to his office. I expected to see Alan Oakes there but it was Danny Williams! He said he wanted me at Swindon and what a great team he had. I asked to think it over until Monday. Over the weekend I met Ian St. John (Portsmouth's suspended Manager) at a Hampshire cricket match and George Graham and talked it over with them. They both advised me to sign and said I'd be going to a better club. On the Monday I went to Swindon to look around the ground and meet the players and sort out my wages. I went back to Portsmouth to collect my kit and signed for Swindon on the Tuesday".

I wondered how he had found life at Swindon compared with Portsmouth; and didn't he get homesick so far from Middlesbrough? "At Portsmouth there were a lot of people, businessmen, solicitors, tailors and so on who wanted to mix with the team so I had a lot of friends outside football. In Swindon nobody wants to sell you any clothes cheap! So my friends are mostly my teammates. In Portsmouth I was in the most marvelous digs. The landlady made me feel part of the family. I only feel homesick if I get depressed like when I'm not playing very well. But I'm not looking forward to Christmas. We've got a match on Boxing Day so I can't go home. It's my birthday on Christmas Day too."

Most of the time Chris sat very still while we talked. The one time he really got excited was when we talked about his main hobby outside football, horseracing. If they have a free afternoon and there's racing nearby, say at Cheltenham, he will go off there with Kenny Stroud. One of his most memorable days recently was when some of the team visited Richard Pitman's stables and met the jockeys and stable lads. Talking racing tactics as one professional sportsman to another was clearly just up Chris's street. "It was great that they asked us to come down to talk to them" he said. "Now I know just how little kids feel coming up for autographs." His own hero is Lester Piggott. I got the feeling that in his own quiet and modest way he was determined that Chris Kamara should one day be just as much a household name.

Mr. Len Olver, Assistant Manager of British Rail Workshops, Swindon handing over the invalid shelters to Chairman, Mr. Cecil Green.





Swindon's Andy Ford (dark shirt) in an attacking role in the Town's game with Plymouth at the County Ground

DANNY'S DESK

Our Boxing Day match against Oxford United developed into a very interesting and exciting encounter with our lads finding themselves three nil down at half time, the goals being the result of very silly mistakes. Aizlewood's ankle injury caused him problems and he went off after twenty minutes, Kenny Stroud moving back into the back four beside Prophett who reverted to No.5, Ray Carter taking over the vacant spot. The players showed great character in the second half by scoring three goals to equalise and I am sure that, had the game had another five minutes to run we should have won the match. Carter played very well indeed after he had accustomed himself to the pace and Stroud and McHale also did very well.

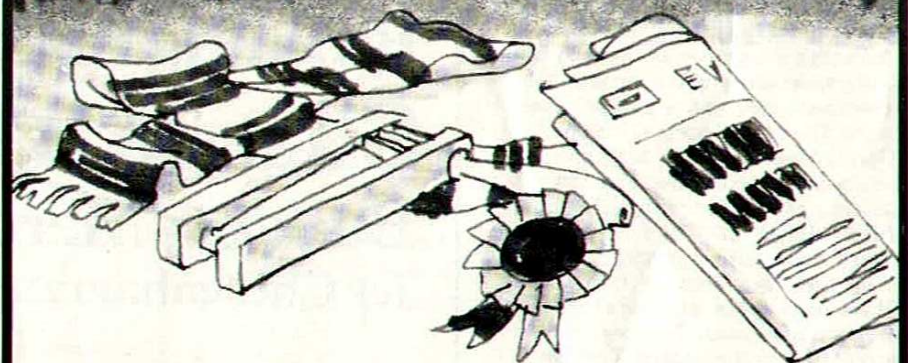
As you will all know by now Trevor Anderson has been transferred, at his own request, to Peterborough United. He renewed his transfer request after being brought off against Carlisle and as we had an offer from Peterborough and Trevor expressed the wish to go there I decided to let him go. Trevor possesses good football skills, but in my opinion, he was just not strong enough for the Third Division, especially when playing away from home. I am now busy looking for a replacement for him.

We were very gratified to see that nine thousand & seven people came along to our ground on Tuesday afternoon last to see the 3 - 1 win over Plymouth Argyle. This game again had a very exciting ending and it has been said that the best team lost. Rubbish - we scored two more goals that they did. Seriously though Plymouth played the better football in the first half but our first goal came at the right time against the run of play and from that moment on, in my opinion, honours become even. In the second half we put enough

pressure on to tire them and although they were stubborn at the back we eventually broke them down and two more goals came to make us the winners.

Now a word to those of you who are travelling to Nottingham Forest and who wish to sit but have not yet purchased your ticket. All unsold tickets must be returned to Nottingham tomorrow and so after today's match will be your last opportunity. We shall need your support so don't forget.

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The Evening Advertiser

TRANMERE ROVERS

By Tony Pullein

People on Merseyside are saying that Tranmere boss John King has the easiest job in the Football League. And that could be true, as far as team selection goes, for with freedom from injuries --- and not too many variations in form --- Mr. King has picked the same 12 players for every League match this season!

Because of the Christmas printing arrangements, we had to complete this programme early, and it could be that injuries over the holiday may have forced Mr. King to make his first changes of the season, but the Tranmere team for its first 20 League matches this season had been the same.

Dickie Johnson has been in goal behind a back four of Ray Mathias, Les Parry, David Philpotts and Eddie Flood. The midfield has comprised of Clive Evans, Mark Palios and Bobby Tynan with Steve Peplow, Ronnie Moore and Russ Allen forming the attack.

Tranmere's unchanged team has been pushing strongly for promotion. Early exits from both Cup competitions left them free to concentrate upon a return to the Second Division they left, after only one solitary campaign, way back in 1939. They were knocked out of the Cups by Fourth Division sides Southport (League Cup) and Hartlepool (FA Cup).

As the holiday games approached Tranmere were maintaining an average of almost a point for each away game. Their three away successes were registered at Hereford (1-0), Plymouth (1-0) and Portsmouth (5-2) and they drew at Gillingham (1-1), Port Vale (1-1) and Chesterfield (1-1). They were beaten at Cambridge (0-1), Bury (0-1), Oxford (0-1) and Preston (1-2).

In their match at Portsmouth they were losing 0-2 at half-time but recovered to win 5-2.

Tranmere Rovers have spent most of their existence in the shadow of the two Liverpool giants on the opposite side of the Mersey. And, apart from that solitary season in the Second Division immediately before the war, they have spent their entire League career in the Third and Fourth Divisions. The club was formed in 1883 and they progressed through the Lancashire Alliance to the Lancashire Combination. When the Third Division (North) was formed in 1921, Tranmere became a founder member. There were those who heralded a breakthrough when Tranmere gained promotion to the Second Division in 1938 but any ambitions they might have held to oust Everton or Liverpool from their powerful positions quickly faded as Tranmere finished bottom of the table --- 14 points behind the

next club --- in their initial campaign in Division Two. And, as they dropped back to the Third, so Everton were crowned League Champions.

Though they made occasional bids to return to the Second Division, Tranmere have never quite made it. Usually they were located in the lower regions of the Third Division and, in 1961 when they cut things a little too fine, they found themselves in Division Four. But they had a successful spell in the lower division, twice missing promotion by a single point before eventually making it in 1967.

They were very nearly down again in 1972 when they were saved only on goal-average after losing their last two games --- both at home. But three years later they went down again, this in spite of a tremendous late rally which produced seven points for their final four games.

Tranmere got off to a good start in 1975/76, losing only one of their first ten Fourth Division games and it soon became clear that few defences would be able to hold their powerful attack, with Ronnie Moore and John James in such devastating form.

Indeed, only three clubs --- Barnsley, Reading and Scunthorpe --- managed to prevent either of these scoring against them in both meetings. Between them, Moore and James scored 51 goals in the League and three in the League Cup.

Though Prenton Park attendances have increased by almost a third over last season's there is still room for improvement. The average before the holiday was 4,256 for League games, compared with 3,251 for last season.

Tranmere play most of their home games on Friday evenings to avoid a clash with Everton though it is curious to note that they drew one of their better crowds (4,848) for one of their two Saturday games on the day that Everton were at home to Birmingham.

TURNING POINT FOR ENGLISH FOOTBALL

English football has rarely been at a lower ebb than it was in 1977. England's elimination from the World Cup, the failure of more than two of our clubs to reach the last eight in the big European competitions, the crowd problems --- both at home and when our teams have travelled to Europe --- all added up to make it a shameful year for poor old England.

But 1977 has gone now. It should be put firmly behind us for 1978 offers some exciting prospects.

Already there are many signs that England are on the road, albeit only at the very beginning, back to success. If we all accept the opportunities available now, we should have regained a great deal of our lost pride by the time we are ready to welcome 1979.

January 1, 1978, is the day Ron Greenwood officially takes over as permanent England team-manager. He has the whole of England behind him in his quite awesome task for the future of the game at all levels depends greatly upon his achievements in the four years ahead.

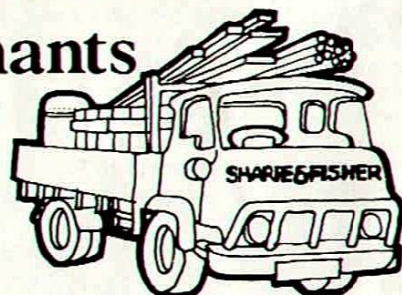
England showed against Italy that we DO have players of skill and imagination. The new manager must create the climate in which they can develop those skills at international level; he must take away the constant fear of defeat with which so many recent England sides have taken the field.

There were few pressures when England met Italy for we had already recognised that we had little hope of qualifying for the World Cup finals in Argentina. One of the revelations of that match was the wonderful performance of Trevor Brooking in midfield.

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Few players have taken so complete command for England since the days of Johnny Haynes and Bobby Charlton and if Brooking can be given a long run --- and permitted every player's occasional off-day --- he could quickly mature into a world star. Brooking had reached the point in his career when many of us were prepared to write him off as an outstanding club player but one who didn't look like making it in international football.

If Brooking is given the psychological boost of being told he is in the team for keeps --- even given the captaincy, for he is a player's player much respected by everyone in the game --- he could attain the stature of a Johnny Hayes in 1978.

There are so many other good players around, like Butch Wilkins whose style complemented Brooking's so well in the Italy game. Trevor Francis is now establishing himself at international level and we have such great younger players as Peter Barnes and Steve Coppell coming along so well.

So let us cast aside the despair that has been plaguing our game for too long. England will not regain her place as a first-rate soccer power in 1978; indeed, we may not achieve that even by 1982. But, by getting our priorities right, we shall at least have pointed ourselves in the right direction.

Football at club level has been showing steady improvement for the past couple of years. More teams are adopting attacking tactics these days --- at least that is the case in the top two Divisions --- as managers and players have come to accept that they no longer have a captive soccer audience. These days they have to be seen to be making an effort to please the paying customer, otherwise he will divert his hard-earned money to some other outlet.

The year 1978 will be seen as the moment when the authorities finally won the battle with the hooligans. This has been one of the game's --- nay society's --- gravest problems since the war.

But it's a problem that can be controlled. This has been proved at Manchester United's away games this season. Manchester United F.C. have reacted so splendidly to the recommendations made by the Government Working Party into Crowd Behaviour, even though it has caused a great temporary hardship to their thousands of genuine fans.

By virtually banning United's fans from away games they have ensured that this great club is no longer trailed around the continent by the vandals. By the end of 1978 Manchester United will no longer have the tag of possessing the worst fans in the world.



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2nd JANUARY

1978

SWINDON

at 3.00 p.m.

TRANMERE

- 1 Allan J
- 2 McLaughlin J
- 3 Trollope J
- 4 Carter R
- 5 Aizlewood S
- 6 Prophet
- 7 Moss D
- 8 Stroud K
- 9 Guthrie C
- 10 McHale R
- 11 Cunningham D
- 12 Ford A



- 1 Johnson R
- 2 Mathias R
- 3 Flood E
- 4 Parry L
- 5 Philpotts D
- 6 Evans C
- 7 Peplow S
- 8 Palios M
- 9 Moore R
- 10 Tynan B
- 11 Allen R
- 12 Sub to be named

REFEREE:

MR. B. J. HOMEWOOD
(Sunbury-on-Thames)

Commenced refereeing at 16 years of age and graduated via Athenian, Southern and Isthmian Leagues to the Football League full list. Still referees in Athenian and Isthmian Leagues with a total of 60 games per season. Is also on F.I.F.A. list of referees - his sixth year. Has refereed a Football League Cup semi-final, also F.A. Challenge Trophy and Junior Cup Finals. Lined an F.A. Cup Final at Wembley and has officiated in many European countries. A married man, he is an Audio and Digital Tape Design Engineer and enjoys walking, gardening and playing tennis.

Linesmen: Red Flag: Mr. J. Byles - Blechley Yellow Flag: Mr. R. B. Gifford - Blackwood

NEXT MATCH

Saturday, 14th January 1978

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