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ROVERS

F.C.

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PROGRAMME 12p**



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SATURDAY 26th AUGUST 1978

KICK OFF 3.00PM

EDITORIAL

Once again we have failed to get past the first round of the League Cup and once again our failure has been against a club from a lower division, all of which poses the question: Is it a psychological barrier we're up against?

There could be no doubt about our superiority over Wigan Athletic in the first leg here at Prenton Park, but we couldn't turn that into goals and while there was more equality about the play at Springfield Park, we still managed to get a lead only to lose it minutes later in a most careless way.

But all credit to the newcomers to the Football League for the way they fought in both games and there can be little doubt that they will more than hold their own in the Fourth Division. What's more, the drive that took them into League football is apparent in the way they have made Springfield Park a stadium equal to many in the Second Division and better than most below that.

Since Newcastle United and Sheffield Wednesday preceded us in the list of Wigan's victims in Cup-Ties, there can be little disgrace in our failure. Let's hope it proves, as last season, to be merely the prelude to another good run in the League.

These notes are being written in advance of our opening League game at Lincoln and since Sincil Bank has been a reasonably happy hunting ground for Rovers in recent years, it may be that we have got off to a good start.

But tonight will be a real test of character for Swindon Town have always been tough opposition to overcome. Anyway, the hope must be for a League run to equal last season's.

The Manager Writes



So it's goodbye to Football League Cup glory for another year and frankly there's no way I can explain why Rovers buckle so badly against teams that five times out of six they would beat in a League match. It's all very disappointing, for whatever one does in the League, its a good Cup run that puts the icing on the cake and brings the fans the excitement no League match can produce.

If there was one bright spot in the gloom of our failure to overcome Wigan at home or away it had to be the fact that Denis Postlewhite showed as stand-in centre-half that he has a future in the game.

Since joining Rovers straight from school, where he was a goal-scoring centre-forward, Denis has been something of a utility player in the Reserves and it was something of a gamble throwing him in against Wigan, but the lad justified that gamble

Continued overleaf . . .

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Continued from previous page

and helped to ease my disappointment over the result.

But as always the cry is for new faces and big names. Well, I had hoped that tonight we would be presenting one of the biggest names ever to appear on a Tranmere team sheet. For the past week I have been negotiating with Tommy Smith of Liverpool in the hope that he'd cross the water to Prenton Park, and at the time of writing the negotiations are still going on, so there's no way of saying how they will turn out. But the competition from Swansea City for the Iron Man of Anfield has been massive and I was left in no doubt that Tommy saw a link-up with his old team-mate, John Toshack, as a good move. One doesn't get a player like Tommy for peanuts, but it's good to know that I had the full backing of the directors to go all out for him.

OLD BOYS ON THE TARGET

You could call it the old boys' revenge, for by an odd coincidence, Rovers' first and second teams were thwarted last Saturday week by two former Tranmere juniors.

Tommy Gore scored the last second equaliser which took Rovers to the second leg League Cup match against Wigan Athletic all square instead of being at least one goal up.

Meanwhile, in the final of the Liverpool Senior Cup at Formby, this handsome trophy was won by the home side with a goal scored by Whittier, an ex-Tranmere junior, who came on as substitute in the second half.

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COLLECTOR'S ITEM

Just over 4,200 people turned up for our Football League Cup tie against Wigan Athletic, yet more than 4,500 copies of our re-shaped programme were sold. The reason is easy to find. As it was Wigan's first match under the auspices of the Football League the programme became a collector's item, and requests poured in from all over Britain.

Happily, we also received many compliments on the jauntness of the new style and it is hoped that as the season goes on we shall be able to introduce new features.

But everything will be determined by cost, since our programme remains one of the cheapest in the country. Wigan's for instance, is priced at 15p, while another came our way from Lincoln over the weekend and that was 20p.

P. CHAPMAN

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TEN YEARS AGO THEY WON THE CUP

One of the minor mysteries of soccer is why so many teams bear the nickname 'The Robins'. Swindon are among them, although they've also been called 'The Railwaymen' and, like most Wiltshiremen, "The Moonrakers".

Whatever the nickname, the fact remains that they have known a lot of success in the past ten years or more, including a spell in the Second Division and a sensational Football League Cup Final win over Arsenal ten years ago. Yes ten years, although it seems only like yesterday that we were watching that match on the telly and marvelling at the skill of winger Don Rogers.

Rovers have good reason to remember that season for we played at the County Ground on one of the coldest February nights the writer can recall, only a few days before the big Wembley occasion, and, with Cup Final tickets on sale that night, we were rewarded with a share of a very large gate. What's more we gave the Division leaders, as Swindon, were, a fright by holding them until the last few minutes when Rogers (but who else?) scored the only goal of the match.

This followed a memorable match at Prenton Park in the same season when Swindon beat us by five goals to three, Rogers getting a hat trick, and even in defeat a very large Rovers' crowd went home tingling with the excitement of it all and knowing that in The Robins they had seen the best in the Third Division at that time.

After five years in the Second Division, Swindon returned in 1974 to the Third and in the past year or two they have been rebuilding towards another promotion thrust. Danny Williams, the man who took them to Wembley, is still there, but the team manager is Bobby Smith, who has acquired the distinction of managing three clubs in one season — Bury, Port Vale and Swindon.

Town, like Rovers, are within sight of their centenary, having been founded in 1881. They were founder members of the Third Division South in 1920, but long before that they had won some small fame as a non-League club through Harold Fleming, who played 11 times for England while Swindon were still in the wilderness, as it were.



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Nick Hilton picks the Winners

The start of a new season. There's no time like it. This is soccer's spring, a time of fresh hopes and new horizons.

Take the lid off any of the 92 Football League clubs and you will find optimism bubbling. It goes with the freshly cut green turf, the new paint on the terraces and around the ground and the players sunburned from foreign holidays.

It's football in shirt sleeves and plastic macs. Most people think about success; that perhaps this could be a good year. Few contemplate failure.

Yet by next May, ten clubs will have suffered relegation, four the humiliation of applying for

re-election to the League and managers will be out of their jobs because the clubs who fared badly had to find a scapegoat for failure.

I say all this because by November many clubs will feel the optimism of August was misplaced and the time wasted. August is the most difficult time of all to make predictions, because all you've got to go on is recent history. And history does not repeat itself all that often in soccer.

Nevertheless I'm going to stick my neck out and give you Nick's teams to follow, and if they feel any more optimistic for setting off with my blessings then at least I can say I also warned them.

In the First Division look for Liverpool, because you can't possibly look the other way: Arsenal, if Don Howe stays as coach, and Ipswich.

Now that Bobby Robson has finally broken

Continued overleaf

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Continued from previous page . . .

Ipswich's luck by winning something I believe the side can play with a little less tension towards the end of the season, when in the past nerves and fatigue have let them down.

I think they're good enough to win a place in Europe but not hot enough for the championship.

In the Second Division I tip Wrexham to do better than Newcastle and Leicester, newly relegated from the top flight, but not well enough to bounce straight into the First Division. For that honour I tip Brighton – who only missed out last season because the three sides above them were of such high quality – Oldham and West Ham.

I'll reserve judgement on Tranmere in Division Three but I expect great things from Swansea City, who should have plenty of big names in the side if John Toshack gets his way, Watford Gillingham and Bury.

Division Four leaves me in the dark but here goes with Bournemouth, Aldershot, Bradford and Stockport County.

To all teams I have mentioned I offer my apologies in advance. By November a manager may realise that August has set him enough problems without being tipped to win anything.

THE KING'S MEN

For some time now we have been looking around for a signature tune with which Rovers could be identified. It is hoped that the search has ended with the introduction of the regimental march of the King's Regiment, with which Merseyside is closely identified. Appropriately, it might be called 'The King's Men' and that's the tune to which the team will take the field tonight.

Bad Luck, Bobby!

Bobby Tynan has made a desperately unhappy start to his new career with Blackpool F.C. for the injury he received in an Anglo-Scottish Cup match against Burnley at Turf Moor a fortnight ago has proved much more serious than first seemed likely.

In a collision with an inexperienced young team-mate, Bobby fell awkwardly and damaged the ligaments of his knee. He is in Wrightington Hospital near Wigan, reckoned one of the finest orthopaedic hospitals in the country, and it seems likely that he will be there for several weeks.

It may be several months before Bobby, who had just become to show his real class with Blackpool, is fit to take the field again.

Happily he is a well-balanced lad and has the courage to fight this stroke of adversity. In fact, he did not forget to send a message of good wishes to his old Prenton Park team-mates before their League Cup tie against Wigan Athletic. They, in turn, will be looking in to see him at Wrightington.

Tranmere Rovers know when they're on to a good thing, they use —

Eavesway Coaches

Why don't you for your next outing?

PEN PIX

KEVIN ROBERTS is a Bristol lad who signed for Swindon from Welton Rovers in March 1977. He made two first team appearances last season.

JOHN McLAUGHLIN, a Londoner, made his League debut with Colchester in 1971-72, but after winning England youth honours and making 66 League appearances with the East Anglians, he moved to Swindon in December 1973. By the end of last season he had figured in 177 first team games for the Wiltshire side, mostly at right back, but operating from time to time in midfield.

STEVE AIZLEWOOD started with his home town team, Newport County in 1969 and made 191 League appearances with them before joining Swindon in March 1976. He is a former Welsh under-23 International.

KENNY STROUD, although born in London, has been with Swindon since he was an

apprentice and is now one of their longest serving players. Signed as a professional in 1970, he made his League debut in 1971/72 season but had to wait three more years before establishing himself as a regular.

ANDY FORD hails from Minehead and started his career with Bournemouth although he never graduated to their League side. It wasn't until he moved to Southend in 1972 that he tasted League football. He joined Swindon at the start of last season and took over from the long-serving John Trollope at left back, but he has been converted into a central defender.

RAY McHALE, from Sheffield, has been a frequent visitor to Prenton Park, first with Chesterfield back in 1972, then with Halifax Town, for whom he was top scorer one season from a midfield position. He joined Swindon in 1976, usually plays as a link-man and the power of his shooting makes him the ideal penalty kicker.

CHRIS KAMARA comes from Middlesborough, but entered League football with Portsmouth as one of the youngsters forced through by Pompey's financial problems. The same problems forced Portsmouth to sell him to Swindon just before the start of last season. He has been a deputy centre forward but prefers midfield.

BRIAN WILLIAMS is under the command of manager Bobby Smith for the second time in his career. He was at Bury, for whom he played 148 games, before Mr Smith sold him to Queens Park Rangers and had 22 First Division outings with the Londoners before rejoining his old boss at Swindon in June.

IAN MILLER is another former Bury player. He moved to Nottingham Forest, but didn't make the first team. In August 1975 he joined Doncaster Rovers and was transferred to Swindon who had shown a lot of interest in him over a period of several months.

CHRIS GUTHRIE knows the ups and downs of football for he had first division experience with his home town team, Newcastle United, before being transferred to Southend United in 1972. 107 games and a lot of goals later he was transferred to Sheffield United, but he never really settled down at Bramall Lane. Transferred to Swindon in the summ of 1977, he plays the traditional centre-forward role.

PHIL BATES is known to his team-mates as Chic. From West Brom, he spent seven years as a part-timer in the Southern League before signing for Shrewsbury in 1974. There he was top scorer for two seasons and was transferred to Swindon last January.

DAVE CUNNINGHAM, from Kirkcaldy, started with Brechin City in the Scottish Second Division before being signed by Southend in 1973. Then he had a spell on loan with Hartlepool and moved to the County Ground in the close-season of 1977. On the small side, he plays with great determination in midfield or on the wing.

Fixtures, Facts and Figures

Attendances
Home Away
4240

Scorers
McAuley

8512

Date	Day	Home	Result	Away	Scorers	Attendance
Sat Aug 12		WIGAN ATHLETIC (FL Cup)	H 1-1	McAuley	8512	
Wed Aug 16		Wigan Athletic (FL Cup)	A 1-2	O'Neill Pen		
Sat Aug 19		Lincoln City	A			
Mon Aug 21		SWINDON TOWN	H			
Sat Aug 26		HULL CITY	H			
Wed Aug 30		League Cup (2nd Rnd)				
Sat Sept 2		Peterborough	A			
Sat Sept 9		GILLINGHAM	H			
Mon Sept 11		Mansfield Town	A			
Sat Sept 16		Swansea Town	H			
Fri Sept 22		BURY	H			
Mon Sept 25		PLYMOUTH ARG.	H			
Sat Sept 30		Watford	A			
Wed Oct 4		League Cup (3rd Rnd)				
Sat Oct 7		Oxford United	A			
Fri Oct 13		CHESTER	H			
Mon Oct 16		SHREWSBURY TN	H			
Sat Oct 21		Brentford	H			
Fri Oct 27		CHESTERFIELD	A			
Sat Nov 4		Exeter City	H			
Fri Nov 10		PETERBOROUGH	H			
Sat Nov 18		Hull City	A			
Sat Nov 25		FA Cup (1st Round)				
Fri Dec 1		COLCHESTER UTD	H			
Sat Dec 9		Walsall	A			
Sat Dec 16		FA Cup (2nd Round)				
Sat Dec 23		Rotherham United	A			
Sat Dec 26		BLACKPOOL	H			
Tue Dec 29		SHEFFIELD WED	H			
Fri Jan 1		Carlisle United	H			
Mon Jan 5		MANSFIELD TN	A			
Fri Jan 13		Gillingham	H			
Sat Jan 19		SWANSEA CITY	H			
Fri Jan 27		Bury	A			
Sat Feb 3		Plymouth Argyle	A			
Sat Feb 10		WATFORD	H			
Fri Feb 16		OXFORD UNITED	H			
Sat Feb 24		Chester	A			
Sat Mar 3		BRENTFORD	H			
Sat Mar 10		Chesterfield	A			
Fri Mar 16		Exeter City	A			
Sat Mar 24		Swindon Town	A			
Mon Mar 26		LINCOLN CITY	A			
Fri Mar 30		SOUTHEND UTD	A			
Fri Apr 6		Colchester United	H			
Fri Apr 13		ROTHERHAM UTD	H			
Sat Apr 14		Blackpool	A			
Mon Apr 16		CARLISLE UTD	A			
Sat Apr 21		Sheffield Wednesday	A			
Tue Apr 24		Shrewsbury Town	H			
Fri Apr 27		WALSALL	A			
Fri May 4		Southend United	A			

LANCASHIRE LEAGUE

Fri Aug 25		Stockport City 'A'	A	
Fri Sept 1		BOLTON WAND. 'B'	H	
Sat Sept 9		Wrexham Res.	A	
Fri Sept 15		WIGAN ATH. RES.	H	
Sat Sept 23		Macclesfield Tn. Res.	A	
Fri Sept 29		BLACKPOOL 'A'	H	
Fri Oct 6		CHESTER 'A'	H	
Sat Oct 14		Chester 'A'	A	
Fri Oct 20		EVERTON 'A'	H	
Sat Oct 28		Port Vale Res.	A	
Fri Nov 3		STOCKPORT CITY 'A'	H	
Sat Nov 11		Wigan Athletic Res	A	
Fri Nov 17		LIVERPOOL 'A'	H	
Sat Nov 25		Oldham Athletic Res	A	

HOW WE FINISHED LAST SEASON

DIVISION III

Team	P	W	D	L	F	A	W	D	L	F	A	Goals	PG
Wrexham	46	14	8	1	48	19	9	7	7	30	26	61	61
Cambridge U	46	19	3	1	49	11	4	9	10	23	40	58	58
Preston	46	16	5	2	48	19	4	11	6	15	19	56	56
Peterborough	46	15	7	1	32	11	5	9	9	15	22	56	56
Chester	46	14	8	1	41	24	2	14	7	18	32	53	53
Walsall	46	12	8	3	35	17	6	9	8	26	33	53	53
Gillingham	46	11	10	2	36	21	4	10	9	31	39	50	50
Colchester	46	10	11	2	36	16	5	7	11	19	25	48	48
Chesterfield	46	14	6	3	40	16	3	8	12	18	33	48	48
Swindon	46	12	7	4	40	22	4	9	10	27	38	48	48
Shrewsbury	46	11	7	5	42	23	5	8	10	21	34	47	47
Tranmere	46	13	7	3	39	19	3	8	12	18	33	47	47
Carlisle	46	10	9	4	32	26	4	10	9	27	33	47	47
Sheff Wed	46	13	7	3	28	14	2	9	12	22	38	46	46
Bury	46	7	13	3	34	22	6	6	11	28	34	45	45
Lincoln	46	10	8	5	35	26	5	7	11	18	35	45	45
Exeter	46	11	8	4	30	18	4	6	13	19	41	44	44
Oxford U	46	11	10	2	38	21	4	4	17	26	46	40	40
Plymouth	46	7	8	3	33	28	2	4	9	10	28	40	39
Rotherham	46	11	5	7	26	19	2	8	13	25	49	39	39
Port Vale	46	7	11	5	28	23	1	9	13	18	44	36	36
Bradford	46	11	6	5	40	29	1	4	18	16	57	34	34
Hereford	46	9	9	5	28	22	0	5	18	6	38	32	32
Portsmouth	46	4	11	8	31	38	3	6	14	10	37	31	31

Dec 2	Sat	Southport Res	A	
Dec 8	Fri	MANCHESTER U 'A'	H	
Dec 26	Tue	Bolton Wanderers 'B'	A	
Dec 30	Sat	Manchester City 'A'	A	
Jan 1	Mon	BRADFORD CITY R	H	
Jan 6	Sat	Everton 'A'	A	
Jan 12	Fri	WREXHAM RES	H	
Jan 20	Sat	Morecombe Res	A	
Jan 26	Fri	MANCHESTER Cty 'A'	H	
Feb 2	Fri	OLDHAM ATH RES	H	
Feb 10	Sat	Blackpool 'A'	A	
Feb 17	Sat	Rochdale Res	A	
Feb 23	Fri	PORT VALE RES	H	
Mar 3	Sat	Manchester Utd 'A'	A	
Mar 9	Fri	SOUTHPORT RES	H	
Mar 17	Sat	Liverpool 'A'	A	
Mar 23	Fri	MORECOMBE RES	H	
Mar 31	Sat	Crewe Alex 'A'	A	
Apr 6	Fri	CARLISLE UTD RES	H	
Apr 13	Fri	Bradford City Res	A	
Apr 14	Sat	ROCHDALE RES	H	
Apr 20	Fri	CREWE ALEX 'A'	H	
Apr 28	Sat	Carlisle Utd Res	A	
May 4	Fri	MACCLESFIELD T R	H	

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- 7 STEVE PELOW
- 8 TOMMY O'NEILL
- 9 RONNIE MOORE
- 10 JOHN KERR
- 11 HUGH McAULEY

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Yellow Flag - R.F. Nixon

WHISTLE STOP

Ken Baker of Rugby began refereeing in 1959 and had reached the Football League line by 1967. He has now been on the full referees' list for several years. For 12 years he served with the Metropolitan and Warwickshire Police, rising to the rank of detective inspector. He is now chief security and traffic officer at the National Exhibition Centre. Married with four children, he is a keen tennis player.

SWINDON TOWN

- 1 KEVIN ROBERTS
- 2 JOHN McLAUGHLIN
- 3 STEVE AIZLEWOOD
- 4 KEN STROUND
- 5 ANDY FORD
- 6 RAY McHALE
- 7 CHRIS KAMARA
- 8 BRIAN WILLIAMS
- 9 IAN MILLER
- 10 CHRIS GUTHRIE
- 11 PHIL BATES



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