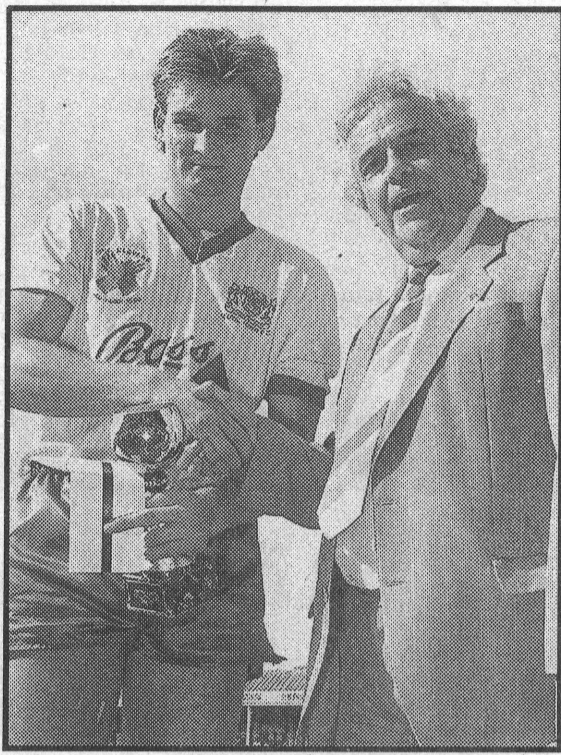


Nostalgia rules on the last day



GAZETTE EDITOR Don Mildenhall presents Mark Shail with our Merit Marks Trophy and cheque following Saturday's game at Huish. Shail picked up 76 marks to win our "player of the year" award — 10 more than runner-up Tiv Lowe, left.

CROSSROADS TIME FOR MARK SHAIL

MARK Shail, Yeovil Town's outstanding young centre-half, is to have talks with manager Brian Hall about his future. As he collected the Western Gazette's coveted Merit Marks trophy after Saturday's final match at Huish, the 22-year-old university student admitted: "I've reached a crossroads".

Shail, signed last season from the Beazer Homes League club Worcester City, finishes university this summer after taking his degree and will then, hopefully, be a qualified social worker looking for a job.

"Everything is coming to a head. I must sit down with Brian and talk things through. There are so many things to be taken into consideration".

Shail, born in Sweden where his father was employed by a tool firm, collected 76 marks over the season to win the Gazette's award of a trophy to keep and £120 cash.

That was 10 more than runner-up Tiv Lowe, who also received a trophy and £60 from our editor Don Mildenhall.

At every first team game throughout the season we give a maximum of four marks for a "brilliant" display, down to one for "above average", and we reckon that we finish up with the right two at the end of the season.

There are certainly no complaints from manager Hall. "They have both had fine, consistent seasons", he says.

Other leaders were Micky Spencer (46), Jeff Sherwood (43), Peter Conning and Derek Dawkins (both 42) and Simon Gowans (40).

Shail says he has noticed a big difference between the Beazer Homes League and the GM Vauxhall Conference.

"The Conference is a very physical and competitive league, and you have to be very focussed and fit to succeed in it.

"I found that I had to concentrate much harder. I suffered the occasional lapse in concentration and in this league you are more likely to be punished for it.

"It has been good to have more experienced players around me to help. Len Bond has been terrific in this respect. He has taken some of the younger players like myself under his wing and talks to us on and off the field".

Bond, the goalkeeper now a veteran, reciprocates by describing Shail as "a player who could have a really good future in the game".

He said "There are certain things you pick up through experience and when I'm behind him I can see the odd things that may be going wrong and point them out.

"For instance, at Runcorn, he was getting too close to Micky Doherty and Mark Carter and they were taking advantage and getting him into trouble. I just told him to lay off a yard or two and give himself more room.

"Once or twice I've also spotted he's been marking people on the outside rather than the inside, giving them the opportunity to cut in rather than be driven wide.

"It's only little things like that. But he's a great lad — and he's been a lot more certain of his place in the team than myself! I don't think there'll be any complaints about him getting your award".

GERRY Hann, who made a 4,000 mile trip to be there, and the 4,236 other supporters who were part of the last day at Huish, were agreed — it was a good day.

From the pre-match entertainment, right through to the lowering of the flags by Len Harris and John Sercombe, everyone seemed determined to enjoy Yeovil Town's last moments of nostalgia at the ground that has been their home for 70 years.

There were a few snags of course. Although 5,000 souvenir programmes had been ordered, the printer delivered only 2,400, and they were snapped up half an hour before the kick-off.

And there were occasions when yobbo-ism on the terraces threatened to rear its ugly head.

But generally goodwill and commonsense were the order of the day.

Alec Stock was as essential on a day like this as the match ball. The manager who led Yeovil to their great 1949 triumph over Sunderland held court in the press-box before the start while his forties teammate Johnny Hartburn fretted over the relegation possibilities of his home town Bournemouth.

Meanwhile, on the forecourt, Bryan Moore and the Supporters Club workers were busily selling the last day commemorative covers.

They sold nearly £2,500 worth on Saturday alone. The £10-a-time covers bearing the signatures of the Yeovil and Telford teams were completely sold out. There will be no more: they are already a collectors' item. Those bearing the Stock and Eric Bryant autographs are almost gone.

"The rest of the programmes and the covers are on sale in the office", said Mr Moore. "We have been pleased with the demand, and we expect a big response when our advertisements for the covers appear in the philatelic magazines".

JOHN LUKINS' soccer scene



Among the big crowd for the last day were several stars of the past. Gerry Hann wasn't one of them, but he has been a Yeovil fan for years and made sure he was home from Saudi Arabia for the big occasion.

Len Harris was, of course, one of the best known players to grace the slope. His 691 appearances remains a club record so they got him back to lower the flags along with John Sercombe, whose grandfather was the first club secretary at Huish.

Before that, a religious ceremony had been conducted by local minister

David Bishop — son-in-law of the former Somerset cricket captain Harold Stephenson. And the singing of Abide with Me had provided the final moving moment.

Now the bulldozers will be moving in. But not before the selling of the turf. There has already been one order from north of Newcastle, and general manager Roger Brinsford tells fans to watch for announcements of when it will be ready.

The cost will be a fiver a time if collected, but £12-50 if posted. "It's heavy stuff, and has to be carefully packed", he says.

MATCH FACTS 55

GM Vauxhall Conference 5th May
YEOVIL TOWN (0) 1 TELFORD UTD (0) 0

(Cordice, — 62 mins)

Gate: 4,237

Yeovil — Bond, Sherwood, Lowe, Shail, Rutter, Gowans, Carroll, Wallace, Wilson, Spencer, Cordice. Subs: Dawkins (for Wilson, 87 mins) and Conning (for Carroll, 75 mins)

Weather: Hot. Pitch: Hard

Entertainment value (out of 5) — 3

Team rating (out of 10) — 7. Verdict: Battled hard to end on winning note

Merit marks: None given as awards decided

Final League position (42 games) — 7th

Bookings: None



ON POINT DUTY! Neil Cordice, Yeovil's No 11, shows Jeff Sherwood the way to go during Saturday's match with Telford.

A CORDICE CRACKER

YEOVIL TOWN 1 TELFORD 0

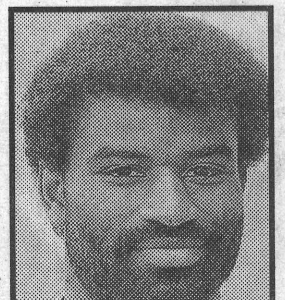
WHEN Neil Cordice moved in to meet a clearance from Telford's hard-pressed defence in the 62nd minute of the final GM Vauxhall Conference game, he could not have realised he was about to write a page in the history books.

Cordice, a 31-year-old who commutes from London for his football, volleyed a terrific shot past in-form goalkeeper Kevin Charlton from over 25 yards.

It not only won the three points for Yeovil, but also proved a fitting goal to bring down the curtain on the ground that had seen many other marvellous goals over the past 70 years.

It was not an easy game for Yeovil. The blistering heat and the tension caused by the occasion threatened to take a toll. And useful Telford weren't prepared to be sacrificial lambs.

But it was a professional performance, with everyone contributing and concentrating. In the first half, Paul



CORDICE — last goal at Huish

WYNNER'S A LOSS

BATH LEAGUE 0
YEOVIL LEAGUE 2

YEOVIL made heavy weather of beating a rather moderate Bath League side to win the final of the Mavis Tate Cup — Somerset FA's inter-league knockout competition — at Langport last Thursday.

Yeovil could well have been three goals up in the opening 15 minutes but for the brilliance of Nigel Wynn, the Bath goalkeeper. "Wynner" pulled off two fine saves from Derek Bidcombe and an even better one from Terry Francis.

At the other end, Ilchester keeper Ian Hildred was also called upon to make a smart save early on when he had to rush from his line to

deny Adam Pawley who had burst through on his own with the Yeovil defence stood appealing in vain for offside.

Wynn was eventually beaten in the 28th minute when Jim Feeley laid on an inch-perfect through ball to Biddiscombe. He timed his run to perfection to beat Bath's tight offside trap before squeezing the ball past the oncoming keeper from the edge of the box.

Yeovil continued to do most of the attacking and missed several more chances, but at the other

end their defence often looked ragged and against a more determined opposition they might well have been punished.

The nearest that disappointing Bath came to scoring was in the 75th minute when a looping shot from Andy Gurd — one of eight players from champions Oval Sports in their side — struck the crossbar.

This seemed to jolt Yeovil into a little more urgency and five minutes later they responded to score the clinching goal. Matthew