



Birth of the Giant-killers

A tribute to Yeovil Town Football Club's
historic achievements in the 1948/49 FA Cup

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Foreword

By Yeovil Town Chairman, John Fry

IT is a real privilege to be asked to write the foreword for 'Birth of the Giant-killers'. Yeovil Town's victory over Sunderland in 1949 undoubtedly established the Glovers as the biggest Non-League giant-killers in the country and that tag has remained with us ever since.

To read through the match reports and see the pictures that have been included really takes you back. Seeing Huish filled to the rafters shows how far football has progressed in Yeovil and I am sure the club wouldn't be where it is today had it not been for that game.

Of course I was not involved with Yeovil in those days but the memories will forever

linger and I am delighted to be associated with them.

I would especially like to thank the people that were involved on that wonderful day who have contributed to this publication as their input has been invaluable to its production.

I hope you all enjoy the book as much as I have and I'm sure it will be a must for every Yeovil Town supporter. ■



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Sunderland May Face Giant of Giantkillers at Yeovil

By **BASIL EASTERBROOK**

DICKIE DYKE, 23-year-old Yeovil solicitor's clerk, who stands 6ft. 3in. in his socks, is finding it difficult to concentrate on his office duties this week.

If Yeovil Town's regular goalkeeper, Stan Hall, does not recover from his torn shoulder muscle injury—and yesterday he was still attending hospital for radio-therapy treatment—Dickie, who has played only one game of senior soccer in his life, will take his place against Sunderland in the Cup.

Alec Stock, the Town's player-manager, was his usual imperturbable self when I accompanied the team to the little Devonshire fishing village of Seaton.

"Naturally I want Stan to play," said Alec, "but, if he does not stand up to a searching test, I shall play Dickie without hesitation.

"The lads are brimful of confidence, and we shall do the same as we did against Bury—play our normal game.

"I am not going to insult the intelligence of the public with stories about secret plans, lucky charms, and the like. You cannot suddenly change the style of a team, in any case.

"Nor are we going out determined to stop men like Shackleton and Robinson at all costs. We are not playing for a draw," concluded Alec.

So Sunderland know the frame of mind they are in at Hush.

Fever Is Chronic

IN the town, however, things are vastly different. Once, during the war years, I was in Beirut a few days before a large-scale insurrection broke loose.

There was suspicion under every lamp-post, danger at every street corner, a threat in every alley-way, and you were acutely conscious you were a stranger in a strange land.

The quickening of the senses I experienced then returned with almost the same degree of vividness when I walked through the streets of this Somerset town early yesterday.

Half-a-dozen times I had to assure zealous, self-appointed guardians of the Town team's secrets that I was no spy in the pay of Roker Park.

As see Cup Final referee Jimmy Wiltshire, who lives at nearby

Gherborne, in Dorset, said to me: "I don't think I have ever seen enthusiasm to surpass the present fever in Yeovil"—and Jimmy, of all people, should know.

A Model Goal

BOB KEESTON, the Town's right-half, told me that he and his team mates frequently have to lock themselves in their hotel bedrooms at night to keep out admirers, all wanting to shake them by the hand and press gifts upon them.

On Saturday, essential services will be run on skeleton staff and many business houses have large notices in their windows saying: "These premises will be closed until 4.30 p.m. in order that our employees may see the game."

Other "shop windows are laid out in a green and white design (the team's colours). There is a model, perfect in every detail, showing centre-forward Bryant about to shoot the winning goal past Hapsom, and alongside the brand new strip in which the Yeovil team will play.

There have been 40,000 applica-

tions to see the match, and Alec Stock is being offered as much as £2 for a 2s. ground ticket. The ground capacity is 18,000.

Sunderland Beware!

THE men who collected my ticket at the station tried to press a handful of silver on me to get him a single ground ticket.

When I told him it was impossible he said he would leave it at the ticket office "just in case."

The players are doing normal training with daily outings, and Hall is the only doubtful starter.

The team will be: Hall or Dyke; Hickman, Davies; Keeton, Blizard, Collins; Hamilton, Stock, Bryant, Wright, Hargreaves.

One final word of warning to Sunderland. The hotel at which the team will stay has prepared such a lavish welcome for them that they will have difficulty in resisting the temptation to eat well.

Unless they heed this warning they will, in the words of the maître d'hotel: "Get puffed running up ze slope, and pouff! —Yeovil will be in the next round!"





A true hero among heroes

Yeovil Town's historic 2-1 victory over Sunderland will always go down as a truly great performance by the eleven players that took part, but the heroics of a certain young, inexperienced goalkeeper will forever be remembered as one of the most legendary moments in the club's glorious history. In what is now the final contact with that great team, Martin McConachie profiles a true Yeovil Town legend - Victor 'Dickie' Dyke

THE events of that wonderful day, January 29, 1949, were to rock football to its foundations. The mighty Sunderland, awash with internationals, faced Yeovil Town, a simple Non-League outfit from deepest, darkest Somerset and were sent flying out of the FA Cup by their lowly hosts.

The whole day would have been a real test of nerve for even the most experienced players, let alone a young goalkeeper with a mere ninety minutes of first-team football behind him. However, he not only coped with the pressure, he positively thrived on it and produced a top drawer performance too. That says an awful lot about Victor Wortley Dyke, a true Yeovil Town legend.

Dickie, as he became known, was born on November 22, 1924 and in his early teens, he first came to the local football world. He played for Yeovil Boys in a match against Exeter Juniors at the tender age of thirteen. Upon leaving school, he later joined the RAF and became a flight mechanic and was seconded to the Army Observation Corps. He often went up spotting for enemy aircraft and had been in the D-Day landings and also at Arnhem. His squadron was the first to have an air base in Germany.

He was demobbed in 1947 and joined the Glovers as their reserve team goalkeeper. Standing six feet three inches tall, he cut an imposing figure and cemented his place in the "stiffs" backing up the first team goalkeeper Stan Hall. Dickie takes up the story. "Before I was demobbed, I came home on leave now and again. Somebody found out I'd played in goal for the RAF while in Berlin and mentioned it to Alec Stock, Yeovil's player-manager. He asked me in for a trial and even hit a few shots at me. I suppose I saved a few of them so they took me on. I played for the reserves that weekend while still in the RAF. Whenever I came home on leave, I played, otherwise the regular keeper was Joe Langford and he'd keep goal."

The thing that kept hitting you about Dickie was his modesty. He was very unassuming and modest; in many of the photos of the era, he can be seen quietly in the background preferring to let others grab the limelight. It appears almost peculiar that he chose to be a keeper really; a position which can thrust you into a dazzling spotlight and can turn you from hero to villain in

no time at all. Of course it can also work the other way as Dickie was to later find out.

By this time, Dickie was working as a solicitor's clerk for Church Street law firm Mayo & Son. He carried on alternating with Langford as the reserve keeper until Christmas Day 1948, a major turning point in his career. Alec Stock selected him for his first team debut, a local derby against Bath City in which he performed admirably in a 1-1 draw.

Alec had seen enough to know he could depend on Dickie should the need arise. That day was to come sooner than he might have thought. Just over three weeks later, regular first team keeper Stan Hall tore a shoulder muscle in a league match at home to Worcester City. It was touch and go all week as to whether Hall would be fit for the big cup tie but in the end, all the treatment, massages and fitness tests were to no avail. Alec had to call for his number two keeper. How did Dickie find out?

"Stan got injured in the match before so Alec had a word earlier in the week to let me know that I was on standby. By the Thursday, it was looking more and more like he wouldn't make it so Alec came to my work and asked my managing clerk if I could have the Saturday morning off".

Seems unbelievable now in this day and age and for everyone's sake, it was a good job the boss agreed to it. "I went over with the team in the morning to Sherborne for dinner before getting a coach back to Yeovil. I didn't do anything different in the way of training for the game either and I didn't feel frightened. It was just another game for me except there were a few more people there."

Yeovil had got thus far by seeing off the challenge of Lovells Athletic, Romford, Weymouth and Bury before arriving at the packed Huish. The official crowd of 16,318 seemed a conservative estimate and it appeared that more than 17,000 tickets had >

"I didn't do anything different in the way of training for the game either and I didn't feel frightened. It was just another game for me except there were a few more people there"





been sold for the game. Yeovil started the brighter and Dickie settled down quickly.

"I was nervous for the first five minutes but I soon got used to it" he smiled but early on in the game Yeovil were virtually reduced to ten men when Jackie Hargreaves pulled a leg muscle at a time where substitutes were some years away.

Eric Bryant, Yeovil's free-scoring forward, put the ball (and the keeper) into the net on eleven minutes but was pulled up for a foul. The first goal wasn't long in coming though and it arrived on twenty-eight minutes. Ray Wright and Les Blizzard set up Stock who swivelled and shot home in one movement sending the packed terraces into ecstasy. It was no more than the Glovers deserved and they even had the temerity to press forward for a second though their illustrious visitors were proving dangerous on the break.

Dickie Dyke made many excellent saves until the one black spot on his whole day. Typically, he was quite self-deprecating about it. "If it wasn't for me giving away the goal, we'd have won 1-0" he chuckled, recalling the error that handed Sunderland their equaliser just after the hour mark. "I kept too much of an eye on the winger and not enough on the ball; it slipped out and Robinson scored." It was a rare blemish in an otherwise faultless performance and one that would have haunted lesser keepers than our Dickie.

In those days, extra-time was used to decide matches due to the fuel shortages and the travel restrictions in place at the time. With the score at 1-1 and an eerie mist descending on to the pitch, the thought of abandonment had crossed the minds of many. The game had one more twist in it though. Just a minute before the interval in extra-time, Ray Wright picked up on a loose pass from Len Shackleton and set Eric Bryant free. He ran on and fired home past the helpless Mapson to put Yeovil ahead for the second time in the match.

Unbelievably, victory was in sight again. Sunderland, sixth in the top flight were trailing little Yeovil, languishing in the bottom eight of the Southern League and despite being richer in just about everything, it was the Davids who looked like toppling the Goliaths. Fifteen minutes of almost stifling pressure followed as the Black Cats fought for the equaliser but it just wasn't to be. Three minutes from the end, the referee blew for a free-kick and thousands invaded the pitch believing the game to be over. After several



"If you were down at the Bruttons End, you had to start at your back post but if you were at the other end, you'd have to start at your near post otherwise the ball could have floated over you"

minutes of arm-waving and shouting, the pitch was cleared for play to resume before the final whistle arrived to spark scenes of delirium rarely seen before.

There had been a lot of hype before the match about the famous sloping pitch. Generally accepted as being around eight feet from the top side to the bottom side, in certain games where it had rained, the bottom touchline was often sodden and muddy and made wing-hugging runs tricky. How was it from the point of view of a goalkeeper?

"It made a big difference", he admitted. "If you were down at the Bruttons End, you had to start at your back post but if you



Dickie, far right, and some of the Yeovil players relax with a cup of tea. Opposite: Dickie makes a save. Previous page: Dickie in action against Sunderland

were at the other end, you'd have to start at your near post otherwise the ball could have floated over you. It made a huge difference". Did it affect the Sunderland team then when we played them? "Well according to Alec Stock, it did" said Dickie, "but I'm not so sure myself really. I've read Alec's book and he did as much as he could to put them off."

He goes on "As I was in goal, I suppose I wasn't putting it in from the wing so had less to think about. We didn't used to have talks about it before the match. I was just conscious that if they were attacking down the right-hand side and we were defending the Bruttons End, I had to make sure I was as

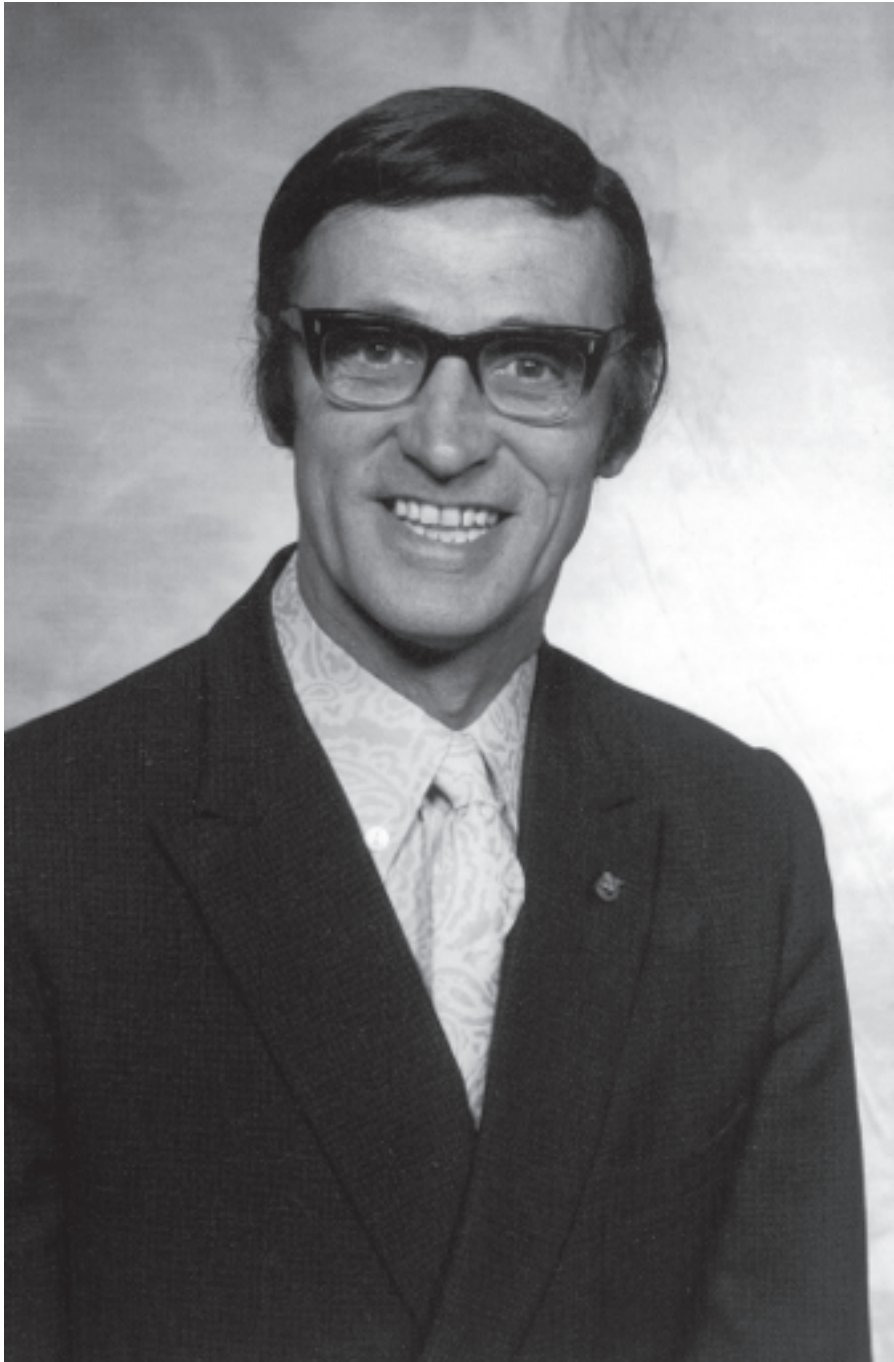
far back towards the back post as possible." If the slope didn't make a difference against Sunderland, did the crowd? "No, not really" said Dickie. "They were a lot closer than normal to the side of the pitch but I didn't feel any more pressure than normal. They didn't overpower me or seem to be more than I could stand."

For a man who was thrown to the lions at the last minute, Dickie had come out intact with his reputation glowing. Within a matter of hours of the final whistle, both Yeovil Town and, not surprisingly, Sunderland had offered the young keeper a professional contract. Dickie chose to stick with his own club

and signed forms shortly afterwards, forms that would ensure he was paid the princely sum of three pounds a week. This could be added to the five pounds a week he earned from his day job at the solicitors office.

Typically, he described the offer from the Sunderland chairman Lieutenant-Colonel J.M.Prior as "a spur of the moment offer". Maybe it was, who knows, but he had done his career prospects no harm at all with a fine display against Sunderland. Shortly afterwards, another offer from Cardiff City landed on the doormat but this ended up being filed in the same place.

Looking back now, sixty years on, he >



confessed that it didn't really sink in at the time. "We had no idea obviously that the game would go down in Yeovil folklore" he recalled. "It was just an ordinary game to me. Sunderland was not really up to what they'd normally play and probably our team played better than sometimes they did, I suppose. I'd never played in front of a crowd like that before but it didn't scare me at all."

What might surprise a lot of the younger fans is that the financial rewards were, shall we say, somewhat limited compared with today's riches. As amateurs, the players weren't really allowed to get paid for playing but there was a 'small bonus' in it for the players who won that day. Dickie continued the tale. "There was a farmer, from Mudford I think, and he had a good bet on the game. He gave all of the players ten pounds each afterwards. Alec said we had to give it all back as it was against the rules of football but nobody gave their money back."

How did the team celebrate the win then? "We had a ball arranged at the Assembly Rooms in Yeovil after the game so it was a good job we won really. I don't drink or smoke but there was a dance there and it was an enjoyable evening. One or two had a few drinks by the end of the night."

Dickie went to Bible class on the Sunday and spent a quiet day with his widowed mother. They lived together with his sister Edna in a small mews flat locally. Mrs Dyke always went to watch her son play football from the days when he was playing for Yeovil Boys and there was no prouder mother when he signed as a part-time professional the next day. He was already well regarded locally as the captain of the water-polo team; he was a keen skittler too and had also been known to play the occasional frame of snooker but to play football for his town was to be a big honour for Dickie.

The draw for the next round pitted Yeovil against either Bradford Park Avenue or Manchester United away. No prizes for guessing which the Yeovil faithful were hoping for and they got their wish when United thrashed Bradford PA 5-0 in the replay. The teams had drawn one apiece while Yeovil turned Sunderland over before United triumphed two days later.

However, Lady Luck, having shone on Dickie in the fourth round, well and truly switched the light off on him when he was injured in training. Diving low during "ball practice", he injured his knee on what was



Dickie and fellow goalkeeper Stan Hall

thought to be a broken bottle and needed four stitches in the wound. Cruelly, it would mean he would miss out on the big match. Silly question but was he disappointed? "No, I don't think so" he says remarkably. "Stan Hall was still the regular keeper in those days" with more than a hint of deference to the man he'd replaced in round four.

The day arrived. February 12, 1949 and more than seven thousand Yeovil fans descended on Maine Road to cheer on what they hoped would be an even more unlikely victory against Matt Busby's stars. Old Trafford was still being repaired from the damage of the war so their near neighbours City hosted the game in front of an enormous crowd of more than 81,000. Incredibly, the goalkeeping curse was to strike again.

Twenty minutes into the game, Stan Hall, safely between the sticks again, received a stud into his lower stomach area and bravely soldiered on. Receiving temporary stitches at half time, he ploughed on through the pain but could do nothing to prevent United, and in particular Jack Rowley, running riot. The final score ended 8-0 to United and, as the players came off the pitch having given everything, Hall's shorts were bloodied and torn from his exertions.

In those days, the goalkeepers union was alive and kicking. Dickie speaks highly of the

man who was, to all intents and purposes, his arch rival in the team. "I'm surprised that nothing is said much about Stan that day. He played through the pain barrier that day and he didn't get much credit at all for his performance. He only played one more game for Yeovil after that before I took over from him."

Dickie had chuckled when asked whether he was disappointed. Tricky one to call in honesty as no keeper would have wanted to concede eight but would anyone really turn down the chance to play against Manchester United? As it was, Dickie's dicky knee decided for him and he missed the game.

During the rest of season 1948/49, he set about making sure the keeper's jersey was his. Yeovil finished in eighth spot in the Southern League but made sure of a trophy by beating Colchester 3-0 in the final of the Southern League Cup. Eric Bryant scored in that match to go along with the other 52 goals he had already netted including five against Chingford in the penultimate league fixture.

Season 1949/50 came along and started in a quite incredible fashion. An 8-0 opening day victory over Kidderminster at Huish was followed by an even more satisfying win, a 4-1 triumph over local rivals Weymouth. A thumping 5-0 win at home to Tonbridge led to a 4-4 draw in the return match with

Kidderminster. All was not well behind the scenes though and the manager Alec Stock left in early September to join Leyton Orient as "secretary-manager" closely followed by Cup scoring hero Eric Bryant who joined Plymouth Argyle.

The end of November saw the return of the FA Cup to Huish and a whopping 12,000 fans turned up to see Yeovil put Romford to the sword by four goals to one. A similar crowd in the second round saw Yeovil dispose of Gillingham 3-1. The third round draw offered hopes of a repeat of the previous season by drawing a plum tie but the draw threw up Chesterfield away and the cup run ended in a whimper.

Although it was six decades ago, there were few problems remembering these days from Mr Dyke. He played a blinder against Gillingham in the second round tie earning national acclaim. What did he have to say about it? "The best game I remember was against Gillingham....I had quite a good game that day." That's about as near to a boast as you got from this quiet, self-effacing man.

He recalled another top game from that season too. "In the April, Glasgow Celtic brought a pretty good team down for a friendly and we beat them 2-0, I think. I used to hate playing at Gloucester though, I always seemed to get injured there; dislocated a finger once, hurt my back another time; I don't think I ever did well against Gloucester" he said with a wry smile.

If Gloucester could be considered an unlucky ground for Dickie through his injuries, the beginning of the end for not only his time at Yeovil, but his whole career, was a match in February 1950 against Bedford at Huish. The Glovers won 4-0 but Dickie had to leave the field after being kicked in the back. It was the first knock on a part of the body which was to eventually force him to finish up very early in his career. The game itself was only memorable for the antics of the Bedford centre-half that day. After Yeovil scored a controversial second, he showed his displeasure at the official's decision by hoofing the ball out for a throw-in every time it came to him. Dickie made a total of 53 appearances that season exceeded only by Arthur Hickman, Bobby Hamilton and Ralph Davis. That in itself was testament to the quality of a keeper who had been a stand-in for most of the preceding season.

1951/52 arrived and really did signal the beginning of the end for his career. Dickie >

"I don't drink or smoke but there was a dance there and it was an enjoyable evening. One or two had a few drinks by the end of the night"

and his defence had shown fine form in the first part of the season keeping nine clean sheets by Christmas. The team were in the higher mid-table part of the league but disaster was to strike when the young keeper fractured his shoulder in a 6-0 drubbing at Merthyr Tydfil. This, together with the back injury from the Bedford game and other bumps and bruises, was to force Dickie from the field permanently at the age of just twenty-eight. He completed a total of twenty-one appearances that season, played just once the following season and that was it. He packed in and returned full-time to his conveyance job at the solicitors.

Dickie ended up with around a hundred appearances for Yeovil Town. He freely admitted to not being 100% sure how many games he played, answering with the beautifully-simple brush-off. "A game was there, it was played and that was the end of it" he chuckled.

He remembered all of his team-mates with fondness though he also said that he never really felt part of that initial Sunderland team coming as he did from the reserves. As could be expected, he was close to Stan Hall, the ill-fated keeper but he had immense respect for Alec Stock and reserved special praise for the defence immediately in front of him. "Arthur Hickman was a big fellow but a terrific player; Ralph Davis was quick on the wing and used to push forward as a midfielder, he had a good cross on him", he mused.

Once the now-retired Mr Dyke had left football, he moved around a little. He left the Yeovil area in the late sixties and moved to the London area where he worked for a local authority in Hammersmith and then on to Slough Borough Council. Upon retirement, he returned to Somerset and took up residence in Bridgwater before moving finally to the peace and quiet of the Hampshire countryside.

His visits to Yeovil since retirement were few and far between. "I came back for the Ray Wright testimonial" he recalled. "Ray was a nice bloke; he sadly lost both his legs at an early age". The testimonial was in 1975 at the old Huish ground and featured a Yeovil side pitted against a Fulham side managed by Dickie's old boss Alec Stock. Also in that Fulham side was a young Barry Lloyd who would manage Yeovil himself a decade or so later. Ten of the eleven players that had beaten Sunderland were there to watch the match which was staged to raise money for Wright.

The last time that Dickie made it up to

Huish Park was in July 1999 for the Alec Stock testimonial. It was the first match of the 1999/2000 season and was a well-deserved reward for the former Yeovil manager. Fulham brought down a strong team including Stan Collymore, Maik Taylor, Steve Finnan, Chris Coleman and John Salako. The visitors won by three goals to nil in front of a crowd of more than 2,300.

Dickie Dyke was a gentleman in what could be a painful, bruising game. His whole demeanour oozed a quiet, calm, steady attitude in a position where one mistake could and would have cost his side the game. They say most goalkeepers are slightly mad; well this one was as sane as they come.

Sadly, Dickie passed away on November 23, 2008 at Bournemouth General Hospital around 3.30pm after a short illness. His death brings to an end the memories of the players that actually could say they played in the Sunderland match. Those players produced one of the greatest shocks that the FA Cup has ever seen. There may well still be occasions where the minnows turn over the big fish.

However, in this age of the giants playing weakened teams as the FA Cup slips down their list of priorities, these results may never have the meaning that the events of 29 January 1949 had. That day shaped the sort of football club that Yeovil became. Admittedly the club could already boast a handful of giants killed over the previous quarter-century but this was the big one, the disposal of a team lying high up in the old First Division by a team in the lower reaches of the Southern League.

This is almost the end of an era. Dickie Dyke, Arthur Hickman, Ralph Davis, Bob Keeton, Les Blizzard, Nick Collins, Bobby Hamilton, Alec Stock, Eric Bryant, Ray Wright and Jackie Hargreaves have all gone now and what we have left are the memories of that day. All eleven of them were heroes; some were more feted than others. Eric Bryant and Alec Stock were celebrated as the goal scorers that day but it meant nothing without the young reserve team goalkeeper playing a blinder at the other end. A true hero if ever you saw one. ■

"A game was there, it was played and that was the end of it"







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Bryant Scores In 104th Minute

By THE TRAVELLER

Yeovil Town, after scoring in the 27th minute, through Stock, were robbed of their lead in the Fourth Round Cup-tie against Sunderland today, when deputy-goalkeeper Dick Dyke failed to hold a free kick and Robinson was presented with an easy goal. The scores were level after 90 minutes and extra time was played.

DICK Dyke, Yeovil's reserve goalkeeper, who was brought into the team this morning when it was decided not to risk playing the injured Stan Hall, got a special cheer when the teams came out. Hall, the most decorated spectator, had seen it was the first match he had missed for nearly three seasons, but he wished good luck to his 23-year-old deputy, and gave him his season—a black cat wrapped in cotton wool. Hall carried it in Yeovil's rear previous Cup-tie this season.

The ambulance men were busy half an hour before the kick-off. A stretcher was needed for one casualty. Never in the history of the club have such crowds been known. Only 2,000 people visited outside the ground in the hope that some would be found for them.

Yeovil Lose Toss

Both teams were given a tremendous welcome. The Yeovil players were led on to the field by their manager, **Shepherdson Rex Hainey**. They saw the coin and faced the toss. There was a great cheer when Yeovil landed their first attack. **Jackie Hargrave** broke away from receiving the ball from Dyke. The ball hovered in the Sunderland goal area for a few seconds before Bryant fired in a shot which, however, did not cause Mappin any anxiety.

Sunderland retaliated, and Duns, who was a good player for Bristol City during the war, got over a perfect centre, but **Hickman** leaved without Dyke being called upon.

Yeovil fought back, and when **Hargrave** broke away again in great style, he put across a dangerous centre. Bryant missed the ball, but it went to **Hamilton**, who sent in a free hit. It was quite a good chance and so that a team cannot afford to risk in a Cup-tie.

First Corner

Hamilton found the first corner lot of the game. He sent over a high cross, and when charged by **Hargrave**, the Sunderland goalkeeper carried the ball over the line. **Hargrave** missed the flag kick opportunity, and **Keaton** made a long recovery effort, missing the corner by a foot—a narrow escape for the visitors.

When **Keaton** passed, **Blizard** missed the ball badly to give Sunderland their first corner kick. This was played by **Dunn**. **Shackleton** countered, but Dyke parried the ball away in most unexpected style. Judging in this clearance he was not suffering from nerves.

Ball in the Net

The Sunderland forwards were positionally brilliant, but often had the ball in the net. **Blizard**, who had several fine passes with **Turnbull** and **Hickman**, attracted



Their forwards attacking in a line. So far Yeovil had done most of the attacking and in another attack, started by **Keaton**, who was playing a raffish mood game at right-foot, they were awarded a free-kick.

It was taken by **Keaton**. **Mappin** parried the ball out and **Wright** took it into the goal. **Keaton** scored his second goal, but he shot slightly—perhaps a little too quickly—and put the ball over the cross-bar. **Thrin** followed in plenty. Under terrific pressure, and with **Mappin** out of goal, **Hick** kicked away when standing on his own.

In the next minute **Blizard** getting possession of a loose ball, set the ball in motion with a surprising effort that **Mappin** got his out-of-control arm to the ball, held it, and cleared.

Yeovil were more than holding their own. In fact, they were now having the better of the encounter.

Cheers For Dyke

Better finishing would have brought Yeovil a goal or two. **Hamilton**, the Yeovil outside-right, was easily leading Sunderland, for whom Sunderland paid £7,000 a year or so ago. The Yeovil winger was quicker and certainly knew what to do with the ball. He was being given plenty of chances by **Alec Stock**.

Alec Stock had made some nice openings for **Hamilton**, who had not wasted one. **Sunderland's** left wing pair were undoubtedly their best combination. **Shackleton** wanted much watching.

It was only a fine recovery on the part of **Blizard** that prevented a score when **Shackleton** passed the ball forward to **Reynolds**.

Turbull was then put through by **Blizard**, and when he shot Dyke was given a great cheer for brilliant clearance. He had to spring across the goalmouth to get in the ball.

The Roof Off!

The roof nearly went off the stand in the 27th minute when **Stock** put a great shot. It was a dramatic goal which had a

backward shot to deal with, because three opponents were in close attendance. **Dyke** got his hand to the ball and held it.

In the next minute we saw a thrilling duel between **Hamilton** and **Mappin**. The latter left his goal and ran 15 yards to meet the Yeovil winger for possession.

A third at the other end followed. **Yeovil's** left wing pair played hard, and Dyke did well to push the ball out.

Blizard dashed back and kicked the ball in safety, with **Turbull** and **Shackleton** only a yard or so away.

Play Held Up

Play was held up while the referee persuaded the spectators to get behind the line in the vicinity of the goalmouth.

A triangular movement between **Hargrave**, **Wright**, and **Collins** continued well, but the latter ran the ball over the line while **Blizard** was waiting for a pass that never came.

The next bit of thrill came in a lightning raid by Sunderland. Four of their forwards took part, and **Shackleton** was left to tie in a hard ground shot. Showing cool-headed anticipation, young **Dyke** still full length and had grabbed the ball. He snailly controlled what was the best clearance of the match so far.

Dyke, who loudly cheered again a few minutes later when he ably dealt with a quick-rising shot from **Turbull**.

Sunderland were now applying unrelenting pressure, but **Hickman** and **Davis**, who help from **Blizard**, were defending brilliantly. **Dyke** had been the outstanding feature. He had done his best to clear the danger.

Just on the interval, **Bryant** took a shot which was thwarted, and when he shot in the right wing now the corner flag he cleared liberally—a pity, because the Sunderland defenders were then re-organized.

Summing up the play in this brief, I should say that Yeovil, in view of the attacks they had done, deserved their lead. It now was for forgotten that they had

the ball to give **Hamilton** a chance. **Hamilton's** shot was held by **Dyke** with **Mappin** standing at the other side of the goal.

Dangerous Duns

Sunderland, who had done most of the attacking since the change-over, now found a corner-kick.

Duns, who was their most dangerous forward, missed the flag kick well, but amid loud cheers **Hickman** cleared. But it was a very poor thing as **Harvey**, the smallest forward on the field, was in the act of shooting.

Shackleton showed his class when he received a knee-high ball, brought the ball down and shot in the same movement. While **Sunderland** were going all out for the equaliser **Hamilton** dashed on the field, connected a long ball and had a thrilling race with **Mappin**.

Hall, however, who seemed to come from nowhere, intercepted and saved the situation for the visitors.

The Equaliser

Two minutes later **Hamilton** was presented with a glorious scoring chance. It was a snappy movement, but this time he did better. He beat **Harvey**, but shot wide when left with only **Mappin** as goal.

No doubt at this stage nerves were playing a big part, for the ground was yelling themselves hoarse.

A little feeling crept into the game, and some hard knocks were given.

Sunderland got on terms with a distinctly lucky goal. They were awarded a free-kick with the game hot and loud when **Blizard** was penalised. **Hall** sent in a high shot and Dyke made his first mistake.

He dropped the ball and gave **ROBINSON** an easy scoring chance. It was good unfortunately for Dyke after he had done so well.

A point of interest was that it was a goal by **ROBINSON** which put Yeovil out of the Cup, when they were beaten by **Sheffield Wednesday** in 1924.

This equalising goal inspired **Sunderland's** players, who, during the next few minutes or so played some delightful football, keeping the ball on the carpet practically all the time.

Yeovil were still pegging away, and although not so prominent as in the first half, they were putting

BACK PAGE



★ ALEX STOCK'S first goal inspired Yeovil's victory.

'General Alec' led Yeovil to finest win

SUNDERLAND SHATTERED

HANG out the flags! Ring the bells! Let's go, my! Crown our team king of all! That was the sentiment in this football-crazy Somerset town last night after a most dramatic 2-1 Cup victory over mighty First Division Sunderland, who, in every department were outmanoeuvred, out-paced and outclassed. Sunderland's never once did Yeovil defence was the deciding factor. And once the attack, ever ticking like a time-bomb, finally burst, it blew Sunderland right out of the Cup.

After 28 minutes, manager and inside-right, **Alec Stock**, pocked up a loose ball from a **Keaton** free kick and scored with his left foot to send the crowd wild with ecstasy.

Sunderland were worried and flustered. Individually, they looked like a Test cricketer playing on a bumpy country pitch. It was no surprise that the Yeovil superiority carried on till half-time.

But **Sunderland** were to have their purple patch. **Dyke**, the young goalkeeper brought in a late eleven hour, who had played superbly throughout, made his first blunder, and **Ronnie Turnbull** tapped home a mis-cut to level the score.

To the end it was a riotous whirlwind of Cup-tie soccer, neither side giving way in their dire efforts to settle the day. Yeovil were firing, and it looked as if the sands of ambition were running out. But **Alec Stock's** generalship carried the day, and close marking and first-time tackling made for extra time.

Then came the great climax. **Len Shackleton** duffed with the ball in defence and was robbed by the magnificent **Stock**, who put through for **Bryant** to put the Glovers in the next round.

Sunderland can have no alibi. Yeovil had heaps more power and precision. A pat on the back to all their players who, each individually, played better than ever before in their lives.

Yeovil: Dyke; Hickman, Davis; Keaton, Hall, Collins; Hamilton, Stock, Bryant, Wright, Hargrave. Sunderland: Mappin; Mollin; Blizard; Robinson; Hall; Wright; Duns, Robinson; Turnbull, Shackleton, Reynolds.

The men that made history

Martin McConachie profiles the eleven individuals that represented Yeovil Town Football Club on its most famous day

Dickie Dyke

Goalkeeper

JUST twenty-four years old, this quiet solicitor's clerk found himself facing the mighty Sunderland after just ninety minutes of first-team action. Regular keeper Stan Hall had an injured shoulder so Dickie deputised. Played a blinder despite erring for the goal and made the first-team position his own shortly afterwards. Had only previously played for the RAF and retired through injury at the age of 28, Yeovil being his only club.

Ralph Davis

Left-back

RALPH was a factory hand in one of the local glove factories and was born locally in Stoke-sub-Hamdon. A no-nonsense but speedy defender who, with Dickie Dyke and Arthur Hickman, restricted the Black Cats to just a single goal. Assisted Hereford during the war and signed for Yeovil upon demobilisation. Played nearly 300 matches over the course of seven seasons with the Glovers before a niggling foot injury ended his career.

Arthur Hickman

Right-back

ARTHUR joined Yeovil after spending a decade at Aston Villa. He also worked as a groundsman at the airfield and did a stint as a coach for the Football Association. A tall defender, his performance against the Sunderland strike force won him rave reviews and regular visits from League scouts. Renowned for his tough tackling.

Bobby Keeton

Right half

BOBBY worked as a commercial traveller and joined Yeovil from Torquay United early in the 1949/50 season. Tasked with looking after Sunderland's £20,000 striker Len Shackleton and worked his socks off to prevent the striker netting.

Les Blizzard

Centre-half

LES could name Queens Park Rangers and Bournemouth on his CV when he came to Yeovil. His other occupation was an electrician. Every team had a stopper-type centre-half, Les was Yeovil's. He was attracting League scouts to Yeovil before his impressive display against Sunderland and was considered the best centre-half in the Southern



The Yeovil Town players and staff of the 1948/49 season

League. Eventually joined up with Alec Stock at Brisbane Road clocking up more than 200 appearances over seven years.

Nick Collins

Left-half

THE oldest member of the team, in his mid-thirties, Nick also ran the Wellington Inn public house in Yeovil and formerly played for Crystal Palace where he was skipper. Known as a cultured ball-player, Nick's greatest talent was his shrewd positional play and eye for the right ball at the right time. Another player to team up again with his old manager Alec Stock at Leyton Orient.

Bobby Hamilton

Outside-right

FORMERLY of Chester City and Heart of Midlothian, this pocket dynamo was equally adept with both feet and could terrorise defences. Chipped in with his fair share of goals too. Stayed at Yeovil Town for five seasons. His memory lives on nowadays with the annual presentation of the Bobby Hamilton award to the 'Young Player of the Season'.

Worked at Westlands in the drawing office while at Yeovil.

Alec Stock

Inside-right

ALEC was the club's player manager/captain and had come to Yeovil from Queens Park Rangers. Inspirational and committed, the victory over Sunderland elevated him into a household name. He left Yeovil in 1949/50 and had a decade at Leyton Orient before rejoining QPR and enjoying legendary status there after a nine-year spell at Loftus Road. Further success followed at Luton and then Fulham where he led them to the 1975 FA Cup Final where they lost to West Ham. Finished his managerial career at Bournemouth.

Eric Bryant

Centre-forward

ERIC also worked as a corn chandler's assistant and joined Yeovil from Mansfield. He achieved hero status by scoring the 104th minute winner against Sunderland, just one of 86 goals scored for Yeovil in a matter of two seasons. He also boasts an amazing 55

goals in his first season at Huish. Left Yeovil in season 1949/50 to join Plymouth Argyle.

Ray Wright

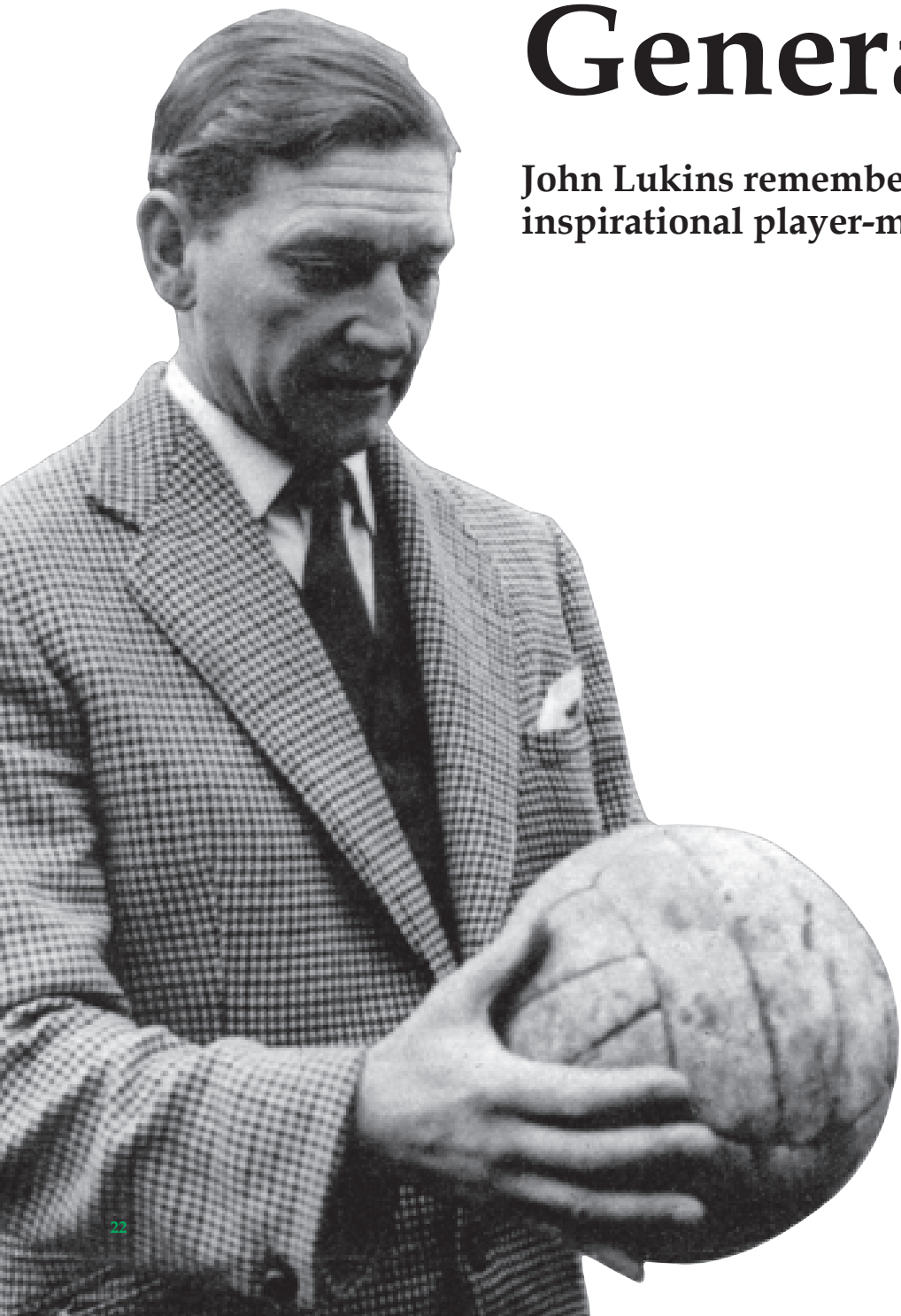
Inside-left

RAY worked as a clerk and came to Yeovil via Wolverhampton Wanderers and Exeter City. Had the sweetest of left feet and the brains of Yeovil's attack. A workmanlike footballer who suffered badly from illness including diabetes and lost both his legs at an early age. Had a testimonial against Alec Stock's Fulham in 1975 when more than 5,300 spectators turned up to support him.

Jack Hargreaves

Outside-left

JACKIE was the second oldest player in the team and had extensive experience with Bristol City, Leeds United and Reading. Combined his football with working as an engineer. Injured in the opening ten minutes of the Sunderland match, his brave and courageous display in an era of no substitutes earned him praise from his manager and team-mates. ■



General Alec

John Lukins remembers Yeovil Town's inspirational player-manager Alec Stock

ALEC Stock was a man who always had a twinkle in his eye. Well, nearly always. The most notable exception was in November 1947 when the Glovers lost 2-1 at Street in the fourth qualifying round of the FA Cup.

A furious Stock ordered his players back on the team bus without a wash - and his demeanour was not helped when a Street housewife opened a bedroom window and told his bedraggled troops to "get on back to Yeovil with your tails between your legs".

That defeat was to have life-changing repercussions for both Stock and the 21-year-old Supporters Club secretary Ivan Rendall who had organised the coaches to Street.

Rendall, an octogenarian who still attends Huish Park matches with his wife, recalls: "Alec had not been appointed as player-manager. He had been appointed as manager and company secretary. After the defeat at Street the board told him they wanted him to be player-manager, so his role changed. And so did mine".

Ivan now became company secretary and although he was primarily responsible to the Board, he formed a close alliance with Stock.

"When he was first interviewed he came across as very sensible and we could see he would make a good manager. He had a way of instilling confidence in anyone under him. He had been a captain in the army so although he was only 28, his management skills were always evident".

Alec was always positive. His first published quote was "This is just the job I have been looking for. I believe the club has every chance of going into Division Three next season".

He died without seeing that dream



Alec is carried by joyous Yeovil fans during a party to celebrate the famous victory over Sunderland

Alec's pre-match talk would be along the lines of "It's a lovely day. The birds are singing. Go out there and enjoy it"

fulfilled, but he oozed belief in both himself and those under him. Before the Sunderland match he told winger Bobby Hamilton that the international full-back who would be marking him was "a weak link". And he drummed in that the near-international Sunderland keeper was "very weak on crosses".

Stock's appointment, soon after the end of the war in which he himself had suffered injury at Caen on D-Day, came when the nation was still in turmoil with players looking to settle down to normal life. There were advantages for Stock - often Westlands would offer a job as an incentive to increase a £6 a week football wage. There were also disadvantages. Contracts did not exist and Stock had to bring players in weekly from all parts of the country at a time when travelling was difficult.

Other clubs were in the same boat and in 1946 and '47 the Southern League fixtures were not completed. But by the "big year"

things were more settled and Alec had got a good team together for those memorable games with Bury, Sunderland and Manchester United.

Even after the victory over Sunderland Stock's feet were firmly on the ground. He could still have a laugh at his own expense and liked the poem he received from a Manchester United supporter soon after the win over Sunderland. It read....

*"Yeovil you must rest content
The cup for you was never meant.
The only one that you will win
Is one from Woolworths made of tin".*

The win over Sunderland cemented Stock's reputation. Life would never be the same again and he was soon whisked away to be secretary-manager of Leyton Orient.

Spells with QPR, Roma, Arsenal (as assistant manager), QPR again and finally Fulham followed. He led the latter to the FA Cup final against West Ham in 1975. Bobby Moore

was in his team, which lost 2-0, and on the eve of the final Moore predicted Alec's pre-match talk would be along the lines of "It's a lovely day. The birds are singing. Go out there and enjoy it".

Not that there was anything lackadaisical in Stock's preparation. There was always meticulous planning and there was an iron fist in a velvet glove, just like that day at Street 28 years earlier.

Yeovil never forgot him and he never forgot Yeovil. Almost to the end he travelled from his Bournemouth home to watch Yeovil games, often accompanied by Johnny Hartburn, the winger he sold to Orient for £1,700 the season before the Sunderland game.

My last face-to-face meeting with the pair was at Huish Park and Hartburn was complaining that Yeovil Town news and match reports did not appear in the Bournemouth edition of the Western Gazette.

With tongue in cheek I suggested "A man with your money should get a Yeovil edition posted every week". Stock chuckled: "That's right", he said. "You tell him".

The twinkle was still in his eye. ■

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An FA Cup run like no other

Yeovil Town Football Club certainly hold plenty of great memories when it comes to the Football Association Challenge Cup, but when asked which one ranks as the best ever, everyone will no doubt refer to the glorious 1948/49 campaign that saw the Glovers reach the fifth round. Chris Spittles reviews Yeovil's great run, round by round

The start of something big...

November 13, 1948

FA Cup Fourth Qualifying Round

Lovells Athletic 2 Yeovil Town 3

November 27, 1948

FA Cup First Round

Yeovil Town 4 Romford 0

December 11, 1948

FA Cup Second Round

Weymouth 0 Yeovil Town 4

January 8, 1949

FA Cup Third Round

Yeovil Town 3 Bury 1

YEOVIL'S most famous FA Cup run might have ended at Manchester United, but it began in the fourth qualifying round at the now defunct Lovells Athletic. They were the works team for the Lovells' sweet factory in Newport and around 700 Glovers fans travelled to Wales for the game by special train.

Yeovil were the favourites to win but Lovells had an FA Cup pedigree, reaching the third round in 1946 before losing to Wolverhampton Wanderers. And the Welsh side ran Town close as Yeovil emerged 3-2 winners thanks to a late goal from the prolific Eric Bryant.

Bryant ended the 1948-49 season with an incredible 55 goals and would be a key man throughout the cup run. Hailing from Birmingham, Bryant played for Mansfield for two seasons before arriving at Yeovil. He netted a brace against Lovells, with the scoring completed by an own goal as Yeovil reached the first round proper. The players and supporters then travelled back to Somerset together as they celebrated the start of a momentous cup run.

The first round draw pitched Yeovil against amateur side Romford, with the Glovers again expected to progress. Romford had a good FA Cup pedigree themselves having once reached the quarter-finals, but that was back in 1881. This time Yeovil enjoyed home advantage and the lure of the FA Cup was expected to bring a crowd of more than 10,000 to The Huish.

That size of attendance required work on the ground, with the supporters club strengthening the embankment at the Town end. In the end more than 1000 fans travelled to the game from Essex but they were held up due to fog. It's recorded that by the time most of the Romford supporters arrived, Yeovil were already 3-0 ahead.

The Glovers eventually triumphed 4-0, with Bryant grabbing another two goals and Bob Hamilton and Jack Hargreaves also on target. Hargreaves had moved to south Somerset in the summer of 1948, joining the club just before Bryant.

A winger, 26-year-old Hargreaves was born in Yorkshire and started out playing for Leeds United before the second world war. Spells with Reading and then Bristol

and then Bristol City followed before he linked up with Alec Stock's Yeovil just in time for their FA Cup adventure.

Having beaten Romford, the Glovers were handed a second away draw of the season in the second round. And this time they were thrown together with local rivals Weymouth, travelling to the Rec on December 11, 1948 with a place in round three at stake.

Understandably given the small distance between the two clubs, a huge crowd was anticipated. And the Yeovil fans didn't disappoint, with 3,000 journeying down to take the overall crowd to the 11,000 mark.

Incredibly, Yeovil again won 4-0 and it was exactly the same goalscorers who accounted for Romford who were on target against Weymouth. Bryant again scored twice, taking his FA Cup tally to six in just three games, with Hargreaves and Hamilton also netting again.

In the third round, Yeovil were given a home tie against Bury, who at that time were close to the top of Division Two. But first, the Town supporters had to negotiate a tricky return from Weymouth after torrential rain flooded large areas of Dorset, forcing many to stay overnight.

The Bury game was scheduled for January 8, 1949, leaving Yeovil to play four league matches before their big FA Cup clash.

They picked up just one point - from a 1-1 draw with Bath City - in those games and slipped down the Southern League table. But in reality all eyes were focused on the impending date with Bury and more work

was undertaken on the ground, with the club applying to extend their capacity to 15,000.

On the day of the game, queues formed outside Huish four hours before kick-off, with the game really catching the attention of the Somerset public. And those who didn't make it into the ground took advantage of any view they could find, with fans climbing trees, standing on roofs and some even balancing on the scoreboard.

Yeovil had the backing of their Non-League rivals for the tie, receiving telegrams from most of the clubs in the Southern League. And once the game started, the Glovers quickly took control, taking the lead within the first ten minutes when Hargreaves headed in.

The Shakers did level, but that didn't affect the home side and just before half-time Ray Wright restored Yeovil's lead.

For the first time in their cup run, Bryant wasn't on the score sheet, but Hamilton emulate Hargreaves by scoring in a third successive round to complete a 3-1 win for the Glovers. Thousands of fans flooded on to the pitch to celebrate and at the time it was felt that victory over an established Division Two side would be the height of Yeovil's achievements.

However, the fourth round draw was to hand Town a chance to eclipse the result against Bury. Sunderland were to travel to Huish at the end of January 1949 - and the north east side were one of the top teams in the country, lying in the top six in the first division. ■



Eric Bryant is denied by Weymouth's goalkeeper



Alec Stock tosses the coin in the Bury match



Yeovil's Eric Bryant, centre, and Alec Stock, far right, put pressure on the Bury defence



Yeovil's Bob Keeton breaks up a Weymouth attack





The 'greatest' giant-killing...

January 29, 1949

FA Cup Fourth Round

Yeovil Town 2 Sunderland 1

After extra-time

THE build-up to the most famous game in Yeovil's history was chaotic to say the least, as the Non-League club prepared to host one of the top teams in the country.

The draw was made on Monday January 10, 1949 and in FA Cup tradition at the time, hundreds huddled round radios throughout Somerset. Within hours, all the stand and enclosure places had been sold out and so began a busy three weeks for Yeovil's 21-year-old secretary, Ivan Rendall.

In the first week, more than one thousand ticket applications were received by the club every day. Rendall had only his schoolboy brother to help him and they had to convert a bedroom in their house into an office to

cope with the deluge. There had been 13,500 fans at the Bury game in the third round but for the Sunderland match demand was far higher.

When tickets were put on sale at the ground, fans queued for hours and a police presence was needed to stop queue-jumping. The attendance was eventually calculated at more than 17,000, with several thousand more locked out.

The Rokerites didn't display much confidence in the run up to the big game, with manager Billy Murray particularly downbeat about his side's trip to Somerset. Asked about the game following the draw, Murray is quoted as saying: "It could be worse, but not much."

But Yeovil were to suffer a big setback as >

Right: Dickie Dyke pulls off another great save for the Glovers. Below: Yeovil centre-half Les Blizzard sends Sunderland striker Ronnie Turnbull tumbling with a neat bit of skill. Previous page: Dickie Dyke safely collects a cross



just a week before the big match they lost goalkeeper Stan Hall to injury. The Glovers beat Worcester City 2-0 in the Southern League, thanks to two more goals from the free-scoring Eric Bryant. But Hall was forced off through injury, prompting a scramble to find a goalkeeper to face Sunderland.

Town turned to Vic 'Dickie' Dyke, a 24-year-old solicitor's clerk from Crewkerne, who until recently was the last surviving member of the team that beat Sunderland. Dyke accepted the challenge of replacing Hall and would be part of the team that lined up in a new kit for the big day, provided by the women's section of the Supporters' Club.

Of course, reports of Huish's famous sloping pitch had reached Sunderland and Murray was keen to see it for himself. He inspected the ground the day before the game and in a bid to put his players' minds at rest, declared that he felt the slope was greatly exaggerated. He even claimed that if the Rokerites lost the tie that there would be no complaints about the pitch.

And Sunderland received yet another boost in the early stages of the game as Yeovil suffered another blow. Having already lost goalkeeper Hall to injury, Glovers winger Jack Hargreaves pulled a leg muscle after just 10 minutes. Of course, in 1949 there were no

substitutes so Hargreaves limped on but was little more than a passenger.

However, the Glovers didn't let that affect them and striker Bryant led the charge as they chased an unlikely giant-killing. The big target man gave Sunderland keeper Joe Mapson a difficult afternoon and thought he'd scored early on. In true Nat Lofthouse style, Bryant bundled Mapson and the ball over the goalline, but the referee chose to penalise Bryant for a foul and awarded a free-kick.

But the home fans didn't have to wait long for another opportunity to acclaim a goal, as Yeovil took the lead in the 28th minute. Les Blizzard and Ray Wright combined to set up



player-manager Alec Stock, who shot past Mapson to make it 1-0. Dyke was relishing the opportunity to play in goal and made several fine saves to keep his side ahead.

But he made one crucial slip when he allowed a through ball to evade his grasp and Robinson equalised for Sunderland from close range. After that both teams had opportunities to clinch victory, but the tie was still level at 90 minutes. At the time, due to the fuel shortage and travel restrictions, FA Cup games then went into extra-time.

That gave Yeovil a chance to earn a momentous victory in front of their home fans in worsening conditions. Mist actually came

close to forcing the game to be abandoned, but the teams played on and a Sunderland mistake gifted Yeovil a second goal.

Len Shackleton gave the ball away to Ray Wright and he found Bryant who fired past Mapson to make it 2-1. Somewhat inevitably, Huish erupted as the disbelieving fans celebrated being on the verge of an astonishing upset. At the time, Yeovil were eighth from bottom of the Southern League while Sunderland were one of the top six teams in the country.

There were still 15 minutes left and Yeovil then defended for all they were worth as they strived to hold on to their advantage.

There was chaos when the referee blew for a free-kick in the closing stages and the fans mistook the whistle for the end of the game, engulfing the pitch.

Eventually order was restored and play resumed, and Yeovil held on to prompt tears and joy among the thousands of supporters. The victory set two records which still stand; a crowd of 17,123 is still the record attendance and the Glovers haven't got past the fifth round of the FA Cup since.

It truly was a magnificent achievement - but reality was to hit home in the next round as the Glovers drew the cup holders, Manchester United. ■

All good things come to an end

February 12, 1949

FA Cup Fifth Round

Manchester United 8 Yeovil Town 0

HAVING sent Sunderland crashing out, Yeovil were handed an even bigger tie in the fifth round as they drew the FA Cup holders Manchester United. The Red Devils had a team packed with six internationals but weren't playing at Old Trafford at the time of their clash with the Glovers.

Bomb damage sustained during the war had forced them to move to Maine Road and groundshare with bitter rivals Manchester City. Despite that, a crowd of around 60,000 was expected for the game on February 12, 1949.

As with the Sunderland game, Yeovil's build up to the big match did not go smoothly and they lost 3-0 to Hereford United in the Southern League just a week before they travelled to the north west.

That league defeat left the Glovers fifth from bottom of the table, but with a date at Maine Road on the horizon, no one seemed worried. The players journeyed north the day before the game and were hailed as heroes in the streets after their fourth round achievements.

They were followed by more than 6,000 travelling fans, who made sure they were noticed with rattles, horns and drums, plus a three-foot long green glove.

In the end, thousands were locked out of Maine Road as an incredible 81,565 turned out to see if Town could pull off another giant-killing.

Yeovil's preparations suffered another blow before the match, when winger Jack Hargreaves, who limped through the Sunderland game, failed a fitness test.

The Glovers did have regular goalkeeper Stan Hall back to replace Dickie Dyke, and he was to be the busiest man in Maine Road.

Hall was helpless as United scored eight goals, with Jack Rowley netting five, to run out comfortable 8-0 winners. And the luckless Hall also sustained another injury, getting a gash in the stomach from a sharp stud just 20 minutes into the match but bravely completed the game.

Yeovil did receive £3,500 as their share of the gate receipts, but the great cup run was over. The players returned to a pre-arranged civic reception but it was inevitably an anticlimax after events at Maine Road. ■



Jack Rowley, far left, scores the second goal of the game for Manchester United



The Yeovil fans who made it to the game



Left: The Yeovil mascot leads the team out at Maine Road. Above: Ralph Davies' slide is not enough to stop Ronnie Burke scoring for United

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YEovil TOWN, who have knocked out Bury and Sunderland from the F.A. Cup contest, meet Manchester United at the Maine Rd. ground tomorrow.



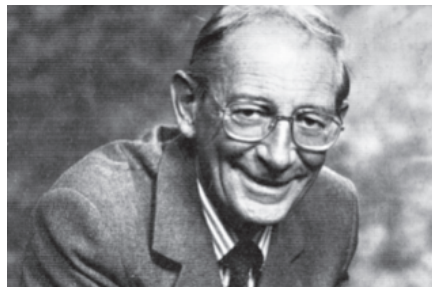


Memories are made of these

For the estimated 17,000 that crammed into Huish on January 29, 1949 it was to become one of those days that will never be forgotten. Bryan Moore, Audrey Hamilton and Gerald Isaacs each give their own account of that glorious FA Cup campaign when the Glovers dared to live the dream

'Everyone was cheering, hugging each other, dancing on the spot, mentally exhausted and some were crying'

AT just the tender age of twelve the events of January 29, 1949 were always going to leave a huge impression on young Yeovil Town fan Bryan Moore. Now retired and living in the town, the former club chairman remembers the day that will always hold a place as one of his most special memories



AT the time I was 12 years old and was, together with my father, a stand season ticket holder. My dad had previously written to the club to ask if, the following season, it would be possible to purchase tickets at reduced rates for juniors. This request was declined as it turned out that I was the only junior with a season ticket.

My first recollection of the day was walking into Huish from a car park and seeing from one corner flag to the other. The late comers who couldn't find anywhere to stand on the terraces had to go into the gully. All they saw of the game was a glimpse of the ball once in a while if it was hoofed high enough in the air.

The game was full of drama, starting with the announcement that Stan Hall, the regular goalkeeper was injured and his place was to be taken by a 24-year-old local boy, Dickie Dyke. Then, ten minutes into the game, winger Jack Hargreaves pulled a muscle and was a virtual passenger for the rest of the game. No substitutes were allowed in those days.

To add to Yeovil's woes they got the ball into the back of the Sunderland net, the referee, however, disallowed the effort - but it was not long before Yeovil took the lead when player manager, Alec Stock, smashed the ball home from well outside the penalty area.

With just over an hour played tragedy struck Yeovil again. A long ball into the box was dropped by hero Dyke and Robinson tapped the ball into the net from a yard out. This was the only mistake made by the amateur goalkeeper during the entire match.

At the end of ninety minutes the score stood at 1-1 and, in those days, extra-time was played as part of the Government's austerity campaign in the years after the war to avoid unnecessary journeys and loss of working days.

As extra-time began fog came down over the ground and, minutes before the first period of extra time, Yeovil struck again. Eric Bryant received a through pass from Ray Wright and shot past the advancing goalkeeper. The roar of the crowd seemed to blow the mist away temporarily.

And so began the longest fifteen minutes

of my life. Sunderland were now rampant and threatened to overcome the fatigued bodies of the Yeovil team. Somehow they kept going, at every opportunity the ball was kicked into touch and as far out of the ground as possible. It was later rumoured that Arthur Hickman, the six foot two right back, had actually sent three balls down into Middle Street!

With five minutes to go the mist returned and it looked as though Yeovil's Herculean efforts were about to be all in vain. Play continued and there was even more drama

to come. With just three minutes remaining the referee blew his whistle - the crowd thought it was for full time but, no, it was for a free kick. By this time the crowd in their thousands were on the pitch 'celebrating' a massive victory. Somehow the players and officials managed to persuade the crowd to clear the pitch.

Then it was finally all over. The long blast on the referee's whistle was the signal for the crowd to invade the pitch again. So many supporters came onto the pitch that there was not one blade of grass to be seen.

Everyone was cheering, hugging each other, dancing on the spot, mentally exhausted and some were crying. I was sitting next to goal scorer Eric Bryant's wife - she swept me up into her arms and kissed me. This was the first time I had been kissed by a woman other than my mum!

How could it have happened? A town with a population of only 19,000, and with a team wage bill of £70 per week, had beaten one of the then giants of English football, a team which was the most expensive in football at that time. ■



Supporters used every possible vantage point in order to watch the match



Local boy Dickie Dyke makes another save

'It was a wonderful feeling when the winning goal went in and I could see Bobby jumping for joy'

FOR Audrey Hamilton recollections of that famous victory over Sunderland take on a whole new meaning, for her beloved husband Bobby was a part of the team on the day. Memories still run strong for Audrey as she lives in a flat that overlooks the famous slope of the old Huish



SUNDERLAND were the Manchester United of their day and it was very exciting when we learnt that Yeovil had been drawn against them. The whole town went mad and there was green and white everywhere. All the shops had green and white in their windows it was an amazing time.

On the day of the game all the lads went off to Sherborne to the Half Moon Hotel for their pre-match meal while the wives went to a fish and chip shop in Goldcoft called 'Farthings'. We all used to have some great times as wives of the players.

Nick Collins the captain used to keep a pub in Wellington Street, called 'The Wellington Inn' and we all used to gather there after the matches. They were some memorable times. The players used to go off and play



Audrey pours husband Bobby a cup of tea

skittles whilst we used to serve and make sandwiches. Then we'd all have supper and Alec Stock would always go down on one knee with lads around him and sing "If I could plant one seed of love in the garden of your heart."

On match day everybody used to walk to the ground so you can imagine it was just a huge mass of people all walking to the ground. Where I live now looks over the old Bruttons end with the slope so it brings back many happy memories of the old days.

On the day of the game we all made our way to the ground but apart from a ticket for a seat we were not given any other special privileges. We were all hoarse very quickly but the funny thing was that we didn't think they were going to lose. It never entered our minds on the day.

With the fog rolling in all the time it was sometimes difficult to see everything and I

remember near the end the referee blew up for a foul and everybody thought the match was over but it wasn't. All the crowd surged onto the pitch and the lads had to tell them it was not over and to clear the pitch. It was a wonderful feeling when the winning goal went in and I could see Bobby jumping for joy because I think he crossed for Alec to score and he knew that was going to be the winner.

After the match we had a dance down at The Assembly Rooms and Glenys Bryant had come in trousers and a top so I lent her the dress I was going to go away in for my honeymoon.

It was a great night and I remember one of the fans who was a business man jumped up on to the stage and gave all the players £10 each for winning and Alec promptly jumped up and took it all back from the players because of course it was against the rules. I

think though they probably got it all back after the dance though.

The next morning the Daily Graphic woke us up at 8 o'clock in the morning to take a picture of me and Bobby having a cup of tea. The celebrations seemed to go on for ages after the match and you couldn't walk through the street without fans coming up to congratulate you on the victory. When we played Manchester United we were followed in the street by photographers wanting to take pictures of us. I suppose you could say we were the original bunch of WAGs back in 1949!

At the end of the season Alec took the whole team on tour to Jersey where they were awarded the Freedom of the Island. They all had to sign the visitors book and it happened that the last person to sign before them had been none other than the Queen herself so they were in pretty exalted company. ■



Audrey and the wives of the Yeovil Town players take to the streets of Manchester

'We were on cloud nine because nobody really expected us to win the game'

AS a twenty-one year old Gerald Isaacs from Crewkerne was never a fanatical Yeovil Town fan but what he did crave for was top class sport. When Yeovil started their epic FA Cup battles against Sunderland and Manchester United he had to be there to witness the event. Now 84, Gerald recalls his memories from those two famous games.



I was twenty two at the time of the match and I can remember well that in those days top class spectator sport was hard to find. We used to go to Twickenham to watch top level rugby because I was never really interested in local football. The problem was it was ok playing it or if you had a son playing but to just watch it never really appealed to me.

So we used to share our allegiance between Bristol City and Yeovil Town and the week Yeovil were at home to Bury we decided to go to Bristol. Nobody really expected Yeovil to win and with Chelsea down at Ashton Gate that seemed a better bet for some excitement. I saw a lot of Yeovil games but I could never really say I was a fanatical fan. Anyway we went to Bristol and saw Chelsea knock out City and we weren't expecting Yeovil to have much chance against Bury.

Now of course in those days there wasn't the internet or even radio for getting results of other matches whilst you were at another game so it was only when we returned to Yeovil that we found out that the Glovers had won. Everybody was talking about the game and then when they drew Sunderland in the next round everybody went completely mad. Sunderland were known as the 'Bank of England' side, a bit like Chelsea and Manchester United are today, so you can imagine the excitement the draw created.

Somehow we managed to get tickets, although I really can't remember how we did, and I can't even remember how we got there as we didn't have a car in those days. When we reached the ground it was mayhem. There were over 17,000 people there all wanting to see the playboy Len Shackleton and his team.

The biggest problem on the day though was the fog that kept rolling in. It was alright to play football in but it did rather obscure parts of the ground. We were in the top end of the ground opposite the main wooden stand and at no time could we see the other end really. I always remember there was a shed on the other side with an advertising slogan that read "Shop at The Stores, the profits are yours."

The game itself seemed to really pass me by. Alec Stock scored a goal I remember but they equalised to send it into extra-time and everybody wondered if the game would finish what with the fog and the dark because



Ecstatic Yeovil fans invade the pitch after the Glovers' stunning victory

they had no floodlights. Extra-time was the order of the day then because there were fuel restrictions which prevented people travelling far.

When Yeovil scored the winner the whole place went mad but I can't really remember the goal that well. I do remember the fans all ran onto the pitch and congregated in front of the directors' box but with 17,000 people there our main concern was to get out of the ground and get home. I must admit we were on cloud nine because nobody really expected us to win the game.

The next thing to think about was to get tickets for the following game against Manchester United. The club got the tickets on sale fairly quickly and somehow we managed to get two. I went with my friend Doug John from Crewkerne. The only thing we took was a half a dozen bottles of beer with a crown cork opener. We got the train from Pen Mill

at 11.30 on the Friday night before the game.

It was a very ordinary train I remember and you could bang your hand down on the seat and all the dust would come out of it. There were several trains going up and we stopped at somewhere like Crewe to kill some time on the way up.

We eventually arrived at Piccadilly station at about 6.30 in the morning so the first thing was to find somewhere to eat so we wandered around until we found Woolworths. They had a cafeteria so we had a lovely breakfast there. The room was so big I remember thinking they could have played a football match up there.

We somehow got to Maine Road with these two precious tickets in our hand. Inside it was amazing. Three sides of the ground just a huge mass of people. As for the match well again I remember Eric Bryant had a great opportunity to score in

the first minute but somehow he missed it. We had a different goalkeeper in the shape of Stan Hall who was recalled after recovering from the injury that kept him out of the Sunderland match. Unfortunately it wasn't a great day for him as United went on to smash in eight goals.

The thing that really sticks out in my memory was the children. There was a continual stream of kids tobogganing over people's heads as they had come in at the back and needed to be at the front to be able to see. They all then congregated on the touch line. People must have lost their kids in that situation but with 81,000 people there I guess that's not a surprise.

We made our way to Piccadilly station and arrived back in Yeovil in the early hours of Sunday morning. Then came the realisation that the party was over, but it had been a great adventure. ■

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Sunderland's cup of woe

Winston Young, Secretary of the Sunderland Former Players Association, recalls the day his team famously became one of the biggest scalps in FA Cup history



MY dad took me to Sunderland's first home game of the 1947/48 season. I was just seven years old then but 61 years later I still remember entering Roker Park that first time, seeing the pitch and experiencing the excitement of being among a great crowd of supporters all wanting 'their' team to win.

It was only later that I felt the bitter disappointment when we didn't. But by then I was hooked – I became and still am a Sunderland supporter. I'm 68 now and, unfortunately, still waiting for the club to be consistently successful.

Yes – we've had some great players and good teams but have only managed to win one major trophy – the 1973 FA Cup when, against all the odds, Bob Stokoe took his Second Division side to Wembley and beat Leeds 1-0. Even today, 35 years later, the team are still considered heroes by the club's supporters. Once the game finished I could relax and enjoy the excitement of winning. But that feeling was only possible because we won. What does it feel like to lose a game everyone expects us to win?

Believe me there have been plenty of those down the years but probably the most upsetting was our defeat away to Yeovil Town in the fourth round of the FA Cup in 1949. To understand why it was such a shock we need to start by looking at Sunderland's stature when football restarted after the end of World War II.

At the beginning of the 1948/49 season Sunderland were the first division's big spenders (indeed they became known as the 'Bank of England club' because of the huge transfer fees they were prepared to pay) and were expected to do well. They had won the FA Cup in 1937, beating Preston North End 3-1 but had lost by the same score in the 1938 semi-final.

The club's most recent signing was Len Shackleton who joined from arch rivals, Newcastle United for a British record fee of £20,500. The season started well, only one defeat in the first nine games and, in October, we comfortably beat the FA Cup holders Manchester United.

Unfortunately this form wasn't maintained but our league results improved during Janu-

ary and, in the third round of the FA Cup, we won easily at Crewe. In the fourth round we were drawn away to Yeovil Town. I remember my dad and his brothers having to look at a map to find where Yeovil was. We learned that special trains were being laid on to take supporters to the game but because these would leave on the Friday and not get back until the day after the match none of our family could go.

However quite a few friends and neighbours (we lived in a pit village just outside Sunderland) were going and, on that Friday, I watched them set off, all sporting the club's colours of red and white. Everyone was confident the team would win easily and leave us just three games away from appearing in the final yet again. For Yeovil the match was a great opportunity and, as it turned out, they took it with both hands.

Now I don't know about the Yeovil fans but I can't remember exactly what I did that Saturday. I was quite sure we'd win and the only question would be, by how many?

Imagine my shock when I arrived home to hear the result and found everyone looking

stunned and my Dad saying: "Two-one, I don't believe it, two-one". I quickly realised things hadn't gone well and decided to keep out of the way until the mood in the house improved. Believe me it took some time. I think it was only when we saw the headline in the local sports paper that we finally accepted the result. Everyone was absolutely devastated, as, deep down, we knew this result could haunt us for a very long time.

Next day the supporters who had left in such a cheerful mood began to arrive back, tired, dishevelled and disheartened, many without the scarves and rosettes they had worn when setting off. What had they to look forward to - just a few hours sleep and then back to work down the pit.

Sixty years have now passed but the result is still remembered, not only in our family, but throughout football in general. There had been about 16,000 spectators including 3,000 from Sunderland crammed into Yeovil's ground. Much has been made since then of how close they were to the pitch, how the ground sloped steeply and how effective Yeovil's long ball tactics were.

I couldn't believe any of these should have made a difference. All our supporters I've ever spoken to still believe we should have won. Nothing else should have had any bearing on the result. Even today talking about the Yeovil result makes Sunderland supporters feel uncomfortable. Fortunately it has now passed (almost) into history and we no longer get routinely embarrassed by it. However, we're still not allowed to forget it completely - commentators and reporters often use it as the yardstick for surprise results. Perhaps we will never be allowed to forget and it will always hang around our necks like the ancient mariner's albatross!

Finally, in 1958 I became a professional with Sunderland and had the good fortune to meet one of my boyhood heroes, Arthur Wright, who was generally considered to be the best left half never to be capped by England.

After retiring from playing he became a coach with Sunderland. On one away trip I found myself sat beside him in the team bus and, knowing he had played in the Yeovil match, summoned up the courage to ask him why he thought they had won. He was quiet for a few seconds and then said: "They played as a team and they wanted to win. It's as simple as that." I never managed to get him to say anything else about the game.

This was my cup of woe. ■

Imagine my shock when I arrived home to hear the result and found everyone looking stunned and my dad saying: "Two-one, I don't believe it, two-one"



Sunderland's Len Shackleton



Sunderland's team of 1949



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A fitting tribute

To mark the 60th anniversary of Yeovil Town's famous victory over Sunderland, the club honour the occasion with a special tribute

ANNIVERSARIES are there to be celebrated. January 29, 2009 marks the 60th anniversary of the day the football world was turned upside down by a bunch of part-time footballers in deepest Somerset.

Plans were organised at an early stage to produce this commemorative book to mark the date whilst the club had two other major events planned for the supporters.

The first event being the evening of Wednesday, 28 January, an anniversary dinner specially arranged by the club with two guest speakers from Sunderland; fabled goalkeeper Jim Montgomery and captain Bobby Kerr, nicknamed "Little General" who both played prominent parts in the Black Cats' famous 1-0 victory over Leeds United in the 1973 FA Cup Final.

There's more than a sense of irony in that the venue for the dinner, the Alec Stock Lounge, is named after the manager who planned and executed the famous victory sixty years before.

The second commemorative event being a 'Legends' match on Thursday, 29 January, featuring some of the stars that have played for Yeovil Town over the years, players for whom "legend" is the most apt word.

These include Warren Patmore, Terry Cotton, Marcus Stewart and Mickey Spencer among many others and former manager Gary Johnson and from the Sunderland team such players as Richard Ord, Gary Owers and Gary Bennett, three players with almost a thousand first-team appearances between them.

The two teams have met twice before other than the cup game. On May 3, 1974, Yeovil hosted Sunderland at Huish in a testimonial for Yeovil's manager Cecil Irwin; a man who had clocked up fifteen years and more than 300 appearances with the Roker Park outfit as well.

Yeovil won by two goals to nil with strikes from Briggs and Verity. Later on, in the pre-season of 1998/99, the two teams met again at Huish Park with the visitors triumphing 2-1. ■





We are the famous Yeovil

When it comes to the FA Cup no club has forged a bigger reputation as giant-killers than Yeovil Town Football Club. With a record-breaking twenty league scalps to their name as a Non-League club, Chris Spittles looks back at the Glovers' glorious history in the world's most famous cup competition



Yeovil's Dave Taylor scores the first goal in the Glovers' 3-1 win against Crystal Palace in the second round of the 1963/64 FA Cup campaign



YEOVIL'S win over Sunderland in 1949 may be their most famous giantkilling in the FA Cup, but the Glovers also boast another 19 league scalps to their name as a Non-League club, which still stands as a record.

Yeovil also reached the third round of the competition 13 times when they were in the Non-League ranks, another record. It all started back in 1924 when a league team first visited Huish in the shape of Bournemouth and Boscombe Athletic in the fourth qualifying round. The game attracted a then-record crowd of 5,500, understandably boosted by a large travelling contingent from Dorset and Hampshire.

Johnny Hayward scored twice as the Glovers ran out 3-2 winners and the date of November 15 1924 went down in history as the day the club recorded their first giant-killing. In the next round Yeovil and Petters United were again drawn at home and given another local derby, this time against Bristol Rovers. Again the attendance record was broken, with 6,600 cramming into Huish, but Yeovil lost 4-2 despite another goal from Hayward.

It was ten years before the Glovers upset another league team, but in 1934 they recorded two giant-killings before being knocked out by Liverpool in the third round. Ties against Tiverton Town, Wells City, Glastonbury and Weymouth were all safely negotiated to earn a first round game against Crystal Palace. And a second major scalp was comfortably secured as goals from Tommy McNeil, Jimmy Parle and player-manager Louis Page earned a 3-0 win.

That win took Yeovil into a second round meeting with another league club, Exeter City, a game which would again shatter their attendance record. The Grecians brought 3,500 fans with them for the game on December 8, 1934 and contributed to an overall gate of 9,000. It's recorded that the home fans turned up with green and white cardboard megaphones, with many hanging from hoardings and on roofs.

And Exeter were dispatched 4-1, with former England international Page again on target, as Yeovil moved into a third round meeting with Liverpool, again at home. Unsurprisingly the club again attracted a new record crowd for the match, with ground improvements allowing 11,830 into Huish.

But despite Tommy McNeil putting Yeovil

1-0 up and Page bravely playing the whole game with a broken collar bone, they lost 6-2. It was only four years before another giant-killing act, with goals from Arthur Graham and Dave Laing beating third division Brighton in a first round tie. Fellow Non-Leaguers Folkestone were defeated in a second round replay, before Sheffield Wednesday proved too strong in a third round replay in front of 14,359 at Huish.

There was then a barren spell of league scalps until the exploits of 1948-49 - and then another ten year gap until 1958, when Yeovil knocked out Southend 1-0 in a first round replay thanks to a goal from 18-year-old John Dennis, their first replay win over a league club. After holding the Shrimpers to a 0-0 draw at Roots Hall to bring them back to south Somerset, Yeovil were handed another trip to Essex, to face Colchester.

Again they performed well to earn a replay at Huish, with Stan Earl securing a 1-1 draw from the penalty spot. Unfortunately the Glovers then capitulated to a 7-1 defeat at home on a quagmire of a pitch, with Dennis scoring their only goal. But Yeovil only had to wait two years for their eighth giant-killing act, which came against third division Walsall in the first round in November 1960.

The Saddlers were unbeaten at their Fellows Park home, but Yeovil hit the bar twice and had two goals disallowed before Dave Taylor netted the winner. That year's cup run ended away at Bournemouth and Boscombe with a 3-1 defeat, with Jim Kelly netting Yeovil's goal. It wasn't long before the Glovers' list of league victims reached double figures, with two notable scalps in 1963-64.

Southend and Crystal Palace had both suffered at the hands of Yeovil in previous encounters and both succumbed again as the Non-Leaguers reached the third round again. Terry Foley settled a disappointing match in the first round with the only goal of the game against Southend.

But their clash with Crystal Palace in the next round saw Yeovil really hit the heights as Dave Taylor (2) and Ken Pound secured a convincing 3-1 win. The national press were full of plaudits for the Glovers, but their run ended at the next stage as two errors from Dave Jones handed Bury a 2-0 win. Yeovil only achieved two giant-killings in the 1970s and after their 1972 win over Brentford they then entered a drought of 15 years.

But the decade started with another vanquishing of Bournemouth in the second >

round in December 1970, which earned Yeovil a significant third round meeting with Arsenal. The Gunners were second in Division One at the time and holders of the Fairs Cup, while the Glovers had been close to extinction a year earlier.

The ground limit at Huish was set at 14,000, less than the 17,000 Yeovil had hoped for, but gates receipts of £12,500 gave the coffers a welcome boost. Arsenal turned up with a team full of star names when the game eventually took place on a Wednesday afternoon following a postponement, and ran out 3-0 winners.

Two years later, Brentford became victim number 12 at the first round stage, beaten 2-1 before the Glovers bowed out at home to Plymouth Argyle a round later. There then followed a 15-year hiatus in giant-killing terms, before Yeovil travelled to Cambridge United in the second round in December 1987.

Andy Wallace scored the only goal of the game as the fourth division side were beaten 1-0 and the win led to another money-spinning third round tie, this time at home to QPR. The first FA Cup game at the new Huish Park, on October 27, 1990, saw the Glovers beat Marlow 3-1 in the fourth qualifying round. But they failed to add to their giant-killing statistics at Brentford in the first round that year, losing 5-0 at Griffin Park.

In 1991 Yeovil again set up a first round tie against league opposition, with Walsall drawing 1-1 at Huish Park. And the Saddlers became the Glovers' 14th Football League victims in the replay, with Richard Cooper heading the only goal of the game.

Unfortunately the next round was something of an anti-climax as Town were given a trip to Woking and crashed out, losing 3-0. They bounced back the following season though to embark on one of the most famous FA Cup runs in the club's history.

The 1992-93 campaign started with a 2-1 win at Crawley Town in the fourth qualifying round, with Paul Batty and Mickey Spencer on target.

The reward was a trip to Torquay United, at that time a league side, and the Glovers performed brilliantly to win 5-2. Man-of-the-match Batty netted a hat-trick which included two penalties and Spencer and Paul Wilson also netted as the Gulls were soundly beaten.

Town's second round draw really caught the public's imagination as they were pitted against Hereford, also famed as cup giant-



The Yeovil players celebrate beating Hereford United in the epic 1992/93 encounter

killers. The first tie ended 0-0 at Huish Park but the draw that weekend paired the winners with top flight giants Arsenal.

So the Glovers headed to Edgar Street on December 16 1992 knowing victory would set up a lucrative home tie with the mighty Gunners.

The replay was a classic cup tie, with Paul Sanderson putting Yeovil ahead before Paul Batty missed a penalty. Hereford then levelled late in the game, but Neil Coates popped up with a winner for the visitors, a goal said to be worth £100,000.

So Arsenal arrived in south Somerset on

January 2 1993, with a team full of stars and one man in particular lit up Huish Park. Gunners striker Ian Wright showed his quality with a hat-trick as Arsenal won 3-1, with Batty scoring Yeovil's goal from the penalty spot.

The 1993-94 season found Yeovil in the unusual position for a Non-League side of being exempt until the first round of the FA Cup. And their good fortune extended to the draw, when Division Two strugglers Fulham were picked to come to Huish Park. The game was televised on Sky and the Glovers didn't disappoint as Andy Wallace scored an



Yeovil's James Bent shields the ball in the Glovers' 2000/01 encounter against Blackpool

injury time winner. That was Yeovil's 17th league scalp but in the next round they suffered a 2-0 home defeat against Conference rivals Bromsgrove.

There followed a five-year break from FA Cup headlines for the Glovers, with four successive defeats in the fourth qualifying before matters improved in 1998-99. It looked bleak when the Glovers were held to a 1-1 draw by West Auckland in the first round at Huish Park, but they eventually triumphed in a penalty shoot-out in the replay in the north east.

It set up a home tie against Northampton

and the Cobblers became victims number 18 thanks to goals from Steve Thompson and Warren Patmore.

The adventure then ended with a third round replay loss at home to Cardiff and the following season the Glovers were knocked out by another league club in the first round, beaten 4-2 at Reading.

But 2000-01 went down as another classic season in Yeovil's FA Cup archives as they achieved two more giant-killings to reach a round 20 and earned a third round trip to Bolton's Reebok Stadium. In the first round the Glovers hammered Colchester 5-1 at

Huish Park thanks to goals from Warren Patmore (2), Barrington Belgrave, Terry Skiverton and Darren Way.

And at the next stage their 1-0 win at Blackpool was shown live on television, with Nick Crittenden lashing in the only goal of the game. The third round trip to Bolton was a great occasion, highlighted by a strike from Warren Patmore, but ultimately Town bowed out with a 2-1 defeat.

And that was the end of Yeovil's giant-killings as their final two seasons in the Conference saw defeats to Hayes and then Cheltenham end their hopes. ■

VICTOR 'Dickie' Dyke sadly passed away days after a visit by Yeovil Town representatives Adrian Hopper and Martin McConachie. Dickie passed on the following message to his nephew Colin Smith, who has kindly asked us to publish it as a fitting tribute to his uncle. ■

“Two gentlemen called from Yeovil Town Football Club and though it was very nice of them, as I seem to be the last survivor of the Yeovil team that beat Sunderland 60 years ago, I like my lonely life and I don’t really want to be involved in any public celebrations. Sorry Yeovil, no giant-killing this year but please, you must score some goals, Yeovil Town nil is very depressing but good luck. My head is thumping badly tonight and when I get to sleep my memory will not be that I played a game of football, but I am a D-Day veteran who did his best for his country. Best of luck Yeovil Town FC”

Dickie Dyke

Further on.



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