

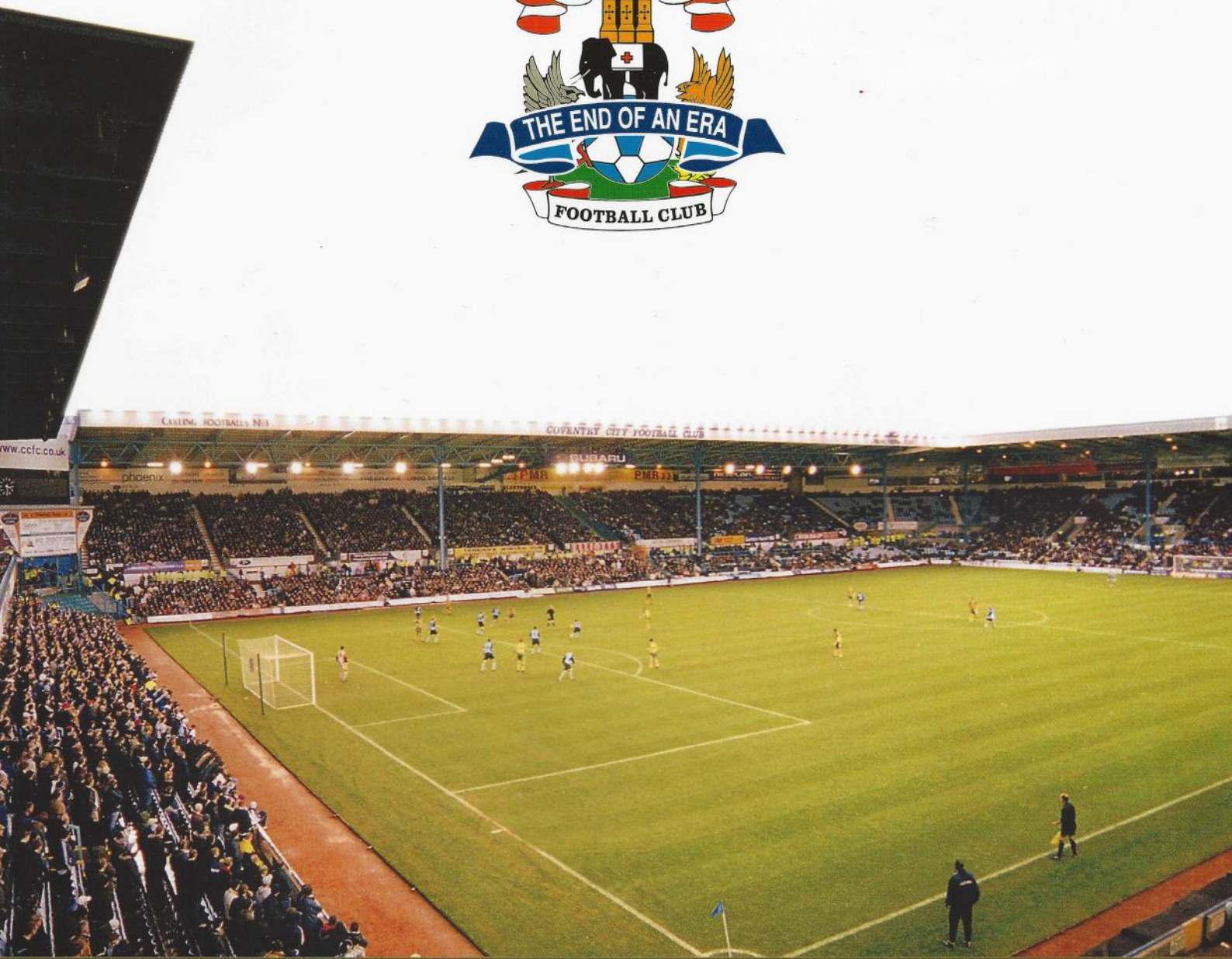


HIGHFIELD ROAD 1899 - 2005

LIMITED EDITION SOUVENIR PROGRAMME MARKING 106 YEARS OF FOOTBALL AT HIGHFIELD ROAD

# COVENTRY CITY

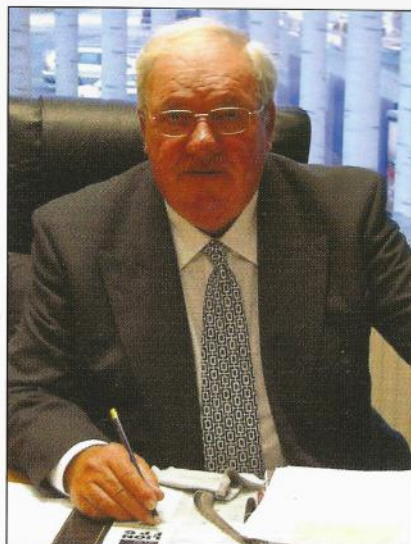
## FOOTBALL CLUB



COVENTRY CITY V DERBY COUNTY  
COCA COLA CHAMPIONSHIP • SAFERDAY APRIL 30 2005 • KICK-OFF 3PM £10



PROVEN THE WORLD OVER



**G**ood afternoon and welcome to the last ever game at Highfield Road. Today's encounter is sure to be an emotional one for everybody connected with Coventry City Football Club – the players, management, staff, board and of course you the fans.

And it will be an emotional day for me as well. Having been involved with the Club for over 10 years, I have seen so much that has made me happy, sad and frustrated and this stadium holds a great deal of memories for me.

Like many people, I will be sad to say goodbye. After all, Highfield Road has been the home of Coventry City Football Club for the last 106 years, during which time so much has happened.

In a way I am not the best person to comment on what has occurred here over the years as I am merely the custodian of the Club at this current moment in time. In years to come, when I am no longer Chairman, Coventry City will hopefully still be a thriving Football Club.

While I have only been involved for a fraction of the time we have spent here I am well aware of the proud heritage of the Club and particularly Highfield Road.

This is where our greatest era took place during the 1960s when we went from the lower reaches of the Football League to the First Division in such a short space of time and remained as a top flight club for 34 years. That was, of course, a record that every Coventry City supporter was rightly proud of and I was extremely honoured to be on the Board during our years as a Premier League outfit.

But perhaps the proudest moment was when I became Chairman in 2002. While I have had to guide us through some tough financial times, the pride I feel at being the Chairman of Coventry City Football Club has never once faded and at times it is that fact alone which has kept me going.

While I will be sad to say goodbye to Highfield Road, the emotion will be mixed with a sense of excitement and anticipation of the times that lie ahead. If I rewind the clock two years to when an eight-hour Council meeting culminated in a

decision to give the Arena the go-ahead, the time since then has absolutely flown by.

I must thank the Councillors who gave the project the green light – without them we may never have had a new stadium to move into. I, like many of you, have had doubts about whether we would ever see our plans come to fruition. After all, it is now seven years since I first became involved in discussions to move to a new stadium and there have been many attempts to bring it to fruition, all of which have ended without success.

I would be lying if I said it has been an easy few years for me, with the finances of the Club, some below par results and the influx of managers, but ultimately if these troublesome times lead to a brighter future, I can be satisfied that I have done my job well.

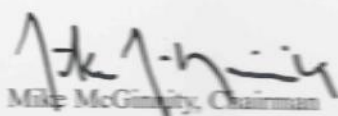
It hasn't all been bad – I have enjoyed many happy times, met a lot of people who I consider to be good friends and have almost always enjoyed my interaction with the fans!

I would like to think I have been as open as I possibly can be with the supporters by holding fans' forums, question and answer sessions via the official website and so on. And while I am aware that you cannot please all of the people all of the time, I hope many of you think I have done a decent job in steering Coventry City towards safer waters.

What is ultimately important to me is the livelihood of Coventry City Football Club and although, at the time of writing, we were uncomfortably close to the relegation zone I hope there is a bright future to look forward to.

Enjoy today's game, let's make it a farewell celebration fitting for this fantastic stadium and I hope you are all as excited about our move to the Arena as I am.

Hopefully, it will coincide with plenty of favourable results on the pitch and that we can stabilise in this division once again before mounting a challenge to return to the Premiership in the not too distant future.

  
Mike McGinley, Chairman

# HIGHFIELD RD

## Contents Page

Coventry City v Derby County Saturday 30 April 3pm Coca Cola Championship



## Pageguide

- 5 Micky Adams
- 7 Roll of Honour 1
- 10-11 Highfield Road - A Potted History
- 14-15 Timeline - In the Beginning 1899-1919
- 18-20 Oggy and Brian
- 24-25 Who's the Greatest
- 26-29 Jim Brown's Great Games
- 30-31 Timeline - 1939-1962
- 32-34 Jimmy Hill
- 36-39 Timeline - The Swinging Sixties
- 42-44 Behind the scenes - The Unsung Heroes
- 41 Micky Gynn
- 46-47 Programmes & Kits through the years
- 48-51 Great Escapes at Highfield Road
- 54-55 George and John
- 59-61 Firsts at Highfield Road
- 62-65 Timeline - 1967 - 1979
- 66-67 Highfield Road Facts and Figures
- 68-71 McSheffrey, Hall & Shaw
- 73 Tommy Hutchison
- 76-77 End of an Era Half Time Quiz
- 79-81 Timeline - 1980 - 1993
- 88-91 The Premiership Years
- 93 Fanzone
- 99 Last Highfield Road Squad Picture
- 106-108 End of an Era Information
- 110-111 Derby County Squad
- 112 Roll of Honour 2
- 114-115 Arena Update
- 118-119 Clockwatch - Wolverhampton Wanderers
- 124-125 Clockwatch - Plymouth Argyle
- 128-129 Match Facts
- 130 The Teams



**Club Honours:** Formed: 1883, **Football League:** Division Two Champions 1966-67, Division Three Champions 1963-1964, Division Three (South) Champions 1935-36, Division Four Runners-up 1958-1959, **FA Cup:** Winners 1987, **FA Youth Cup:** 1987, **Football League Cup:** Semi-Final, 1981, 1990, **European Competitions:** European Fairs Cup 1970-71

**Club Officials:** President Geoffrey Robinson MP, Chairman Mike McGinnity, Chief Executive Graham Hover, Directors Sir Derek Higgs, Michael Jepson, Brenda Price, Joe Elliott, General Manager Neil Bryson, Commercial Director Alan Stevenson, Commercial Manager Raj Athwal, Financial Controller John Street, Ticket Office Manager Dan Walker, Community Manager David Busst, Retail Manager Karen Bennett, Press & PR Manager Jo Lea, Publications Editor David Antill, Stadium Manager Don Blair, Safety Manager Bob Rankin, Team Manager Micky Adams, Assistant Manager Adrian Heath, Reserve Team Manager Alan Cork, Academy Manager Steve Ogrizovic, Medical Officers Dr Moss Gold, Dr Richard Keating, Dr John Batten, Dr Pat Griffin, Club Statistician Jim Brown.

# Micky Adams

Welcome back to Highfield Road for our last ever home game before we move to the Arena in the summer.

Due to print deadlines, I'm writing this before our trip to Plymouth, but I sincerely hope that we have come away from that game with a positive result.

Today we welcome George Burley and his Derby County side. The Rams are right up there in the play-offs after a terrific season and George has done fantastically well in the time he has been there. Last season was a period of transition for them, where they avoided relegation by a point, but with some inspired signings they are now challenging for promotion. We wish them well in that quest - but only after today's game!

I have seen Derby play two or three times this season and the style of football they produce is very attractive. They've got some good players - probably too many to mention - and we know that we're in for a tough encounter this afternoon.

The last time we were at home, we grabbed a point in the dying seconds against Wolves and I believe that had we not got something out of that game, it would have been a travesty. The work ethic - especially when we had a number of players performing out of position - speaks volumes for the squad. The team kept going right until the end and I believe that the commitment to the cause was everything I, along with the fans, wanted and expected.

The atmosphere created by our supporters was again tremendous. I've been delighted with the level of support we have received since I arrived at the Club - home and away - and long may it continue.

We hope that our Championship survival has been secured by the time you are reading this. In a lot of ways, this season would have gone down as a big disappointment to the fans of Coventry City. At the beginning of the campaign, everyone started off with high expectations and were hoping to be like Derby County and in the race for promotion ourselves. But for whatever reason, that's not been the case, but I think we have shown of late that we are moving forward and we'll be trying to take that momentum to the new stadium.

We've improved the squad but I still feel that if we are to be up there challenging, it needs to be improved even further. I need to give credit to the squad since I've arrived at the Club as I think that everyone has had some part to play. I think the one thing this football club needs at the moment is a season or two of stability and an opportunity to move forward.

The summer will be shortly upon us and it's a time when the players can relax, re-charge their batteries and be ready for

whatever comes next season. I'm sure some players will be leaving us and new faces will arrive which is always the case in football clubs, regardless of whether you're successful or unsuccessful - there are always casualties.

Either way, we're expecting a busy time - whether that be re-negotiating with existing players for new contracts or bringing new additions to the squad. Hopefully by the time we report back on the first of July, the squad will be assembled so we can try to get a good pre-season under our belts.

But back to the present day - and there's no doubt that today is an historic and emotional day for everyone connected with Coventry City Football Club. A total of 106 years at Highfield Road is set to come to an end and it would be nice to give the fans something to remember for the final game.

The fans obviously hold Highfield Road very close to their hearts and I believe that when we move to the Arena, it will be a real treat for our supporters. It's set to be a fantastic stadium and I hope everyone takes it to their hearts in the same way they have with Highfield Road and eventually, class it as home. Hopefully, we can also give the fans a team that's worthy of the new stadium.

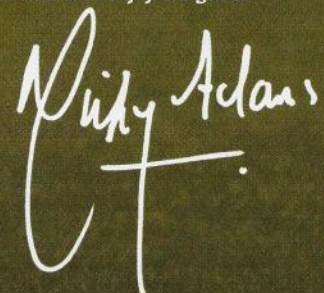
As a former Coventry City player myself, I have very fond memories of Highfield Road. People talk about pressure and life at the bottom of the league and that always seemed to be the case when I was at Coventry! But there were some very good times too. I was fortunate enough to score against Everton on my home debut when as well as clearing one off the line, I remember completely outplaying our own Adrian Heath, who was turning out for the opposition!

Speaking of Inchy, I believe he could only make the bench when we faced Everton again at the end of the 1984-85 season, when we had to win our final three games to ensure we stayed in the top flight. Everton were the league champions at the time and we beat them 4-1. I actually scored in that game too - anyone would think I made a habit of it! That's obviously a special memory for me (although I think Everton had been drinking rather heavily in the days leading up to the game....!)

I was privileged to play with some great team-mates along the way. It's nice to see so many Coventry City legends back here today - some looking fit and healthier than others (!) - but all have played their part in the history and tradition of this great football club.

It's a special day today and we want to go out having given a good account of ourselves, as well as feeling that we've done the place proud. So as much as it's just another game of football for us, let's raise the roof and give Highfield Road the send-off it deserves.

*Keep the faith and enjoy the game.*



So here it is – 106 years of football within these four stands (or one as it was back in 1899) finally come to an end.

When the final whistle blows against Derby County on April 30, 2005 there will be no more matches played at Highfield Road as the Sky Blues prepare for a brand new era at their new state-of-the-art stadium.

In this programme we have attempted to do some justice to the games, players, managers, and of course the supporters who have made Highfield Road such a special place.

Much of what you read in this End of an Era programme comes thanks to the good will of people who have been involved in the Club over the years. A huge thank you to all those who have been interviewed or contributed in some way to our End of an Era programme. Without you this would never have been possible.

Gratitude also goes to the various authors of Coventry City history

books, whose works have proved to be priceless reference tools of the occurrences here over the years. Full acknowledgements are given below.

Finally, many thanks to the huge number of Sky Blues supporters who have shown interest in this project since the very beginning – whether you've pledged support via the Roll of Honour, contributed to our Fanzone or memories pages or have been kind enough to buy a copy.

We hope you enjoy what you see here and if so, keep your eyes peeled for a similar programme for our first game at the Arena this summer.

More importantly, we hope you enjoy this last ever game at Highfield Road and let's hope for one last Sky Blues victory so we can bid farewell to this wonderful stadium in style.

**Play up Sky Blues!**

From Dave and Carl,  
CCFC Publications Team

## Programme acknowledgements

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*Coventry City, the Elite Era: A complete Record*; Jim Brown, *An Illustrated History of Coventry City*; Jim Brown, *Coventry City, The Complete History of the Club*; Neville Foulger, *Coventry City: A Complete Record*; Rod Dean with David Brassington, Jim Brown and Don Chalk., *Singers to Sky Blues, the Story of Coventry City Football Club*; David Brassington, Rod Dean and Don Chalk, *The Sky Blues: The Story of Coventry City Football Club*; Derek Henderson, *The Coventry City Football Book*; Derek Henderson, *Coventry City Footballers 1908 – 1993*; Martin and Paul O'Connor

To celebrate the final ever game at Highfield Road, supporters were invited to place their names in a Roll of Honour, which is featured on two pages in this programme. Many thanks to all those who pledged their support to the Club by entering the Roll of Honour.

CHARLES HARLOCK  
THOMAS BURGESS  
DAVID JOHN PRICE  
ANDREW HAYNES  
DAVID MYNARD  
HELEN MYNARD  
LYNNE MYNARD  
ADY STEANE  
RICHARD TURNER  
MARK SAVAGE  
BILLY BIGLEY  
TERRY BIGLEY  
STUART SPILLER  
PAULA CLOSE  
ROBERT CLOSE  
NANCY LANG  
FRED READER  
FRANK BACK  
RON BACK  
PAUL BACK  
SIMON BACK  
KEVIN HOMER  
DAVID R JOHNSTON  
BARRY IRELAND  
SIMON YOUNG  
ADRIAN HAMLIN  
TONY CURRIER  
JASON CURRIER  
JONATHAN LACKENBY  
MICHAEL JOHN HALL  
PAUL BARTON  
CHRIS LAMB  
JOHN LAMB  
BARRY ASKEW  
KATIE McDONALD  
IAN BERRY  
ADAM WARD  
RUSSELL ELEY  
ADAM SMITH  
THERESA LAYFIELD  
ADAM LAYFIELD  
PAUL HADLAND  
PAT RAYBOULD  
THE SHIPTONS  
BEN CASSEY  
STEVE SHARRATT  
LISA SHARRATT  
BRUCE RAYBOULD  
LES RAYBOULD  
NICHOLAS PETTY  
NIGEL GRIFFIN  
DALE HORSLEY  
DANIEL HORSLEY  
PAULINE EAST  
JASON EAST  
MATTHEW MIDDLETON  
DAVID W ARCHER  
HITASH PATEL  
STEVEN & BEN KILBY  
EDWARDS FAMILY  
STEVE SOUTH  
KARL SOUTH  
ASHLEY SOUTH  
PAT MOYNIHAN  
MARK SORBIE  
ALAN WARD  
DAVE PERKINS  
DANIEL PERKINS  
KEN HANCOCK  
ROY C REYNOLDS  
JONESY  
JOHN LEEKEY  
HANNAH WILMSHURST  
CHRIS WILMSHURST  
MICHAEL JONES  
ANDREW JONES  
KIERON BYRNE  
CURTIS JOHNS  
KAREN RICE  
IAN SENIOR

## Coventry City Supporters' Roll of Honour

Highfield Road 1899 - 2005

CONRAD PEARCE  
MICHAEL MARTIN BAKER  
MARTIN BAKER  
BAKER FAMILY, MK  
TERRY HORTON  
THOMAS SHINETON  
JAMES SHINETON  
JOKERS CORNER  
IAN MACINTYRE  
BOB EALES  
GRAHAM WATKINS  
JONATHAN STRANGE  
SIMON LOVEITT  
YVONNE PERKS  
ROSS LOVEITT  
RICHARD BULLARD  
SANDRA BULLARD  
DOROTHY BULLARD  
MIKE YOUNG  
BRUCE YOUNG  
CARL SPRASON  
CRAIG SPRASON  
ANDREW SHIPWAY  
STEVEN LEATHLEY  
BRYAN COGLEY  
ANDY COGLEY  
CHRIS DORAN  
CHRIS MEESON  
SUSAN POUNTNEY  
GRAHAM POUNTNEY  
REG POUNTNEY  
GARY BARNES  
BRYAN PARNELL  
JONATHAN COUSINS  
PAUL N THOMPSON  
JASON CURTIS  
DARREN SMITH  
STEVE McKENNA  
ROB JENKINS  
NIGEL TUDGE  
DAVID MANN  
MATT DEAN  
HARRY GARNER 1909-96  
DENNIS HALL  
REGINALD AUBREY WOOD  
JIM CHASE  
IAN CHASE  
JIMMY CHASE  
PETER R HALLAM  
CALLUM WHITEHOUSE  
BRADLEY WHITEHOUSE  
KEN PAYNE  
MICHAEL SADLER  
JILL BUSBY  
LESLEY LEWIS  
BALDIP SINGH  
RICHARD WOODFIELD  
JOHN WOODFIELD  
ROB THACKER  
TREVOR ANKERS  
SIMON BONFIELD  
GEOFF NORMAN  
RICHARD PARKES  
SIMON MILES  
ANNA MILES  
LEE NEAL  
KERRY REED  
SHAUN WESTON  
LIONEL BIRD  
JONATHAN BIRD  
HERBERT KENDALL  
REECE SUDDICK  
HARVEY SUDDICK  
OWEN SUDDICK  
KEITH LENTON  
MATHEW LANE  
PATRICK SWEENEY  
RICH SWEENEY  
SEAN RYAN  
JOCK McCANN

BARRY O'SULLIVAN  
BRIAN WARD  
DAVID TURNER  
PAUL TURNER  
DOMINIC MOTTRAM  
JONATHAN MOTTRAM  
PAUL OWEN  
ANTHONY SMITH  
ASHLEY MALYON  
MARC MALYON  
GRAHAM ARCHER  
SETH EDWARD ARCHER  
STEPHEN GROVES  
JORDAN GROVES  
JAMIE JEFFS  
LIAM BROWNE  
SAM BRAKES  
MATTHEW HARES  
IAN HARES  
STEVEN WILSON  
JACK LONG  
TONY LAWS  
JACK LAWS  
ROBERT SAVEKER  
MARTIN NOBLE  
EDDIE NOBLE  
NEIL PRESTIDGE  
DAVID HOWE  
CHRIS HOWE  
DAVID HAMMOND  
TIMOTHY PANTER  
RAY PHIPKIN  
PATRICK DENENY  
DON DENENY  
ADRIAN SHELSWELL  
MICHAEL HINTON  
JOHN BERRY  
SAMANTHA YORK  
PAUL WESTLAKE  
LAURENCE KILPATRICK  
WILLIAM INGLIS  
DAVID M GOLDER  
ROY FREEMAN  
ALEC SHRIMPTON  
DAVE SHRIMPTON  
JOHN G BREEN  
MURC WEBB  
DAVID WEBB  
HARRY WEBB  
ADRIAN WHEELER  
CHRISTINE WHEELER  
RICHARD H POWELL  
IVAN ORTON  
SARAH LEA  
ROGER LEA  
PAUL SEDDON  
MANDY SEDDON  
MIKE KELLY I.O.M  
LEWIS FREWIN  
NEIL SHEFFIELD  
FRED COLLINS  
JIM BROWN  
MARIA GORMLEY  
MARGARET WHITEHOUSE  
HARRY WHITEHOUSE  
JOHN HURLEY  
JOHN HOBLEY  
MR KEITH PEARCE  
MRS CAROL PEARCE  
MR WAYNE PEARCE  
TONY JONES  
PETE HANCOCK  
LIAM RICHARDSON  
WILLIAM RICHARDSON  
STEVE COWELL  
NATHAN REAY  
SIMON RICHARDS  
PETER WILES  
JOHN COMER  
PAUL DUNN  
SAM MULKEIRINS  
LAURA RITCHIE  
ROBERT RITCHIE  
RICHARD STEVENSON  
MR PETER ANDREW BRIERLEY  
DANNY HOPKINS  
BERNARD HOLT  
GRAHAM LAW  
CAMERON WATSON  
JENNIFER WATSON

# Graham Hover

Coventry City's Chief Executive Graham Hover is one of the Club's longest serving members of staff, having joined in 1984 as Secretary. Here he talks us through 21 years of memories and what he hopes the move to the Arena might hold.

"This afternoon we will play our final game at Highfield Road and while it will be an emotional day for me having worked here for so long, our move to the Arena heralds a bright new future for Coventry City Football Club.

I have been lucky enough to spend 21 years working for the Sky Blues and being involved in football is a privilege, there is no doubt about it. There have been a lot of stressful times and I can say there have been times when it's nearly got the better of me, but most people would give their right arm to be involved in this sport.

I would like to think I have given a lot to the Club. I spend seven days a week thinking about this place. If I'm not here, it's still on my mind and it's my life. You can't switch off and if you're needed to help with something you have to be there.

I have many memories of my time here most of which are of the good occasions. I started here in February 1984 which was the season when we played Norwich on the last day of the season and had we not won we would have gone down. I remember Robert Rosario hit the post in the last few minutes and it bounced back into Perry Suckling's arms, which perhaps set the scene for many of the years ahead.

From a playing point-of-view, the one game that probably stands out the most was the 5-4 League Cup win over Nottingham Forest in 1990, which also happened to be Terry Butcher's first match as player-manager.

Matches like that are what make football the great game it is and another of my personal favourite memories is when we played Chelsea in the 1996/97 season and they turned up to play in their blue strip which clashed with ours. We told them that we could get them an alternative kit and somebody had to go down to the training ground to bring our away strip back to the stadium. When it arrived they expected us to put it on but we wouldn't wear it.



Frank Leboeuf, shortly before his tantrum

They turned up in the wrong colours so they were going to have to wear our red and black checked away strip, which didn't go down very well. They covered up the badges with tape but they were totally deflated about having to wear our away kit and we beat them 3-1 thanks to goals from Dublin, Williams and Whelan. I remember at the end of the game Frank Leboeuf took his shirt off and chucked it on the ground in front of the Main Stand. It showed world class senior players who couldn't handle a situation like that.

Another memory revolves around our old dugouts in the Main Stand which were in the same place they are now but were a lot different back then. You used to have to go up stairs to get into them and you looked out as if you were bird watching – it was like peeking through a hatch. I think about them now and imagine the likes of Alex Ferguson or Jose Mourinho having to sit there and watch a game like that! I don't think they'd be too happy. You would find no other club in the country with dugouts like that.



I have been lucky enough to spend many happy years here while Coventry City were in the top flight but in all honesty, for many of those years we were punching above our weight. That is by no means a bad thing but one of the biggest problems is that the Club spent many a year without success and we were regarded by many as just making the numbers up. Maybe we would have been better off being a "yo-yo" club, thus giving the fans some more good times, but you can't re-write the history books!

Our move to the Arena is not just about moving to a new stadium but improving facilities and moving forward. The Arena is not just a football stadium, it's got so many different aspects to it, and it gives us the chance to put Coventry on the map, not just the football club.



City's "special" dug-outs visible behind David Smith

I'll be sad when we leave here, we all will be but you have to think forward. It's like everything in life, if you stand still you'll get left behind. We've got an option to be able to re-acquire 50% of the Arena Company and that's when we hope to generate additional revenues from other opportunities than football alone. Our gates currently do not allow us to compete financially but it has been recognised that any team moving into a new stadium gets an increase in capacity in its first year there. To maintain that increase after the first year, it is down to results and there is no reason why we can't do that.

We would be dreaming if we thought we were going to get 32,000 fans week in, week out but you have to have dreams and we chose that capacity for a reason – we feel that if we get back to the Premier League, we could sustain a gate of that magnitude in a brand new facility.

In Micky Adams I think we have the right man in charge to improve our fortunes on the pitch. Micky has proved successful at lower level clubs and taken Leicester City into the Premier League which is obviously what we want him to do here. Being involved with Coventry City previously, he understands the Club, he's got an affiliation and the fans can associate with him. In my mind there is no reason at all why he can't be the right person to take us where we want to go.

Hopefully, what we will get is a sustained period of stability because what we have had over the last three or four years is too much chopping and changing which has not been good for the Club. The fans wanted Micky, as did the Board, and hopefully now we can all be patient because success doesn't always come straight away.

I hope you enjoy this afternoon's match – I know I will and I look forward to enjoying this fantastic stadium for one last time on a matchday, when it has an extra special atmosphere. I also look forward to seeing as many of you at the Arena from the start of next season, when hopefully a whole new Sky Blues revolution will unfold."

# Highfield Road

## A Potted History

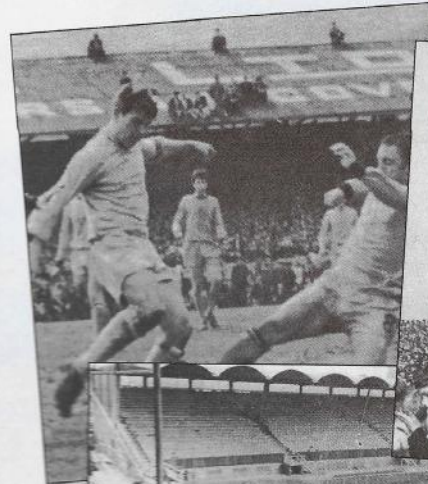
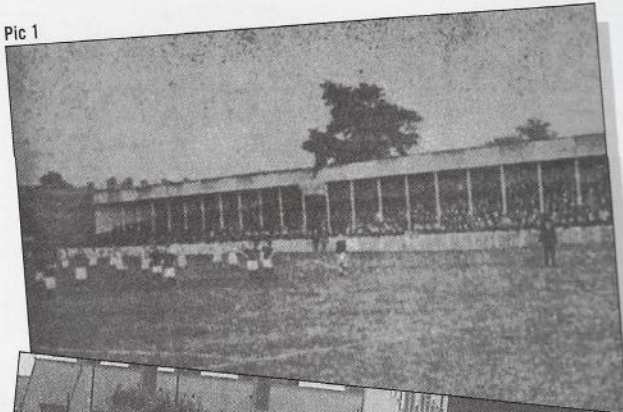


As you take your final look around Highfield Road you might think that the old stadium is not looking too bad for 106-years-old.

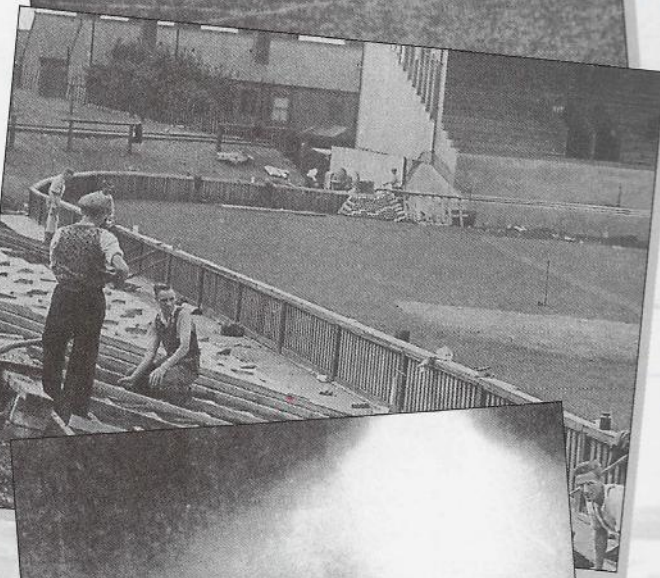
This is due mainly to the fact that despite surviving for over a century, and in the process two World Wars and a huge fire, the ground we have called home for all these years has been redeveloped on a regular basis, most recently in 1993 when the old Spion Kop became the East Stand.

Here we take a look at the developments that have taken place over the years, all of which have contributed towards Highfield Road being the stadium it is today.

Pic 1



Pic 4



Pic 2



Pic 3



Pic 5

**1899: (pic 1)** Highfield Road Stadium opens its doors after Coventry City and its predecessor Singers played at two other grounds in close proximity. The first stand was built by a goal to nil. **1910:** New barrel-roofed stand built on the Thackall Street side of stadium for £1,200. **1922:** The Spion Kop on the Swan Lane end was built-up using the old stand for 11,000 spectators. **1936: (pic 2)** Original 1899 stand demolished, making way for new Main Stand at a cost of £14,000. In September the Club purchased the freehold of the Main Stand taking capacity up to 40,000. **1953: (pic 3)** Floodlights installed and first used for friendly against Queen of the South. **1957:** Improved floodlights installed on the Terrace with the West Stand on the top. **1968: (pic 5)** On March 6 the Main Stand is gutted by fire and all the Club records are destroyed along with the Division One records. **1967: (pic 4)** A record crowd of 51,455 which still stands today. **1973:** Sky Blue Stand roof replaced. **1981: (pic 6)** Highfield Road becomes England's first all-seater stadium. 8,000 extra seats are installed at a cost of £1.5 million. **1982:** The Football Association insists all top division stadia must be all-seater by 1994 following the Hillsborough Disaster. **1993: (pic 7)** Work on new East Stand begins and is completed for a cost of £7 million. **Present Day: (pic 8)** Views of how the stadium looks today, an all seater stadium with maximum capacity of 23,613.



Pic 6



Pic 7

Pic 8



**HIGHFIELD RD**

~ MEMORY ~

**John Motson, BBC Commentator**

"It's not necessarily pro-Coventry but the Highfield Road memory that stands out for me is when Clive Allen had that goal ruled out when it hit the stanchion in a game in 1980. It was against Crystal Palace and I was commentating on the match. Allen scored but I think Coventry won and the cameras clearly showed that the ball hit the back stanchion and came out so fast that the referee didn't know whether it was a goal. As a result of that, Jimmy Hill, who was then Chairman, had the stanchions removed from the goal nets and had them made in a different way. A pro-Coventry memory is when Robbie Keane made his debut for Coventry against Derby and I was commentating on that game too. He scored two goals and I remember it because he is one of my favourite players in the game at the moment. My first game with the BBC here would have been in the 1971/1972 season when Joe Mercer and Gordon Milne were joint managers. That's how far back I go with Highfield Road. I went right through the era when Jimmy Hill was Chairman and did various things with the kit and the stadium. I go back quite a long way and it is a stadium I am very fond of."



the Main Stand currently sits – held 2,000 spectators and City's first game was held on September 9 in front of over 3,000 fans who saw Coventry beat Shrewsbury  
 concrete from when the city's tram track was re-laid. **1927:** West Terrace covered by a roof purchased from Twickenham Rugby ground for £2,200, providing cover for  
 ground from the Mercers' Company for £20,000. **1938:** Standing extension to the Kop, otherwise known as the Crows Nest was added. **1939:** Canopy extension built onto  
 cost of £15,000, paid for by The Supporters' Club. **1963:** Thackhall Street Stand replaced piece by piece using pre-fabricated units and a distinctive vaulted roof,  
 attends the game against Wolves to celebrate promotion to Division One. During the close season the old Covered End roof is demolished to be replaced by the West  
 Championship trophy. The stand was rebuilt almost immediately at a cost of £150,000 and was ready for the start of the 1968/69 season which was only delayed by two  
 capacity is reduced from 36,500 to 20,600 as a result. **1985:** Seats are ripped out of Kop and East-end is partially rebuilt to allow a better view. **1990:** Taylor Report  
 1993/1994 season at a cost of £4.3 million. New roofs on Main Stand and Sky Blue Stand (now the North Stand) take cost of redevelopment during the Nineties to over



	Years	Apps	Goals	Selected
<b>Dave Bennett</b>	83 - 89	207	35	George Curtis
Brian Borrows	85 - 97	488	13	Tommy Hutchison
<b>Dave Busst</b>	93 - 96	50	5	Dion Dublin
Willie Carr	67 - 75	290	37	Ernie Hunt
<b>Chris Cattlin</b>	68 - 76	239	0	Tommy Hutchison
Dave Clements	65 - 71	257	30	George Curtis
<b>Mick Coop</b>	66 - 81	492	22	Ronnie Rees
Dion Dublin	94 - 98	171	71	Cyrille Regis
<b>Mick Ferguson</b>	74 - 84	149	57	Ernie Hunt
Ian Gibson	66 - 70	104	15	Ronnie Rees
<b>Terry Gibson</b>	83 - 86	113	52	Les Sealey
Bill Glazier	64 - 75	395	0	Tommy Hutchison
<b>Bobby Gould</b>	63 - 68	89	42	Reg Matthews
<i>Manager 83-84, 92-94</i>				
Micky Gynn	83 - 93	291	45	Terry Gibson
<b>Keith Houchen</b>	86 - 89	66	12	Tommy Hutchison
Darren Huckerby	96 - 99	109	34	Steve Ogrizovic
<b>George Hudson</b>	63 - 66	129	75	George Curtis
Willie Humphries	61-65	126	24	Ronnie Rees
<b>Ernie Hunt</b>	67 - 74	168	50	Willie Carr
Tommy Hutchison	72 - 81	355	30	Willie Carr
<b>Robbie Keane</b>	99 - 00	34	12	Gordon Strachan
Mick Kearns	57 - 68	385	16	George Hudson
<b>Brian Kilcline</b>	84 - 91	213	35	Tommy Hutchison
Chris Kirkland	00 - 01	29	0	Steve Ogrizovic
<b>Gary McAllister</b>	96 - 03	200	38	Robbie Keane
<i>Manager 02 - 04</i>				
Lloyd McGrath	83 - 91	258	5	Cyrille Regis
<b>Ernie Machin</b>	62 - 72	288	39	Willie Carr
Dennis Mortimer	69 - 76	215	10	Tommy Hutchison
<b>Steve Ogrizovic</b>	84 - 00	601	1	Tommy Hutchison
Trevor Peake	83 - 91	334	7	Steve Ogrizovic
<b>David Philips</b>	86 - 89	123	11	Terry Yorath
Mick Quinn	92 - 94	68	26	Brian Borrows
<b>Cyrille Regis</b>	84 - 91	281	62	Trevor Peake
Richard Shaw	95 - 05	330+	1	Roland Nilsson
<b>John Sillett</b>	61 - 66	128	2	George Hudson
<i>Manager 87 - 90</i>				
David Speedie	87 - 91	145	35	Micky Gynn
<b>Colin Stein</b>	72 - 75	98	29	Tommy Hutchison
Gordon Strachan	95 - 97	33	0	Steve Ogrizovic
<i>Manager 96 - 01</i>				
<b>Danny Thomas</b>	79 - 83	130	6	Tommy Hutchison
Garry Thompson	78 - 83	158	49	Tommy Hutchison

## Who Are The Players' Favourite Players?

It's quite common for fans to be asked who their favourite Sky Blues player of all time is. On pages 24 and 25 of this programme we reveal the results of the official Coventry City poll which was run with supporters earlier in the season.

Here, regular matchday programme contributor Alan Mynard takes a new spin on the theme, by asking 40 Sky Blues legends who they consider to be the best City player of all time.

### 40 City heroes of the last 40 years were asked:

Which Coventry City player, past or present, would you most like to see play again at Highfield Road, at their peak?

To the left shows how they answered.

## The voting:

There were some nostalgic votes-Terry Gibson for his old pal Les Sealey, David Philip for the memory of his first televised game on his return from Holland and seeing Terry Yorath captaining City magnificently and Bobby Gould remembering his dad sitting him on the wall behind the great Reg Matthews's goal. Robbie Keane remembered Gordon Strachan being brilliant in training and wishing he'd seen him at his best and Darren Huckerby voted for Oggy because he said there were seasons when he was the difference between relegation and staying in the Premiership. David Speedie said Micky Gynn was a most under rated player, John Sillett said George Hudson had everything you'd want in a striker and generally there was great respect for fellow pros-Richard Shaw, for example, said Roland Nilsson was a class player and a true professional and he also rated Robbie Keane extremely highly.

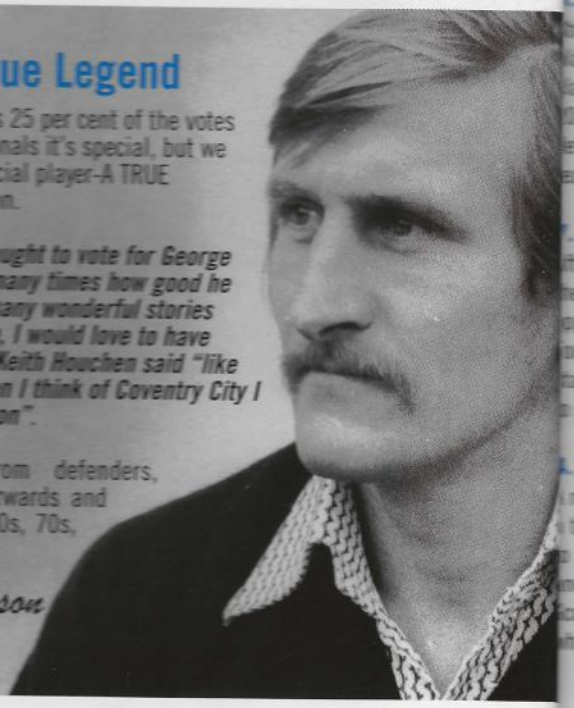
### A True Sky Blue Legend

When one player receives 25 per cent of the votes from his fellow professionals it's special, but we ARE talking about a special player-A TRUE LEGEND Tommy Hutchison.

Steve Ogrizovic said "I ought to vote for George Curtis as he's told me many times how good he was but I've heard so many wonderful stories about Tommy Hutchison, I would love to have seen him at his best". Keith Houchen said "like many other people, when I think of Coventry City I think of Tommy Hutchison".

Tommy got votes from defenders, midfield players and forwards and from players from the 60s, 70s, 80s and 90s.

*Tommy Hutchison*





# XI of the best

## 1. Steve Ogrizovic

The goalkeeping legend was the clear frontrunner for the spot between the sticks in our ultimate Sky Blues XI. Our leading appearance maker of all time received votes from former teammates Trevor Peake, Gordon Strachan, Darren Huckerby and his protégé Chris Kirkland. Two other keepers – Les Sealey and Reg Matthews – earned a vote apiece but neither come close to touching Oggy who was our saviour on so many occasions.

## 2. Brian Borrows

Bugsy nicks the right back slot having received one vote from former teammate and fellow scouser Mick Quinn. The two played together for three seasons in the Sixties and once both scored a brace in the same game – a 5-1 thrashing of Liverpool at Highfield Road. Borrows was a true servant to the Sky Blues, making over 400 appearances during 12 years with the Club.

## 3. George Curtis

Coventry City's very own Captain Fantastic takes one of the centre half berths having received a couple of votes from ex-teammates David Clements and George Hudson and one from a player he managed in 1986/87, Dave Bennett. Our second highest appearance maker of all time, Curtis was a supremely strong defender and his no-nonsense attitude drove the team from the Third Division to the First in the space of five years during the Sixties.

## 4. Trevor Peake

Everybody who ever played in the same team as Peakey says he was a vastly under-rated player who could have represented England and he takes the other centre back spot thanks to one vote from Eighties teammate Cyrille Regis. A consummate professional who rarely put a foot wrong, Peake was a rock at the back during over 300 appearances between 1983 and 1991.

## 5. Roland Nilsson

Strictly speaking a right back, but as no left-backs were named by the 40 players asked, Nilsson would be the most likely candidate to fill in here. A highly classy performer who went on to manage the Sky Blues for the majority of the 2001/2002 season, Nilsson was voted for by a man who played alongside him in defence, Richard Shaw, who also said Robbie Keane was inspirational during his year with City.

## 6. Ronnie Rees

After being drafted into the team as a raw 18-year-old by Jimmy Hill, Rees made the left wing his own between 1962 and 1968, although he is played on the opposite flank in this team to accommodate the favourite of so many players, Tommy Hutchison, in his more favoured position. What he lacked in physical stature he more than made up for in pace and skill and his wide play contributed to so many of the goals for the likes of Terry Bly, George Hudson and Bobby Gould.

## 7. Willie Carr

A real livewire of the engine room during the late Sixties and Seventies, Carr was a tireless midfielder whose workrate allowed the more skilful players around him to shine. This is perfectly demonstrated by the fact that both Tommy Hutchison and Ernie Hunt voted for him along with midfield hardman Ernie Machin. The Scottish international is best remembered for his contribution to the Donkey Kick which was of course scored by...

## 8. Ernie Hunt

Hunt was a fans' favourite and his exuberant style of play always endeared him to the crowd. A scorer of some vital goals, he added a touch of class to the centre of midfield during the 1960s and 1970s and his contribution was recognised by a striker from that era, Mick Ferguson, along with Willie Carr.

## 11. Tommy Hutchison

Surely so many players and fans cannot be wrong about just how good a player Tommy Hutchison was. As well as earning the vote of the supporters in this programme, Hutch was voted for by a remarkable 10 of the 40 players involved in this poll and his legacy lives on to this day. Although he was voted for by three teammates, remarkably enough seven of his admirers did not play alongside him but still consider him to be a massively influential performer.

## 9. Cyrille Regis

The competition for the two places up front was extremely tight but Regis secured his spot thanks to votes from teammate Lloyd McGrath and a man who followed in his footsteps, Dion Dublin, who would presumably have loved to have played alongside him. After a couple of seasons of settling in, Regis continually improved for the Sky Blues and has all the attributes required of a top striker as did...

## 10. George Hudson

A star of the Sixties, Hudson was voted for by John Sillett and Mick Kearns, and it is not hard to see why. His strike rate of 75 goals in 129 games is second only to the legendary Clattie Bourton in the all-time stakes and he is considered by many to be the most complete striker who has ever represented the Club, combining skill and power with clinical accuracy in front of goal.

## PLAYERS' GREATEST EVER TEAM

If we use the votes to select a team based on the most votes for each position it would look like this, moving Roland Nilsson across to left back.





# in the **Beginning** 1899-1919

**C**oventry City, or Singers Football Club as it was previously known, played in two locations in close proximity to Highfield Road before our current ground opened its doors in 1899.

Singers were formed in October 1883 by William Stanley and the team was made up of workers from the local cycle works in Hillfields who played on a pitch in Dowels Field, which was located where Binley Road and St George's Road now meet.

That pitch was approximately a quarter of a mile from where Highfield Road is located and the next move was one step nearer to home. In 1887 Singers began playing their games on a pitch between Paynes Lane and Swan Lane called the Stoke Road Ground.

This had the added advantage of being enclosed by fences and hedgerows, thus allowing the powers-that-be to start charging entry for spectators. As the area around the pitch expanded minor alterations were required, until in 1899, when developments on King Richard Street led to construction on the ground, forcing a third and final move.

A year beforehand Singers were renamed Coventry City FC, as the club began to transform into the entity it has become today. Their new playing surface lay between Swan Lane and Nichols Street – previously owned by the Craven Cricket Club – took its name from the only street leading to it at the time, Highfield Road.

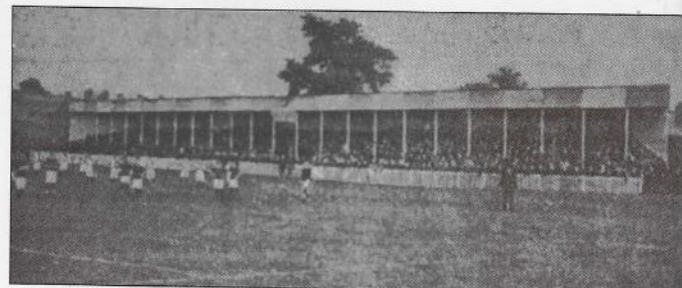


A picture of the 1904/1905 Coventry City Football Team, made up mainly of workers from the local cycle factory

## 1899-1900 Birth of a Stadium

Work totalling £100 began on the six-and-a-half acre site early in 1899, with a row of elms being removed before the playing surface was laid. A grandstand was erected capable of holding 2,000 spectators and this went on to be known as the John Bull Stand – the very first at Highfield Road – which would last for the next 37 years.

The first game at Highfield Road was against Shrewsbury Town in the Birmingham and District League as City won 1-0 in front of a crowd of approximately 3,000 but that was as good as it got in the first season, which was defined by pay disputes between the players and committee and some shocking results.



The John Bull Stand could hold up to 2000 supporters



Record gate receipts from the Everton game enabled the club to build a new stand, until 54 years later it was replaced by the Sky Blue Stand



## 1901-1908 Building from the bottom

The second season was all about rectifying the damage that had been done but things grew progressively worse and the club struggled through rumours of gross mismanagement up until 1905 when the old Board was taken over by a consortium led by Fred Lee and former player Joe Beaman.

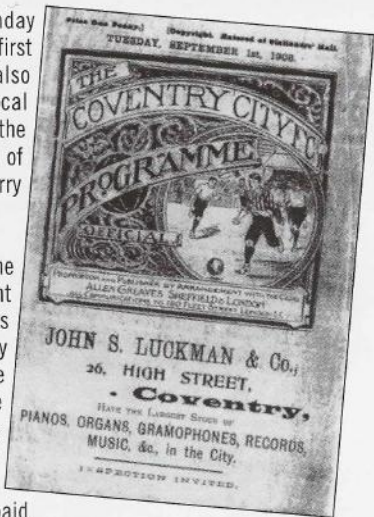


Fred Lee led the consortium that took over the club and turned its fortunes

New players were recruited and home form took a significant turn for the better, with the new look City winning their first two games of the season at Highfield Road. They went on to finish in eleventh place and the crowds – which had dipped to as low as 200 – began to return taking the average attendance up to 4,500 by 1907/08, with a record home support of 10,000 for the FA Cup tie against Crystal Palace. And the fans were treated to a fine league season as well as City finished fourth scoring 97 goals. 1907 was also the year that Coventry City became a registered limited company and they were on the way to brighter times.



a scoreboard, while matchday programmes were introduced for the first time. As a result admission also increased to 6d. A year later local tobacco magnate David Cooke joined the Board of Directors and his injection of cash allowed player-manager Harry Buckle to strengthen his squad.



By now City had acquired the nickname of the Bantams which would stick right up until the 1960s and the side was going from strength to strength and by 1909/10 were considered genuine title contenders. They also reached the quarter finals of the FA Cup, facing Everton who offered to switch the tie to Goodison Park. City officials declined the offer and 19,095 fans paid record receipts of over £1,000 which went towards building a new barrel-roofed stand which lasted until 1964. Coventry had also beaten two Division One teams on the way to the quarters - Preston 2-1 and Nottingham Forest 3-1.

The record attendance was broken again in 1912/13 campaign, once again in the FA Cup – a competition that the Bantams were regularly progressing quite far in. After holding Manchester United 1-1 at Old Trafford 20,042 came along to Highfield Road for the replay which ended in a 2-1 defeat.

## 1913-1919 Back to square one

The following season saw the return of City's financial woes as the travelling costs required in the Southern League began to cripple the Club. Gates fell to around 2,000 and an application to switch to the Central League was rejected. The Bantams were in mass debt and had no squad to speak of once World War I broke out in 1914.

This led to the cancellation of most sports but football carried on amidst heavy criticism, although the fact that many of City's players had been called up for duty meant that fielding a team was far from easy. No football was played at Highfield Road from 1915 onwards but the costs of upkeep remained and two years later the Club was, once again, extremely close to going under. David Cooke came to the rescue and paid off all the debts and in August 1918 Coventry entered the Midland Section of the Football League which contained five First Division clubs and it did not take long for the Bantams to settle among the country's elite.

The lack of football during the War had led to a huge demand for the sport and gates of well over 10,000 were now common, rather than one-offs, and in March 1919 Coventry City were elected a member of the Football League for the first time.

## 1908-1913 Let the good times roll



The team of the 1909/10 season

In 1908 Coventry were elevated to the Southern League – at the time only just outside the Football League – and improvements to Highfield Road were required as a result. New dressing rooms were constructed in a brand new stand, along with



### ~ MEMORY ~

**Robbie Keane, Player 1999 - 2000**

"I would have to say that beating Aston Villa in the Midlands derby was one of the biggest memories for me as a player. Because of the rivalry, the atmosphere and the importance to the club and fans it was the best feeling to score the winner past David James. I'll never forget the celebration of the Cov fans that day. It was very special."



# The Arena i

**A new era is about to dawn on Coventry when the £113 million Arena opens in just THREE months time.**

The multi-purpose complex is one of the most eagerly anticipated developments built in the city in recent years and will be a landmark building the region can be proud of.

As well as the new home of the Sky Blues with its 32,000-seater stadium, the Arena will include a 6,000-sq metre exhibition and events hall capable of holding 8,000 people for concerts.

It will also include a business centre, extensive office space, overnight accommodation, a fitness suite, community facilities and a 1,000-seater banqueting suite - which will be the largest column-free conference and banqueting space in the Midlands.

The Isle of Capri, based in Biloxi, Mississippi, is committed to the development and is hoping to open next year one of the country's first 'resort casinos' including restaurants, bars and live entertainment.

For the last 18-months contractor Laing O'Rourke has been building the impressive Arena and has used more than 7,000 tonnes of steel and 30,000 cubic metres of concrete.

The contractor, which also built the Millennium Stadium and City of Manchester Stadium, has also moved more than 20,000 cubic metres of earth and during the height of

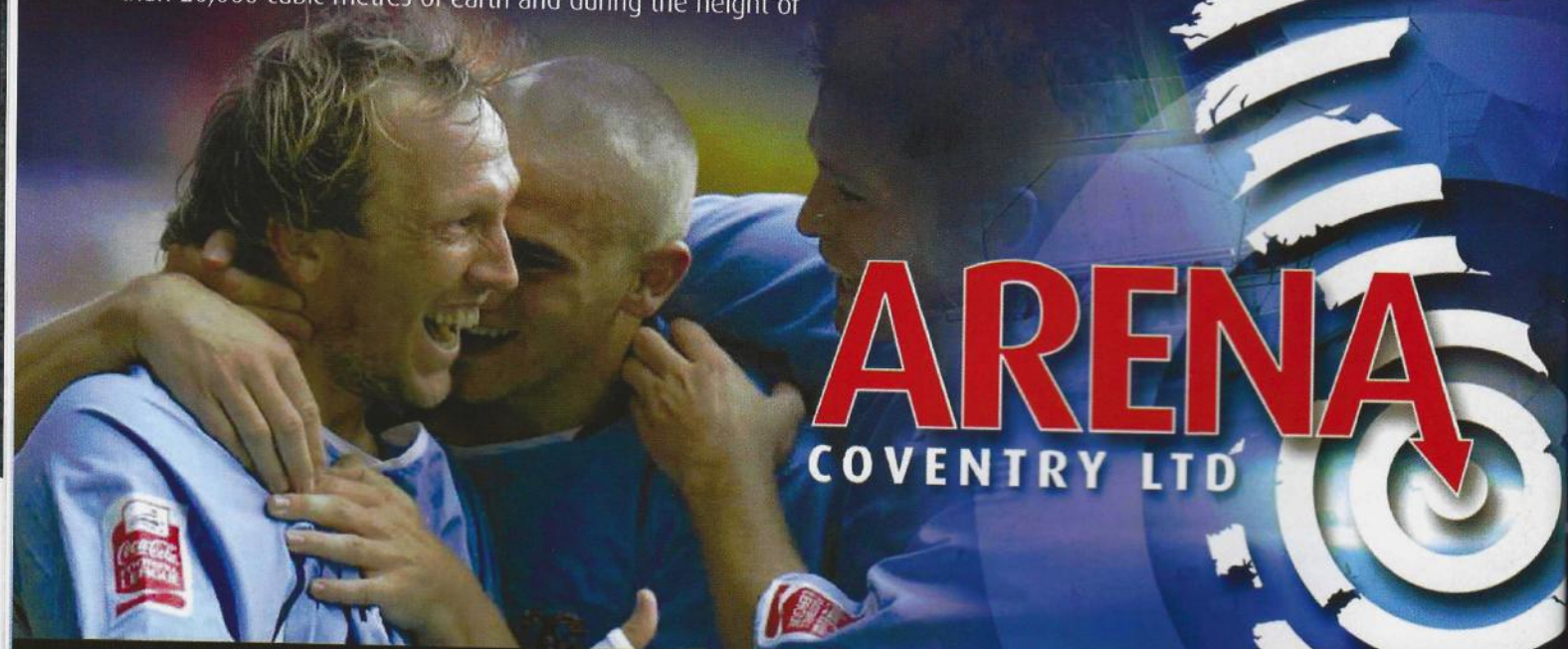
construction had more than 300 workers on site per day. Situated at the heart of the country as well as the motorway network, the Arena is less than 30 minutes away from two international airports and will prove to be a popular venue throughout the year.

As well as football, there are plans to attract other sports to the development such as rugby, snooker, tennis and boxing. The state-of-the-art facilities will mean it is also the perfect venue for exhibitions and conferences of all sizes.

The Arena will be managed by Arena Coventry Ltd (ACL), a joint venture company between Coventry City Council and the Higgs Charity.

Paul Fletcher, Chief Executive of ACL, said: "Everyone can already see what an exceptional building the Arena is and this multi-purpose facility will be unique in the region - a real feather in the cap."

"It has attracted investment to the city and has helped to regenerate the north of Coventry. The opening of the Arena will herald a new era and will create a wonderful facility we will all be proud of."



Arena Coventry Ltd

The Enterprise Centre, Coventry University Technology Park, Puma Way, Coventry CV1 2TZ

Tel: 024 7623 6601 Email: [info@arenacoventry.com](mailto:info@arenacoventry.com)

# coming...

Arena Coventry is proud of the relationship we share with our partners:



Resort Casino



Exhibition Centre



Home Ground



Conference Banqueting



North Stand



East Stand



South Stand



West Stand



Level 3 Lounge



Level 2 Lounge



Health & Fitness Suite



Business Suite



Brewers



Soft Drinks Suppliers



Joint Venture Partners

THE HIGGS CHARITY

Joint Venture Partners

# OGGY & buggsy

By David Antill



**B**etween them they made over 1,000 appearances for the Sky Blues – they were and still are true servants to the club, and have got as many if not more memories of Coventry City Football Club than the vast majority of players.

We caught up with Steve Ogrizovic and Brian Borrows in their current capacities of Academy Manager and Assistant Academy Manager to find out exactly what Highfield Road meant to them.

## What was your first memory of Highfield Road?

**Bugsy:** It would obviously be my first game against Manchester City at Highfield Road. I started and I think it was 1-1. That was my first game but my first memory when you talk about the Club is coming down to sign. I can remember driving down one afternoon and I met the manager Don McKay. Then I had to go and see big George Curtis to try and sort a contract out and I signed that afternoon.

**Oggy:** The first memory I have is of the day I signed, when I came down to Highfield Road. George Curtis was the first person I saw and he came out and introduced himself. Bobby Gould was manager and my first impression was that it really seemed like a family, homely club. The vibes felt good as soon as I walked through Highfield Road's doors.

## What made you want to sign for Coventry?

**Bugsy:** I was at Everton from the age of 13 and I played about 30 games for them. They're a massive club now and they were a massive club then but I left them and went to Bolton for two seasons from '83 to '85. I played regularly there and did well and that for me was the stepping stone to joining Coventry. Bolton were in the old Division Two but my contract was up and the object then was to get a deal with a top flight club. Coventry were interested and after a chat it didn't take me too long to make up my mind even though I didn't know too much about them.

**Oggy:** I'd spent two seasons with Shrewsbury who were in the old Division Two so I was stepping up into the top league and that was something that I'd always wanted to do. Any player wants to play at the highest level possible and Coventry gave me that opportunity.

## What was the key to the team's success in the Eighties?

**Bugsy:** We struggled in the first season I was here and towards the end of it Don McKay got the sack and John and George took over. They looked at the players as individuals, looked at the strengths of the team together and built their side around that. Allied with the team spirit which they were really big on, they treated the players well and it was a really homely atmosphere and it was very effective.

**Oggy:** Bobby Gould had brought in some good players but he suffered because they were inexperienced. The players he brought in were fantastic for the club, there's no doubt about that. When George and John took over, their personalities were good for the side, they imposed themselves on the side and built a great team atmosphere. That was the cornerstone of what they believed was good management – getting the players to enjoy playing football and enjoying each other's company. We went out and socialised quite a lot and the wives were involved. Everybody lived very close to each other – we had to live within 20 miles of



Coventry and the majority actually lived in Coventry and Leamington. Nowadays a lot of players live an hour or so away but it was inevitable we were going to be close – I think it was one of the main reasons we did so well.

## You played through two decades – what were the biggest changes witnessed?

**Bugsy:** The biggest difference with the onset of the Premier League was the influx of foreigners into the game. People like Klinsmann, Zola and Bergkamp all came into the game when I was still at Coventry. It didn't change that dramatically because you're still playing against the best players no matter where they come from. But for all the good foreign players there have been more who have come and gone without really having too much of an effect on things.

**Oggy:** Two of my very last games were against Arsenal and Liverpool in 2000 – Arsenal had Thierry Henry, Overmars, Vieira, Petit and Liverpool had the youngsters like Michael Owen coming through and you could see the pace and the athleticism these players had. By and large that's what separates the players now from then. You've always had to have the knowledge and technique but nowadays you've got to have power, pace and athleticism as well. I realised then that the game was getting really quick and I picked a good time to retire.



## Who was the best player you ever played with or against?

**Bugsy:** I played with a lot of top internationals but they weren't at their peak when they came to Coventry. Kenny Sansom was without a doubt one of the best left backs that England has ever had but he'd gone past his best. Terry Butcher was another who joined us at the end of his career. Saying who the best I ever played with is a very hard one to answer but it would go back to the '87 squad where everybody was a good player in their own right – Trevor Peake, Steve Ogrizovic to name a couple but they were all influential and I can't really come out with one name.

**Oggy:** In the era when I started a player who always stood out was Kenny Dalglish. I was fortunate enough to be at Liverpool when he came there and then I played against him when I was at Coventry. For me he was a magnificent player, he had knowledge, vision, a great touch, could score with both feet. I thought he was a real class act. I was also fortunate enough to have played against Maradona in a game at Wembley, Football League against the rest of the world. He was at his peak then and I remember him playing – he was tremendous. The sign of how good a player he is that in all the clips I've ever seen you hardly ever see him use his right foot. His left foot was just unbelievable.



What was the highlight of your Coventry career?

**Oggy:** The Cup win was the highlight of it all but we had a lot more success as well. We got to the semi-finals of the League Cup, we were riding high in the table as well and had finished around tenth and eleventh so they were great times. Significant games for me were the Liverpool game in the early Nineties where we won 5-1 and I scored a couple of goals. Then, for other reasons, I'll always remember the game the Saturday before the Cup Final when I got injured. I remember the Littlewoods Cup game against Nottingham Forest where we were winning 4-0 and ended up winning it 5-4. They're three of the ones that really stand out.

**Oggy:** 1987 was the finest moment but probably the most exciting moment was the semi-final at Hillsborough when we realised we'd made it. We won against Leeds 2-2 after extra time and realised we were going to Wembley. It was as good a feeling as winning it in many respects. The atmosphere that day was amazing – our fans were magnificent and it was certainly one of the noisiest atmospheres I've ever played in.

Which relegation battle stands out in your mind the most?

**Oggy:** We struggled in the first season I was here and towards the end of it Don McKay got the sack and John and George took over and we had to win two out of the last three games to stay up, which we did.

**Oggy:** It happened that often – life was never dull at Coventry because we always had something to fight for. I remember the season I came we had to win the last three games to stay up. Everybody else had finished because we'd had a epidemic and were eight points adrift with three games left. We played Luton who were a decent side at the time and beat them 1-0. We beat Stoke 1-0 and they missed a penalty that day. Then on the last day of the season, Everton came to Highfield Road and they were League Champions but we beat them 4-1 and that felt like we'd won something. That was all about the players being together and fighting for each other. It had been a long, hard season, we'd been at the bottom for virtually the whole time and we managed to get out of it. I was relieved and thought never again but little did I know that it would become a regular occurrence.

How did you get your current job?

**Oggy:** I went to Swindon for two years when I played over 40 league games each season and I said that was going to be it. I came back and worked part time in the academy with one of the junior teams and I've been full time for three years or so now. It's not as good as playing but it's the next best thing to just be involved in football, which is your life. I joined Everton when I was 13 and I know nothing as well as I know football. You've still got the enthusiasm, the love and now it's a case of passing on a lot of your experience, knowledge and habits to the younger players.

**Oggy:** The Academy started in 1998 and I joined in 2000/2001. I started as Under 18s coach and did that for a couple of years and was offered this job when Richard Money left. I played football from 1977 to 2000 and 24 years is a long time. It's your life, it's what you do, you're good at. The best part of football is playing so to still be involved is fantastic.

How will you feel after today's game?

**Oggy:** Obviously it'll be sad because I spent a vast amount of my life – 12 and a half years – just playing here. This is where I played most of my football every other Saturday and I've got a lot of good memories and experiences. It'll definitely be sad when I drive past in a year or so and see it as a housing estate and you say to your kids or your grandkids that it used to be Highfield Road. That'll



be the strangest part, when it's not there anymore. But the new place looks fantastic and it's all about moving on. I'd have loved to have been able to play in this new stadium because it looks a terrific venue.

**Oggy:** I'll be sad because that's where all my memories are but I think it's a great opportunity for the Club. We'll have something that is the envy of lots of other clubs up and down the country. Times move on and my memories are in my head. You don't need to keep revisiting the place where they're from.



## Steve Ogryzovic - Stats



**Born:** September 12 1957, Mansfield  
**Signed:** 1984 from Shrewsbury Town  
**Debut:** August 25 1984 v Aston Villa (a)

**All-time appearances:**

**League:** 507  
**FA Cup:** 34  
**League Cup:** 49  
**Other:** 11  
**TOTAL:** 601, 1 goal

## Brian Burrows - Stats



**Born:** December 20 1960, Liverpool  
**Signed:** 1985 from Bolton  
**Debut:** August 17 1985 v Man City (h)  
**Sold:** Swindon Town, £80,000

**All-time appearances:**

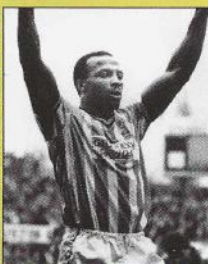
**League:** 409  
**FA Cup:** 26  
**League Cup:** 42  
**Other:** 11  
**TOTAL:** 488, 13 goal



## ~ MEMORY ~

**Cyrille Regis, player 1984 - 1991**

"Five of the seven years I spent at Highfield Road were very happy ones. The first two were quite tough, signing from West Brom, but it all clicked into place when John Sillett and George Curtis took over, when we played some great football and of course won the FA Cup. My biggest memory of Highfield Road though was when we beat Everton on the final day of the season to stay up. We had to win all three of our games to avoid the drop and bearing in mind we hadn't even won two games back-to-back all season, it was an amazing achievement. We won the first two – away to Stoke and at home to Luton and then we had to beat Everton who had won the league and had a great team. The ground was absolutely packed and it was a sunny day and we won 4-1. I scored two goals and the feeling afterwards was amazing. Never having suffered relegation it was a huge relief and it just showed how much character we had in that team, to win three games on the bounce when we were under that much pressure."





They've worked together for over 20 years, consider each other to be good mates but what we really wanted to find out is how well Oggy and Buggy know each other. We tried to establish the facts using our highly scientific quiz.

## Buggy on Oggy

How old is Oggy? 47. *Correct*

What is the name of his wife and children? Caroline, Christopher and Rachel. *Correct*

Who is/was his footballing/sporting hero? It'd probably be a cricketer.  
Oggy's answer: I'd go for Geoffrey Boycott. *Half a point*

What did he consider to be his biggest strength as a player? Shot-stopping or coming out for crosses.  
Oggy's answer: Collecting cross balls. *Half a point*

What did he think was his defining moment as a footballer? I'd say it would be leaving the police force to join Chesterfield.  
Oggy's answer: It's got to be winning the FA Cup. *Incorrect*

What was his most embarrassing moment as a footballer? Probably when he came out of his area in the FA Cup quarter final against Sheffield United in 1998, lost the ball and had to run half the length of the pitch to stop the guy scoring.  
Oggy's answer: I was playing v Leeds or Everton in about 1995, went up to collect a cross and someone caught my shorts, so I was left standing there with two hands on the ball and my shorts around my ankles. *Incorrect*

On hearing Buggy's answer: Actually that's a good one. If he'd scored I'd have said that. Then there was the one where I took it round Peakey in the FA Cup Final and lost it. There's been a few!



Which player from an opposing team did he least like playing against? That's a tough one. Michael Owen, Matt le Tissier or Tony Cottee.

Oggy's answer: I'd say Ray Harford. He always used to elbow me. *Incorrect*

What was his worst matchday habit? On the way to away games he'd constantly badger the coach driver about getting to the ground on time. Then he'd have a skip all of his own with his goalkeeping kit in it.

Oggy's answer: Moaning. Especially to the bus driver if he didn't get us to away games at ten to two exactly. I apologise to anybody I've offended! *Correct*

What would he have been if he wasn't a footballer? He was one – a policeman. *Correct*

Five out of nine

## Oggy on Buggy

How old is Buggy? 44. *Correct*

What is the name of his wife and children? Karen, Charlotte and Chloe. *Correct*

Who is/was his footballing/sporting hero? Colin Harvey was his coach. I don't know about that one.

Buggy's answer: Tough one. I'd say George Best. *Incorrect*

What did he consider to be his biggest strength as a player? Technique  
Buggy's answer: Passing or reading of the game. *Incorrect*

What did he think was his defining moment as a footballer? Probably his debut for Everton.

Buggy's answer: Signing for Everton. *Correct*

What was his most embarrassing moment as a footballer? Probably when he chipped it over me with a half volley against Nottingham Forest. To be fair I should have been on my line!

Buggy's answer: Scoring an own goal past him against Nottingham Forest. *Correct*

Which player from an opposing team did he least like playing against? It'd have to be a tricky winger. John Barnes.

Buggy's answer: Peter Beagrie. He always used to shape to cross, then go back – he'd do it about five or six times. *Incorrect*

What was his worst matchday habit? I don't know about on a matchday but he spits when he eats and he always answers his own questions.

Buggy's answer: I can't think of any! *Oggy gets a point by default.*

What would he have been if he wasn't a footballer? I've got no idea.

Buggy's answer: I've got no idea, maybe I'd be in the building trade. *Incorrect*



Five out of nine

So there we have it. With five each Oggy and Buggy know each other equally well. After working in each other's pockets for so long there are one or two gaps in their knowledge but it's nice to see they've paid attention to some things.

James Benfield + Peter Danker - Thanks for the 41 years of Ecstasy and Agony

# The last Coventry City Squad at Highfield Road, April 2005



**Back row (left to right):**

Lloyd Dyer (on loan from West Bromwich Albion), Eddie Johnson (on loan from Manchester United), Andrew Whing, Richard Duffy, Dele Adebola, Marcus Hall, Trevor Benjamin, Neil Wood, Gary McSheffrey, Michael Doyle.

**Middle row (left to right):**

Darren Robinson (Fitness Coach), Andy Morrell, Claus Jorgensen, Luke Steele (on loan from Manchester United), Seamus McDonagh (Goalkeeping Coach), Kevin Pressman, Isaac Osbourne, Stern John, Michael McBride (Physiotherapist)

**Front row (left to right):**

Robert Page, Shaun Goater (on loan from Reading), Stephen Hughes, Adrian Heath (Assistant Manager), Micky Adams (Manager), Alan Cork (Reserve Team Manager), Adrian Williams, Steve Staunton, Richard Shaw



HIGHFIELD ROAD  
1899 - 2005



HIGHFIELD ROAD  
1899 - 2005



# the Stormy Period 1919-1945

The 1919/1920 season was Coventry City's first ever in the Football League after they were elected to Division Two although rather than being a period of excitement, the next decade was one of ill-fortune and became known as "The Stormy Period".

The signs were ominous right from the first game against Spurs when the eventual Champions routed the Bantams 5-0 and then dished out a 4-1 thrashing at White Hart Lane a week later. City did not collect a single point until October before they finally got their first win against Stoke on Christmas Day. Relegation was ultimately avoided through what seemed a super-human effort, which would have been admirable were it not for Coventry's role in a scandal that rocked football at the time.



Programme dating back to the 1920/21 Season



Team photo from the 1919/20 season

## the Bury affair

Back in the 1920s, clubs were voted into and out of the Football League and Coventry avoided having to apply for re-election to the Football League by defeating Bury in their final match of the 1919/1920 campaign – a victory which capped off a tremendous turnaround. A poor start to the season had been tempered by some great results in the New Year, and Coventry were second from bottom with two games remaining, a point behind Lincoln but with a game in hand.

It should have been a time of celebration but rumours were abound within football circles of potential match-fixing, although it took nearly three years for the stories to fully come to light.

They faced two games against a strong Bury side who sat fifth in the league and a creditable 2-2 draw at Bury meant Coventry sat level on points with Lincoln going into their final match which was watched by a record 22,000 fans at Highfield Road. After an abysmal performance the Bantams were 1-0 down at the interval but thanks to two terrific goals by inside forward Alec Mercer – a star player of the age – City won and avoided relegation by the skin of their teeth.

In March 1923, the FA came to the verdict that an arrangement had been made to allow Coventry to win and 10 officials and players from the two sides were suspended for life, with both clubs fined £100.

For Coventry, Director Jack Marshall and player George Chaplin received life bans along with Chairman David Cooke, a tremendous benefactor to the club during troubled times. Years later, Chaplin – a quality full-back – admitted that he and Cooke had been offered £200 for their part in the scandal. As well as all the bad press it earned the Club, the scandal would haunt Coventry for the remainder of the 1920s years which were typified by relegation battles.

## Battling on

Following the Bury Affair, Coventry would go on to avoid the drop on four more occasions under manager Albert Evans, finishing in 20th, 21st, 20th, 18th and 19th in their first five seasons in the Football League.



The 1923-24 team photo

After Evans' resignation in November 1924, City finally succumbed and were relegated to Division Three (north) at the end of the 1924/25 campaign. James Kerr stepped into the breach but the three seasons he spent at the helm were among three of the most dismal in Coventry City's history. 1925/26 was a disaster from a playing and financial point-of-view and attendances dropped to some of their lowest ever while Coventry had been in the Football League.

1926/27 started in Division Three (South) because Stockport and Stoke had also been relegated from Division Two. 41 years later this would allow City to stake the claim to be the only club to have played in all six divisions of the Football League. Three seasons of low finishes, the latest of which saw City avoid dropping out of the League altogether by only one point, led to the dismissal of Kerr and as James McIntyre took over in 1928 the future began to look brighter.

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# Onwards and Upwards

McIntyre strengthened the entire Coventry squad and caretaker boss Albert Saunders – who took over team affairs in February following the sacking of Kerr – also helped matters by signing two of the most successful players of the decade in Ernie Toseland and Peter Ramage. Along with the likes of Laurie Crown, Frank Allen, Billy Lake and record £1,700 signing Billy Kirton, the Coventry Evening Telegraph declared them “the best eleven Bantams since the war.”

Coventry finished 11th in the 1928/29 season and then had a realistic pop at the top the following year. They beat league leaders Plymouth on Christmas Day in front of a record crowd of 26,500 which was broken a month later when an FA Cup tie against Sunderland was played in front of 31,673 fans at Highfield Road.

Things were progressing well on the pitch but there was disruption at Board level and during the Twenties the Club had accumulated debts totalling £10,000 – a huge sum in those days. There was a decline in the 1930/31 season when Coventry finished 14th, leading to the resignation of McIntyre and a bright new era under manager Harry Storer.

## Booming thirties

The 1930s were the most successful years in the Club’s history before the Sky Blue era of the 1960s. The city itself was prosperous and relatively untouched by the economic depression of the decade and the Club put the terrible times of the Twenties well behind them.



The 1935-36 team photo

Harry Storer appointed Dick Bayliss as his chief scout and he also acted as a coach. Bayliss was a shrewd judge of players and was responsible for discovering some of the best talents of the next 20 years including all-time leading scorer Clattie Bourton and another fine striker Jock Lauderdale for a combined fee of just £2,000.

In 1932 the two of them were undoubtedly the idols of the terraces and Bourton became the Football League’s top scorer with 49 goals that season as City scored an incredible 108. The nickname the “Old Five” was attributed to the team, as they regularly smashed that number of goals or more past their opponents.

The 1933/34 campaign saw a great team taking shape which was more than capable of promotion back to Division Two. City scored over 100 goals for the third successive season – the first time the feat had been achieved in the Football League. A finish of second was not enough and the following year City dropped to third but the celebrations were only put off for a short while.

## Back where we belonged

Coventry saw off the challenge of Reading and Luton to secure their promotion back to the Second Division in 1935/36, beating Torquay on the final day of the season.

Stadium reconstruction began with the original John Bull Stand – the first built at Highfield Road – replaced by a new Main Stand on the King Richard Street side of the ground. This was ready by August thanks to an appeal to raise the £14,000 required, just in time to house the hundreds of additional fans eager for Division Two football.

In October that year, the Club purchased the freehold of the Highfield Road stadium from the Mercers Company – a sure sign that Coventry City was a flourishing outfit. A month later, and positive results indicated that City could be in with a shout of promotion to Division One at the first time of asking – Coventry were extremely solid defensively but the free-scoring days of the “Old Five” had gone. Even so, a finish in eighth place was creditable.



Goal Machine Clattie Bourton during the 1936/7 season

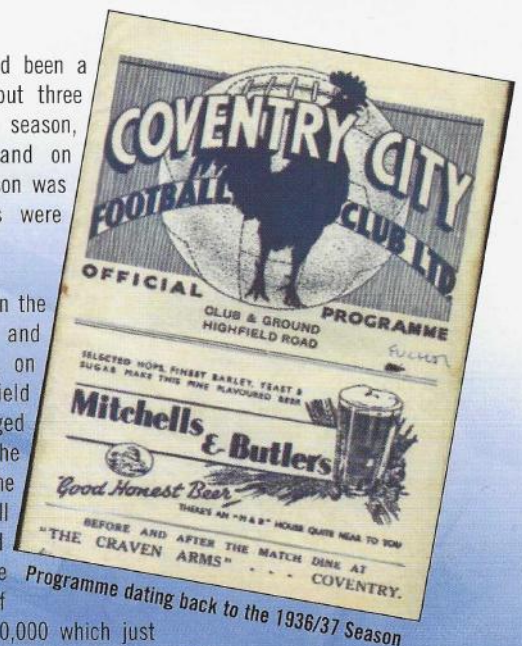
In 1937/38, promotion looked even more likely as Coventry went unbeaten in their first 15 games and never left the top four. But fourth was where they ended up, missing out on going up by a solitary point.

An ageing Clattie Bourton was sold to Plymouth that season and the following term, another finish in fourth spot saw some fans turn their back, feeling too many quality players had been sold, and average attendances dropped by 6,000 to around 19,000.

Nevertheless the Thirties had been a decade of great progress but three games into the 1939/1940 season, World War II broke out and on September 6 1939, the season was aborted and all contracts were cancelled.

Football continued but only in the shape of friendly matches and regional leagues. However, on November 14 1940, Highfield Road was seriously damaged during heavy bombing. The stadium was patched up the following summer and football resumed as Coventry rejoined the Midland Regional League in 1942 playing in front of crowds of between 5 and 10,000 which just allowed the Club to stay afloat until peacetime in 1945.

DA



Programme dating back to the 1936/37 Season

# Who's the Greatest?

Although it's a debate which will always divide fans, both young and old, the question of who the greatest Coventry player of all time tends to throw up some familiar names.

While the occasional shout for an abstract foreigner who was gone in the blink of an eye raises an eyebrow, those who think a little longer and hard enough come up with a player who either showed such loyalty or produced enough moments of magic to be realistically referred to as a Great.

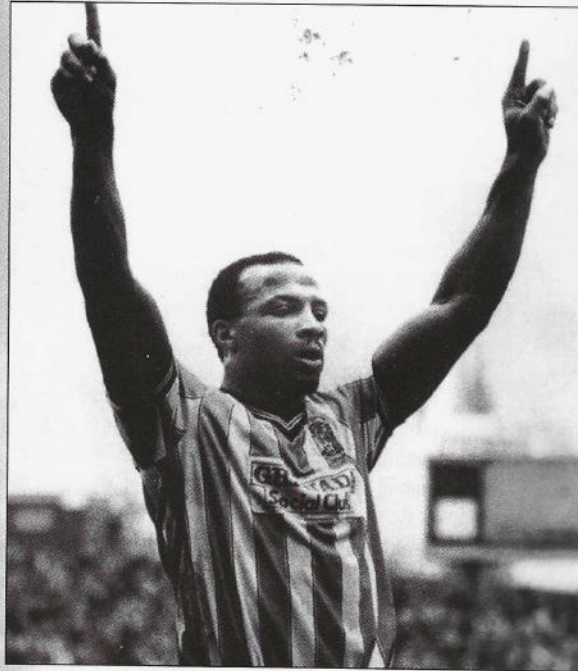
This question has been asked many times in the past but the final ever programme for a Coventry City game at Highfield just would not seem right without a poll for who the greatest player to ever grace this pitch really is.

In 106 years we have seen many players come and go. Some achieve enough in a short space of time to capture the imagination of certain fans enough to always be considered their favourite. Others have devoted practically their whole career to the Club and have seen enough highs and lows to know exactly how it feels to be a City fan.

Our poll ran earlier in the season via both the official website and the matchday programme and votes came flooding in. Well over 500 fans gave their opinion and while the results provided a familiar top two who between them received half of the total vote, some of the other players in the top ten show a good appreciation of important performers from a number of eras.

## Runners & Riders

Robbie Keane's placement in third shows just what an impact he made during one season with the Sky Blues while the high position of Sixties favourites George Curtis and George Hudson, proves that our rise from the Third Division to the First in just five years still remains a fond memory for many.

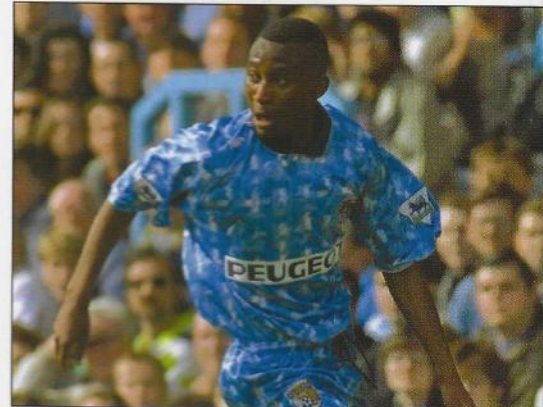


Eighties favourites Cyrille Regis and David Speedie both made the top ten, having turned what in general was a dour decade for English football into one of great excitement for Coventry fans.

The inclusion of Peter Ndlovu and Ian Wallace in the top ten ultimately, and perhaps not surprisingly, proves it is attacking players who have caught the imagination of the fans the most over the years. Of the top ten, seven were strikers or wingers and out of all 35 players who received votes, 18 could be classed as attackers. Nine were midfielders, five defenders and three goalkeepers.

A look further down the voting shows that people recognise influential performers from way back in the past and right up to

current times. Richard Shaw's loyalty to the Sky Blue cause is recognised with six votes, while 2003/2004 player of the season Stephen Warnock also collected one vote, despite only spending one term on loan at the Club.



Coventry City's leading scorer of all time, Clattie Bourton is actually remembered by fewer and fewer people but the stats speak for themselves. He received one vote for his exploits during the 1930s when he netted an amazing 172 goals in 228 league appearances.



## ~ MEMORY ~

**Micky Adams, Player 1983 - 1987**

"My most memorable game was when we beat Everton on the final day of the 1984-85 season, when Everton were League Champions. We had to win three in a row to stay in the First Division. We beat Stoke City away, Luton at home and Everton on the last day which was played on a Sunday. I was lucky enough to score that day so it's a memory which will always stick with me. It showed how much team spirit we had in that side - we were struggling at the bottom of the division but managed to win three on the bounce against the odds."



**Ladbrokes Member - Richard Bullard**  
Wishes to say farewell to Highfield Rd, and all the best for Sky Blues at the New Arena



# The top Two

The closeness of the voting at the top end of the scale made it a real tug of war battle between two legendary Sky Blues performers. As emails, letters and phone calls came through, the lead constantly changed, but in the end there had to be a winner and Tommy Hutchison pipped Steve Ogrizovic to the title of Greatest Coventry Player of All Time by just three votes.

Hutchison was a remarkable player during the 1970s and his achievements are still clearly recalled by those who were around to watch him play. Here are a sample of the reasons people gave for voting for him:



*"Sheer football artistry, year after year after year, allied to great commitment and bravery. My greatest ever footballing regret – not being at Highbury to see him score the Sky Blue's goal of the millennium."*

*"It has to be Tommy Hutch – the wizard of the wing. Playing in an average side he was class."*

*"Who was the greatest player to pull on a Coventry City shirt?... Tommy Hutchison of course. Skillful, elegant, the only Sky Blue player I've ever seen who was capable of winning a match on his own. The nearest thing we ever got to Zidane. When the bulldozers start their work at Highfield Road, the memory of Tommy's crazy runs, especially during the 1977-1978 season, will live on. A gentleman hero, cut from an altogether classier cloth than today's shellsuit stars."*

*"Tommy Hutchison. Very hard to remember specific moments because there were so many. His balance on the ball was tremendous and the ability to take players on and just glide past them like they were not even there was breath-taking to me as a budding 10 year old. What made it more amazing was the fact he wasn't even that quick, he just had speed of thought. I never saw anybody at the City even come close to Hutch."*

*"My vote goes to Tommy Hutchison as he was the most elegant player I have ever seen"*

*"There is no debate. The best player ever to put on the City shirt... Tommy Hutchison."*

*"Special mention must go to Oggy who pushed Hutch all the way for the title. After 601 appearances for the Sky Blues, the big man saved us an end of times and the fans will certainly never forget what he has done:*

*"My vote goes to Steve Ogrizovic. He was a giant as a player (as recently as 2000!) and remains a faithful servant to the Club. Uniquely, Oggy forms an actual bridge from Highfield Road to the arena. He's the past, the present and, we hope, the future!"*

*"The best Sky Blues player has to be Steve Ogrizovic for the following reasons. His work ethic is amazing. He rarely had an off-day. There were probably five or six seasons that we would have been relegated with a lesser man between the sticks. Obviously, he is also immortalised for two great games against Tottenham....1987 and 1997."*



*"Steve Ogrizovic - Record number of appearances, single-handedly kept us in the top-flight for 16 years, relegated the year after he retired. Say no more - LEGEND."*

*"Even though I am a lover of attacking football my greatest of all time has got to be OGGY. Through the years of relegation battles immense praise was heaped on forwards but without the big man we would have been sunk years before. His commitment and performances were unrivaled through the whole league never mind just the City. He was an absolute hero."*

*"The best player I've seen is Steve Ogrizovic, the best ever player not to play for England. A Coventry legend then and today."*

*"It has to be Steve Ogrizovic as we have spent years since trying to replace him and yet to find a permanent person to fill the role."*

- ## TOP 10
- 1 Tommy Hutchison 123
  - 2 Steve Ogrizovic 120
  - 3 Robbie Keane 66
  - 4 George Curtis 36
  - 5 Cyrille Regis 24
  - 6 George Hudson 21
  - 7 Trevor Peake 19
  - 8 Ian Wallace 17
  - 9 David Speedie 13
  - 10 Peter Ndlovu 10

- ## Best of the Rest
- Dion Dublin 9
  - Brian Kilcline 8
  - Bill Glazier 7
  - Willie Carr 6
  - Richard Shaw 6
  - Terry Gibson 6
  - Moustapha Hadji 6
  - Dave Clements 5
  - Roland Nilsson 4
  - Ernie Hunt 4
  - Kevin Gallacher 3
  - Ernie Machin 3
  - Colin Stein 2
  - Gary McAllister 2
  - Keith Houchen 2
  - Dennis Mortimer 2
  - Mick Quinn 2
  - Magnus Hedman 1
  - Stephen Warnock 1
  - Dave Bennett 1
  - Steve Hunt 1
  - Neil Martin 1
  - Garry Thompson 1
  - Danny Thomas 1
  - Clarrie Bourton 1





# Jim Brown's Great Games at Highfield Road

## Everton

April 3 1910, FA Cup 4th Round  
Coventry 0 Everton 2

Just two years after leaving the Birmingham & District League, Southern League Coventry reached the last eight of the Cup following shock victories over First Division clubs Preston and Nottingham Forest. Everton wanted to switch the tie to Goodison Park but City refused and were rewarded with a record crowd of 19,095. City followed their tradition of preparing for several days at the brine baths of sleepy Droitwich and only arrived back in Coventry at lunchtime on the day of the game. Despite a brave showing, a third top flight scalp was beyond them however and two goals from England centre-forward Bertie Freeman ended the Bantams famous Cup run. The match generated enormous interest and the club had to employ crowd packers to ensure everyone could get into the small ground. The match receipts of £1000 helped pay for a new stand on the Highfield Road side of the ground. It would be 53 years before the club would again reach the last eight of the Cup.



## Bristol City

April 28 1934, League Division 3 South  
Coventry 9 Bristol City 0

Between 1931 and 1936 Coventry City's attacking football captivated the crowd at Highfield Road. In four out of five seasons Harry Storer's team scored over 100 league goals with the great Clarrie Bourton setting goalscoring records that never be beaten. In this end of season game the Bantams racked up their biggest ever league win albeit against a pretty woeful Bristol team. Bourton was a brilliant best and he scored the third goal on fifteen minutes after earlier strikes from Les Jones and Jock Lauderdale (pictured above). Bristol rallied however and gave City a good game until just before half-time when two quick goals from Freddie White and Bourton made it 5-0 at the break. Jones scored a stunning goal five minutes into the second period before Bourton scored two more and White made it 9-0. Bristol won a late penalty but Riley blasted wide to sum up their woeful season. Sadly only 7,035 watched the game, the lowest crowd of the season.

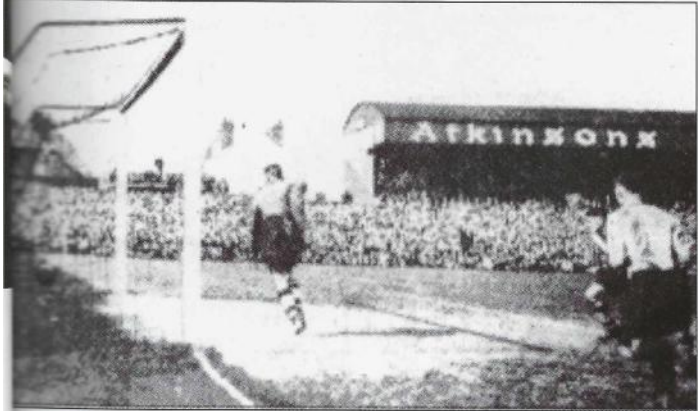
## Torquay United

May 2 1936, League Division 3 South

Coventry 2 Torquay United 1

After three seasons of near misses the Bantams clinched promotion to Division Two on the final day of a momentous season. A home draw with their closest rivals Luton left City with what looked like the easy task of beating Torquay in their final game five days later to clinch the title but they would be without skipper George Mason, injured in the Luton game.

After a nervous and goalless first half City were awarded a penalty midway through the second period. George McNestry, normally deadly from the spot, drove it straight at the goalkeeper and minutes later the visitors broke away and scored. The news filtering through that Luton were drawing the possibility of promotion was slipping away. City piled on the pressure and were awarded another penalty. This time stand-in skipper Ernie Curtis coolly slotted home and with three minutes remaining Fred Liddle crossed for the crowd's hero Clarrie Bourton, to score the winning goal.



At the final whistle the jubilant City fans in the 30,514 crowd stormed onto the pitch and cheered their heroes who came up from the dressing room below the Atkinson's Stand to acknowledge their followers. The biggest cheers were reserved for Bourton and Mason, the latter having spent the second half pacing around the Atkinson's Stand too nervous to watch the game.

## Sunderland

March 25 1963, FA Cup 5th Round

Coventry 2 Sunderland 1

This was the night that convinced many doubters, both in the city and further afield that something remarkable was happening under the leadership of Derrick Robson and Jimmy Hill. The new-look Sky Blues burst out of the big freeze of 1963 and into a run that would carry them through to the quarter-finals of the FA Cup and to the brink of promotion from Division Three. All this was heady stuff for their loyal supporters, who had been fed on a diet of despair and failure for a quarter of a century.



Those who were there on that clear spring evening will never forget it. In their excitement to see the game, the fans broke down three gates to gain entrance and it has always been widely believed that the final attendance was over 50,000 as against the officially reported figure of 40,487.

City, urged on by the fanatical crowd, stormed back from being a goal down to score twice in the last eight minutes to clinch victory against the Second Division leaders. Crossan had put Sunderland ahead after 33 minutes of a tentative first half. After half-time, though, there was only one team in it as City bombarded the visitors goal. It seemed as if the Wearsiders might hold out, until a freak goal put City back on terms. A lob-cum-centre from Dietmar Bruck deceived Montgomery, hit the angle and fell into the net. Pandemonium broke out as hundreds of fans ran on to the pitch, a situation repeated three minutes later when skipper George Curtis rose above the Sunderland defence to powerfully head home a John Sillett centre. The deafening sound of the Sky Blue song rang round the ground during an emotional last five minutes.

## Colchester United

April 25 1964, League Division 3

Coventry 1 Colchester United 0



City had begun the 1963-64 season in blistering style, opening up a nine-point gap at the top of Division Three by the New Year, with Hudson having already amassed 26 goals in League and Cup.

Then came a collapse. From 11 January until the end of March, City failed to win a match and finally lost their top place. A hypnotist offered his services but manager Hill opted for the transfer market, buying George Kirby and John Smith for £24,000.

The promotion train was back on the rails but come the last day of the season only a win over Colchester would be good enough to win promotion. The fans' hero, George Hudson, who because of injury had played only six games since the New Year, was declared fit.

It was 'the Hud's' 28th goal of the season that clinched the win in the 24th minute from a superb Ronnie Rees cross. The crowd of 36,901, the largest for a league game for 15 years celebrated City's return to Division Two, after twelve years in the wilderness. With rivals Watford and Crystal Palace losing the Sky Blues went up as champions. Jimmy Hill led the singing of the Sky Blue Song from the Main stand after the fans had invaded the pitch at the final whistle.



### ~ MEMORY ~

*Mick Ferguson, Player 1974 - 1984*

"It would have been when we won 4-1 against Ipswich in 1979 and I scored all four goals. I remember Bobby Robson had said something in the press the week before about the Club's valuation of me and had commented that if I scored against his defence he would sign me. To score four against anybody is amazing but after that it was extra special. I was outside the dressing rooms afterwards and Bobby walked past me and didn't say anything. Ipswich had a really good side then with players like Butcher, Osman and Gates and it was a great feeling to go off with the whole crowd applauding me, especially as it had taken me a bit of time to win the fans over."



## Manchester United

March 16 1968, League Division 1  
Coventry 2 Manchester United 0

In an electric atmosphere over 47,000 (the second biggest crowd ever at the ground) saw the relegation threatened Sky Blues defeat the best team in Europe. After a fire had gutted the Main Stand ten days previously the club had erected temporary gantries to accommodate the season ticket holders.



City had struggled to find their feet after promotion the previous season and lay twentieth, one place above the trap-door. Only the most blinkered supporters imagined that points might be easy to obtain from the defending champions, who topped the league again.

City included Chris Cattlin & Ernie Hunt, making debuts after being signed the previous day and Cattlin had a superb game against the mercurial George Best. After 34 minutes Ernie Machin rocketed a 30-yard volley past Alex Stepney to open the scoring. United responded like a wounded tiger, and Bill Glazier, Maurice Setters and the rest of the defence needed to bolt down the hatches. But then, seven minutes after half-time, Setters headed a goal from Ernie Hannigan's corner.

Protected by a two-goal lead, City enjoyed some breathing space, but United, with Bobby Charlton to the fore, hit back strongly. Setters was booked following one typical act of belligerence and Glazier's woodwork was struck twice in the closing quarter of the game, but that was as close as Matt Busby's team came. City's defence held out to earn a merited victory.

## Manchester City

October 4 1977, League Division 1  
Coventry 4 Manchester City 2

The Coventry Evening Telegraph described it as one of the most gripping First Division games for years and any Coventry fan present at this match will still remember it as one of the highlights of following their club. In the second half the team touched heights rarely equalled before or since, scoring three times in the final seventeen minutes to turn probable defeat into exhilarating triumph.

Manchester City arrived as unbeaten league leaders, having conceded only four goals in eight games whilst Coventry, playing an adventurous 4-4-2 formation, were also wowing the fans used to more mediocre fayre.

The visitors dominated the early stages. With wingers Peter Barnes and Dennis Tueart in devastating form, the visitors dominated the early exchanges and Tueart put them ahead after four minutes. On the half-hour however John Beck centred for Mick Ferguson to shoot home.

Manchester attacked incessantly and Barnes restored their lead on the stroke of half-time, latching onto a long punt before shooting past Les Sealey.

Throughout the second half Coventry camped in the visitors' half, attacking relentlessly and creating chances galore. In the 73rd minute the dam broke: Beck flicked on Graham Oakey's cross and Fergie lobbed Corrigan to make it 2-2. Six minutes later Terry Yorath, architect of many attacks, swung over a cross.

Ferguson glided a header into Wallace's path and the Scotsman beat Corrigan ease.



Manchester hit back. Barnes shot narrowly wide after a dazzling run but within a minute left Ferguson completed his hat-trick with a classic goal. Tommy Hutchings crossed from the left and the big man took it on his chest and smote the drop ball past Corrigan.

That goal brought the crowd to their feet, where they stayed to the final whistle giving the team a standing ovation.

## Liverpool

December 10 1983, League Division 1  
Coventry 4 Liverpool 0

Bobby Gould's rebuilt team, a combination of unknowns and disaffected Division 1 players, had strolled through the autumn thumbing their noses at all those who predicted certain relegation. The acid test, however, would be the visit of Liverpool. The reigning champions, full of international stars, were once again out in front having lost only two games and conceded only nine goals.



The Reds were rocked onto their heels in the first minute. The ball was played into the box, Bruce Grobbelaar failed to hold Terry Gibson's shot, and Nicky Platt pounced from close range, sinking on his hands and knees to head the ball home.

City continued to press and after nineteen minutes Gibson ran onto Dave Bamford, knock-down to score. Shortly before half-time 'Gibbo' belted a half-chance to the edge of the box to make it 3-0.

Liverpool refused to lie down and die, but they were unable to stamp their mark on the game. City always looked the more likely side to score, and but for Grobbelaar's Liverpool's embarrassment might have been heightened. The icing was put

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City's cake with six minutes remaining. A long clearance bounced wickedly receiving Phil Neal and allowed Gibson to advance and lob the keeper. 'Gibbo' thereby became the first Coventry player to score a hat-trick against Liverpool, and the first opposing player to do such damage to the Reds for eleven years.

The ovation from the capacity crowd at the final whistle was fitting reward for City's virile display, while Liverpool boss Joe Fagan admitted that Coventry had outclassed his team in every department and tipped them as championship contenders.

## Nottingham Forest

November 28 1990, Rumbelows League Cup 4th Round  
Coventry 5 Nottingham Forest 4

In terms of 'shock factor', this result ranks alongside any in the last twenty years. Brian Clough's Forest were a major force in English Football and had won the League Cup for the past two seasons. This was only Terry Butcher's third game in charge at Coventry, and rarely in his playing career can he have experienced such emotions and his first victory as a manager was a classic.



Kevin Gallacher drew first blood in the 14th minute with a close-range shot after David Speedie's header had been blocked. A minute later, Cyrille Regis produced a defence-splitting pass to Gallacher, who chipped Crossley.

The ungainly Steve Livingstone scored City's third after Forest failed to clear again. After 35 minutes it was 4-0, an ecstatic Gallacher completing his hat-trick with a close-range shot after Peter Billing had headed down.

Forest fans could be seen pouring out of the ground, disgusted by their team's performance. But they were too hasty as City pressed the self-destruct button and put Forest back into the game, Nigel Clough scoring from the edge of the area. Forest were transformed and Clough completed a seven-minute hat-trick before half-time to make it 4-3.

It would be fun to have been a fly on the wall during Butcher's half-time verbal assault. But nine minutes into the second half, Speedie lost Parker, who levelled the scores by shooting past Ogrizovic.

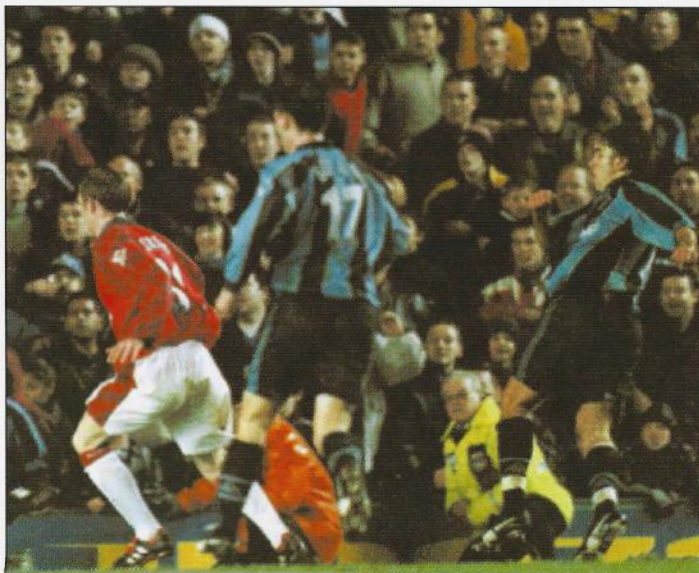
There was even more drama: either Forest relaxed, having climbed their mountain, or City woke up. Whatever, the Sky Blues dragged up more energy and spirit and after 62 minutes, Livingstone scored the winner after a terrific scramble in the Forest goalmouth.

Even then both sides had more chances and at the finish the teams received a fantastic ovation.

## Manchester United

December 28 1997, Premiership  
Coventry 3 Manchester United 2

City, fourth from bottom in the table gave a magnificent team performance to beat United, who had started the game six points clear at the top of the Premiership. The winning goal of a classic match, from Darren Huckerby two minutes from time, was one of the finest ever seen at the stadium. In a 40-yard slaloming run he beat four United defenders before slotting the ball home to bring a capacity 23,000 crowd to their feet.



Three minutes earlier City had trailed the champions 1-2 despite a 12th minute cool finish from Noel Whelan. Clinical finishes by Solskjaer and Sheringham either side of half-time giving Alex Ferguson's side a fortuitous but seemingly unassailable advantage.

Gordon Strachan's side were not giving up however and with United resting somewhat on their laurels Huckerby, Whelan and the immense Dion Dublin, playing against his former club, started to cause some panic in the Reds' rearguard.

Four minutes from time Huckerby ran at the United defence for the umpteenth time, Henning Berg baulked him and the slippery striker fell to the ground. Referee Neale Barry, to the disgust of Ferguson and his players immediately pointed to the spot. In Gary McAllister's absence skipper Dion Dublin coolly slotted his first penalty in a Sky Blue shirt past Kevin Pilkington in the United goal.

The defeat was a serious setback to United and they eventually lost their title to Arsenal. City lost only one of their next fourteen games and reached the FA Cup quarter-finals.



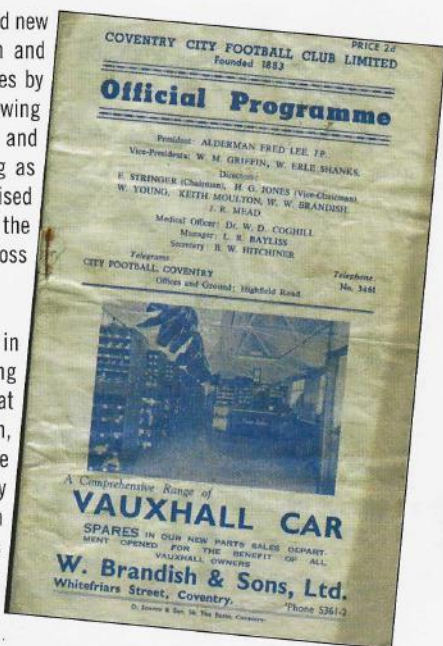
1948 1949 1950 1951 1952 1953 1954 1955 1956 1957 1958 1959 1960 1961 1962

# Back to business 1945-1962

Thankfully the lives of no Coventry City players were lost during World War II but Harry Storer left the Club in 1945 to join Birmingham City, with his assistant Dick Bayliss taking over as manager. The first season ended with a 13th place finish in the Football League South and by August 1946, Coventry were ready to return to regular football in Division Two.

A team of pre-war favourites and new signings struggled to blend in and only managed to win five games by the end of 1946. Early the following year, Bayliss fell seriously ill and died, although his last signing as manager, Don Dearson, stabilised the team and City won eight of the last 12 games under new boss Billy Frith.

After another mid-table finish in 1947/48 along with a losing streak of 10 out of 16 games at the end of the following term, Frith's 18-month spell in charge came to an end, paving the way for the return of Harry Storer in November 1948. Coventry's most successful manager instantly oversaw an upturn in



fortunes and he masterminded five straight wins during December.

Things were not looking good for Coventry and following two mixed seasons between 1949 and 1951, Coventry's oldest ever side – with an average age of 27 – suffered the ignominy of relegation back to Division Three (South) in 1951. The worst part was that Storer – the man who had worked so hard to establish Coventry as a Second Division force to be reckoned with – had now taken them back to the level they started.

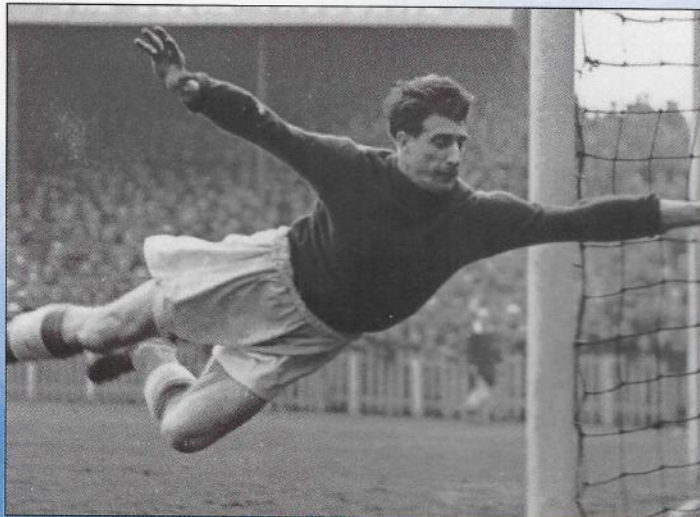


Team Photo 1948/49 season

## Down but not out

Coventry finished the 1952/53 season in sixth spot with a playing staff of 39, but with attendances down from 22,000 to 13,000, players had to be sold and Norman Lockhart was among the experienced players who were sacrificed. The side took on a younger look with Reg Matthews, Gordon Nutt and Ronnie Waldoock all making their debuts.

A poor start to the following campaign saw Storer leave the Club for the second and final time. Jack Fairbrother came in at a time when crowds were at their lowest in 30 years and the team sat 15th in the league.



Goalkeeper Reg Matthews makes a great save

In April a new Board was elected, with Erle Shanks taking over the Chairmanship and Derrick Robins becoming one of two new directors. The Board paid off a slice of the debt, restructured the scouting and coaching systems and provided money for new players.

The managerial merry-go-round continued in 1954/55 when Fairbrother resigned for health reasons. Charlie Elliott took temporary charge and it was announced that Jesse Carver would take over in June 1955 with George Raynor his deputy. This was an all-star line-up. This was a national talking point, with Carver joining from AS Roma while Raynor previously held the dual role of Lazio & Swansea national coach.

1955/56 started with Coventry considered the glamour side of Division Three and a crowd of 24,000 flocked to Highfield Road for a 3-1 opening day win over Bournemouth. Results were not consistent and despite a good run in December, Carver resigned on New Year's Eve and Raynor took over, leading City to an eighth place finish. There were few positives but two rays of sunshine were an international debut for the hugely talented goalkeeper Reg Matthews as well as the first appearance of a 17-year-old George Curtis in the senior side.



George Curtis made his first team debut at just seventeen



## Plumbing new depths

In June 1956 Harry Warren became Coventry's sixth manager in five years and things started well but there was the usual slump around the corner. Fans had no doubt become accustomed to this but what they weren't prepared for was the sale of Matthews to Chelsea. Chairman Shanks nor manager Warren could hardly be blamed – one of City's all-time greats had lost his England place and was being urged by everybody outside Coventry to join a First Division outfit and it was inevitable he would leave.



Billy Frith - second stint in charge

But it did Coventry no favours on the pitch and as they fell to third from bottom in March, crowds were as low as 8,000 and a final finish in 16th was nothing short of a disaster.

He assembled a highly experienced squad – epitomised by the return of 43 year old keeper Alf Wood to the side, who came out of retirement to fill in for Jim Sanders after he had broken his leg. He played 10 games in the autumn and Coventry only lost once as they surged to the top of the league and the fans returned. Frith also proved to be an astute judge of players and operated well on a shoestring budget and Coventry suffered only four defeats in 32 matches between September and March. Despite a late stutter, where City failed to score in five straight matches, a 1-1 draw at Millwall was enough to ensure promotion.

Just as they had done when they won promotion to Division Two in 1936, City threatened to go up again in 1959/60 but ultimately the Club was bankrupt and could not afford to fund the manager following a good start. A win over second place Norwich at the start of April proved there was still a glint of light but City lost three on the bounce at the end of the season to fall just short.

## Enter the New Regime

The fans were disillusioned to say the least at the fact Frith had not been given the money he needed to strengthen the squad and crowds fell significantly at the beginning of the 1960/61 season.

But in October Derrick Robins took over as Chairman of Coventry City Football Club and little did the supporters – or the rest of English football for that matter – know what was around the corner. Robins immediately made cash available to Frith but he did not spend wisely and following his dismissal in November 1961, the other man who would shape the fortunes of Coventry City beyond all belief was installed.

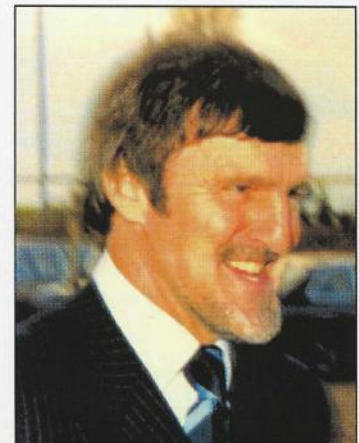
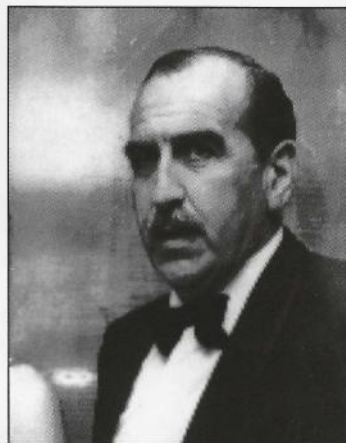
*Jimmy Hill became manager and nothing would ever be the same again...*



Team Photo 1958/59 season

The 1957/58 season was hugely important because the Football League was being restructured, with only the top 12 in Division Three South and North going into the new Division Three and the remainder dropping to the newly formed Division Four.

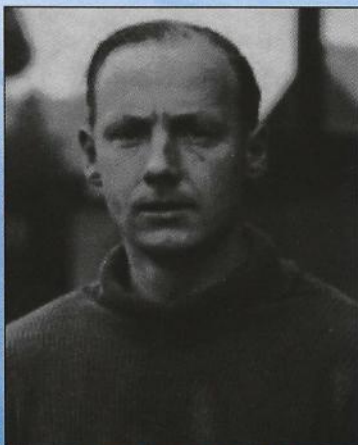
Injuries and a loss of form saw the back of Harry Warren and Billy Frith returned for a second stint. But much like Storer – whose return had not been a success – Frith failed to re-live past glories and rather than making the top 12, City finished 19th and found themselves in the basement division.



Derrick Robins took over as Chairman and injected some much needed money and Jimmy Hill was later appointed as manager


## The only way is up

The Thirties had been Coventry's best season to date and the Forties were largely disturbed by War, the Fifties had been an unmitigated disaster as City were relegated twice and crowds slumped from as high as 36,000 at the beginning of the decade to as low as 8,000 by the end of it.



Great Servant: Alf Wood


The one thing which seemed a good decision in hindsight was the fact that Frith kept his job, at a time when continuity was desperately needed and he set out with a clear gameplan for Coventry to play their way out of Division Four.

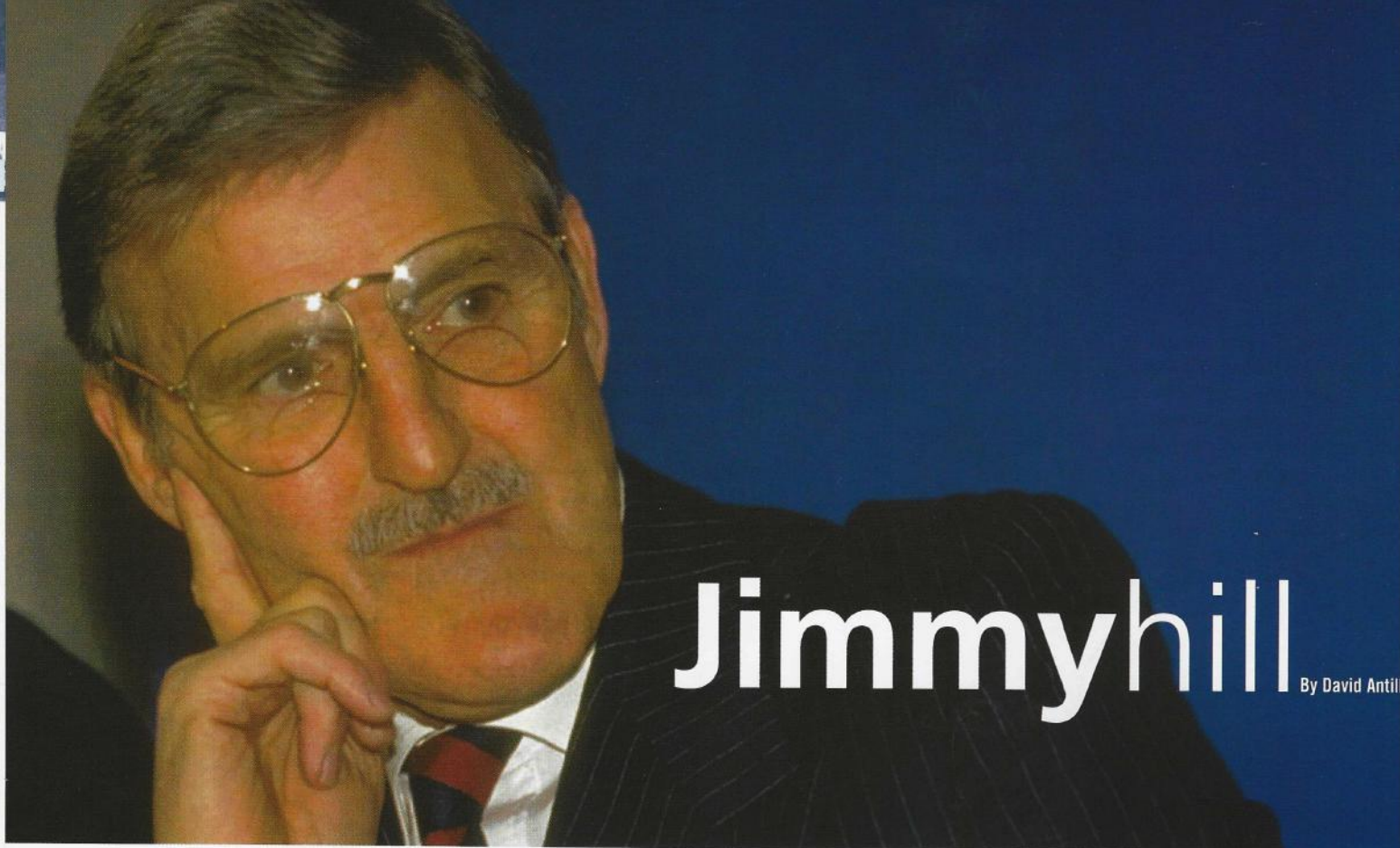


**~ MEMORY ~**

*Lloyd McGrath, Player 1984 - 1994*

"The thing that sticks in my mind the most is when the pitch was completely covered in sand around 1988. I remember John Sillett pull all the lads to one side before we went out and told us that we weren't going to like the pitch but that we just had to get on with it. Unfortunately I broke my leg playing on it in a Simod Cup game against Ipswich and was out for nine months. I think the problem was with the under-soil heating or drainage and it wasn't the best of surfaces to play on. Thankfully the pitches have got a lot better since then!"





# Jimmy Hill

By David Antill

**“The Wolves game was such an unforgettable day and for me nothing can compete with it.”**

**“Derrick Robins was my Abramovich”**

**“It’s harder to be a hooligan sitting down than it is standing up.”**

**H**e achieved more in five years with the Sky Blues than the majority of managers do in their entire career. We spoke to former Manager, Board member and Chairman of Coventry City, Jimmy Hill, and found out how he went from being an untried manager to the most important figurehead in the Club’s proud history.

#### **How did the Coventry City manager’s job come about?**

I bumped into Derrick Robins at a social evening although I had no idea that he was thinking of me as manager. I was invited to watch them play Kings Lynn in the FA Cup and they lost 2-1 and I’m pretty sure he thought there was no way I’d take the job after that. But I thought the other way around because you can’t get any worse after going out of the Cup to a non-league team so in my mind it was the ideal time to start. To me it was a great advantage that they lost because I didn’t have too much to do to make things better. There was only one way to go and that was up.

#### **How did you feel going into your first managerial position?**

I’d be lying if I said I could see all sorts of possibilities ahead of me. I gained coaching experience with Oxford and then London University and I’d learned to win games with an inferior team. The experience of how to win matches and make a team better than another caught me straight away. It gave me a good grounding and when I came to Coventry I knew how I was going to train the players straight away.

#### **How did the fans take to your appointment?**

I’d finished playing the season before when I damaged my cartilage and I retired and I went onto the other side of the fence. There was no instinctive feeling from the fans because their reaction would depend on whether we won or lost football matches. If you win matches you’re a good manager, if you lose them you’re not but I came with some fixed and strong ideas on how to win football matches.

#### **How did you make your impact on the team?**

Derrick Robins gave me £30,000 to strengthen the team and I bought six players with that money. Among them was a guy called Bobby Laverick who I signed but I dropped him after very few matches and never played him again and put in a 17-year-old called Ronnie Rees. The effect that had on the other players was amazing because they all saw that if they weren’t doing their stuff, they’d be dropped. You just do what your mind tells you and the one thing I can’t stand is players who

don’t try. I can stand players who try their heart out and it doesn’t work out. In my eyes I didn’t want him in the team and I brought Ronnie Rees in who was green but he tried and in the end he became a class player. The effect that had on the other players was staggering. I’m not saying I was clever enough at the time to think of all this but looking back I did the right thing by dropping a player who was bought.

When I got rid of Terry Bly and brought in George Hudson I wasn’t very popular with the fans. It’s easy to look at it retrospectively but I could always cope with the problems that would arise publicly for me doing something like that. I didn’t regret it about that because all I was concentrating on was getting a team that would win us more matches than we lost. If you’re not more accurate in your judgement than your own supporters, how can you not expect to be more accurate in your judgement than other managers who have spent their whole lives in the game being unkind to the fans but they don’t have the background and they’re not involved so deeply in the game. All I did was follow my instincts.



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### Who were your most important players?

Having George Curtis as captain at 21-years-old, who was the strongest man in the blessed world, had a huge effect. You generally have captains who have played a few years first but when I saw the way he tackled people I wasn't going to argue with him! I was very lucky to inherit him because his cold-blooded total enthusiasm for the game and desire to win, both physically and mentally, was such a reward. In the end, Ernie Machin was the cheapest player I bought out of all the ones I spent that £30,000 on and that was a bit of luck because he was the star player for me when we got promoted.



### How was your relationship with Derrick Robins?

He didn't get on with everybody but he was a very determined man who had made a success of his business. For me it was a perfect relationship between manager and Chairman and without any doubt that is the most important relationship at any football club. If you're happy with each other and on the same side it gives you a hell of an advantage, especially if they fund you well! Derrick was my Abramovich. Not only did he assist me in signing players but he also transformed the ground. The first thing he corrected when I arrived was the sloping pitch. I told him that if we were to go up the leagues it can't be right playing on a pitch like that and he got it sorted out. We were a good partnership, we got on well and we never lost our heads with each other.



### You were renowned for coming up with innovative ideas while at Coventry, how did you dream them all up?

Thankfully Derrick was willing to open his mind to any idea. I was the one who would come up with them but he was very happy to go along with it and it was a mutual trust. We also treated the supporters like they were very important to Coventry City, which they always have been. We had to have an open mind, and risk failure because they didn't all work. One of the Directors, John Camkin, was there on the night we wrote the Sky Blue Song. That particular night he came back from working at another match and said we have to have a song. Over a bottle of wine we wrote the words between us and sung it together, promoted it at the next game and it caught on.

### What was your greatest achievement while manager of the Club?

Beating Wolves in front of 51,000 people, all of them singing the Sky Blue Song, will stay with me forever. There were so many people in the ground and it was an amazing atmosphere. Wolves were a much bigger club than Coventry back then and had brought masses of their own fans so to beat them 3-1 and virtually assure ourselves the Championship was amazing. It was such an unforgettable day and for me nothing can compete with it.

### Why did you leave Coventry after achieving promotion?

It's quite strange because I didn't think of anything else except for staying on managing Coventry. All I could foresee was managing Coventry City for the rest of my life when the job as Head of Sport at London Weekend Television came up. It was a difficult decision but being a football manager is a very frightful business for your family. Life is strange and looking back on how it happened you wonder what would have happened if I'd made another choice. I've been very lucky in my working life that I don't regret any decisions but I have nothing but fond memories of Highfield Road and although I don't regret leaving, I'm necessarily pleased that I did. I always feel at home in this stadium and to this day I hate it when Coventry lose.



### You returned as Managing Director in 1975 and later went on to be Chairman, how did that compare to management?

I was pleased that I could do something to help when I came back. That is the feeling I can remember. However, whatever else one does in football, nothing is as enjoyable as playing but it is not nearly as enjoyable being a Director as it is being a manager. As a Director or Chairman you rely on too many people to do their jobs well without having any real control and I didn't like that.

### As Chairman, you changed Highfield Road to an all-seater stadium – what was your thinking behind that?

It was all about up-lifting football at a time when it was needed most and it was about increasing the entertainment for the supporters. The saying I had back then was "It's harder to be a hooligan sitting down than it is standing up." Football was really suffering from hooliganism at the time and although I think it was a difficult decision, I was a bit worried that people wouldn't like it because they would find it harder to cheer their team on sitting down. But I'm used to people accepting my decisions until they work – then they have to accept them! I've never in any doubt that it was the right thing to do.



### Is there anything you feel you could have done better as a manager or Chairman?

It wasn't while I was with Coventry but I feel my one and only failure is that I never managed to get the game refereed by ex-professionals. I have tried for years but I have given up now. One of my favourite ideas is when I suggested introducing three points for a win in the early Eighties when I was on a Football League committee as a way of improving the game. The Committee weren't keen for it and Matt Busby stood up and said "Hold on a minute, nobody else has thought of anything." They introduced it on a trial, it worked and now the world plays for three points. Amazing!

### How will you feel when Coventry leave Highfield Road?

There will be an element of sadness obviously but the way I look at it is it will be a new era in Coventry City's history. It's all about progression and I just hope we win more games there than they have at Highfield Road recently. I think it's inevitable if the Club wanted to survive and the Council must take the credit for providing the football club with those facilities. Full marks to them because they can't take the blame for the mistakes that have been made in the past, which meant the Club could not survive without its stadium. You can't take away what has happened in the past and I look at the move as going forward again. I'm not about moving on.

## Derrick Robins the man behind the success

When Sky Blues fans were asked to observe a minute's silence before the final game of last season there were undoubtedly a fair proportion of supporters who were not watching City when the man they were respecting was involved with the Club.

Younger generations of Coventry fans had perhaps never even heard of Derrick Robins – who passed away on May 3 2004, aged 89 – but nevertheless an eerie hush descended upon Highfield Road as over 22,000 supporters paid their respects to the former Sky Blues Chairman – undoubtedly the most important in Coventry City's history.

Because whether or not you followed City during the Sixties, Robins' legacy lives to this very day. Put simply, without him Coventry would never have been the place they were in the top flight without his assistance and Highfield Road would most definitely not be the stadium we are bidding farewell to today.

It was fitting then, that his tribute was held at the Crystal Palace game when the ground he practically built was virtually packed to capacity with what was by far the club's biggest crowd of the season and even more fitting that the team delivered an impressive victory against the would-be play-off champions.

The son of a stockbroker, Robins was born in Bexley Heath in Kent in 1914 and although he came to adore football while involved with the Sky Blues, his first sporting love was cricket and he made his mark as a talented wicket keeper.

He moved to Coventry in 1937 and served as a Major during World War II, seeing service in India, Iran, Iraq and Burma. He soon took up cricket again after demobilisation in 1946 but football was becoming more of a lasting interest.

He went on to achieve some success in cricket circles, keeping wicket for Warwickshire and playing regular Minor Counties cricket from 1946 to 1952. But as football boomed in the post war era, the soccer bug well and truly bit him.

A self-made man, his business interests exploded from a basic four man operation into a huge concrete-building industry to make him one of the richest men in the country in the late Sixties although he hated to discuss his wealth with anyone. He was renowned as a ruthlessly ambitious man, and it was this drive which changed the fortunes of Coventry City forever.

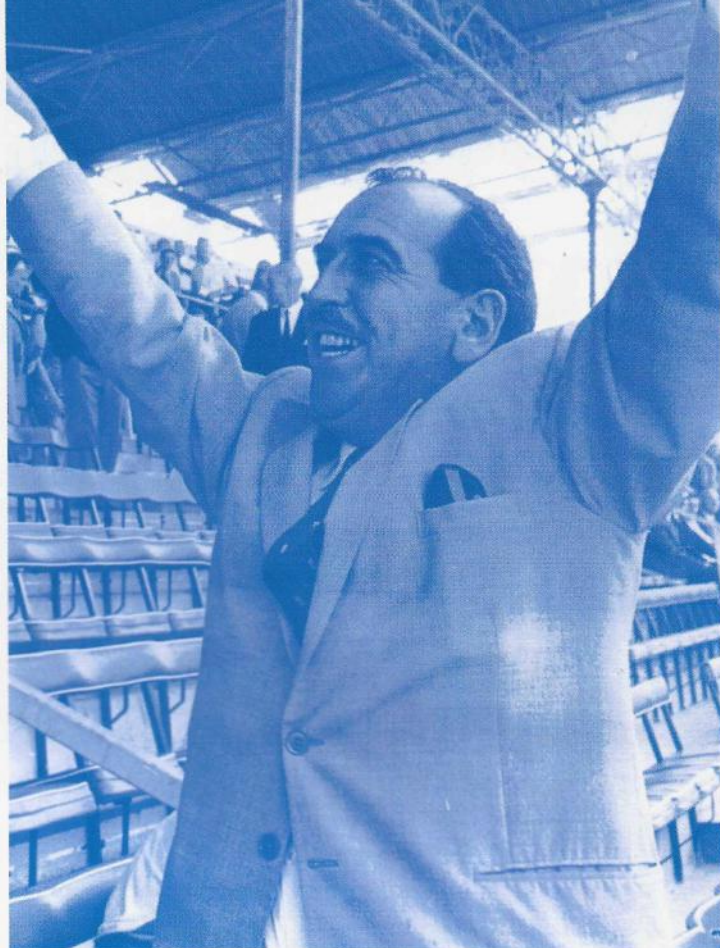
Robins' association with the Club began in April 1954, becoming a Director when Peter Shanks was installed as Chairman. A large part of the debt was paid off immediately by the new Board and the scouting and coaching systems were reshaped as the funds were promised for new players.

Immediately it was apparent that the Club was now controlled by more ambitious people, desperate to see City further up the footballing pyramid than Division Three South.

The fans were crying out for a return to Division Two, which they were relegated from in 1952. Instead, by 1958 when a restructuring of the Football League saw the amalgamation of the regionalised Division Three North and South into Divisions Three and Four, Coventry failed to finish high enough to be included in a new third tier.

By one season at that level was to be endured as City finished second to win promotion to Division Three, which was followed by a near miss in the 1959/60 season when they finished fourth.

In October 1960 Robins became Chairman of the Club and immediately made funds available for manager Billy Frith but it did not pay dividends. Inconsistency was a major fault and following an embarrassing Cup defeat to Kings Lynn in November 1961 he was sacked.



The history books tell us that it was a chance meeting between Robins and Hill at the 1961 Lord's Taverners Ball in London which led to the PFA Chairman taking over the managerial reins at Highfield Road and four days after that cup exit Hill was in charge.

Over the next five years Hill would lead the team to unimaginable success. Thanks to his Chairman's willingness to assist him in the transfer market, Hill made some inspired signings and within five years Coventry had risen from Division Three to Division One. Robins handed over a gift of £30,000 in the summer of 1962 with which Hill was to reshape the team and it was from that point onwards that our rise through the leagues gathered momentum.

Success on the pitch is one thing but to match that with equal if not even greater strides off the pitch is another and Robins was just as responsible as the more famous manager for really putting Coventry City on the map.

Not only did he allow Hill complete freedom in taking charge of team matters but he also backed him fully with the many ideas he came up with. He was always full of foresight as well, supporting the growth of seating within football stadia and predicting that the family atmosphere would take over football. "Football must have a new conception," he would say. "It hasn't any divine right of survival."

Also, how Highfield Road stands to this very day is largely down to the vision of Robins, allied with his willingness to take a risk.

For while Jimmy Hill was behind the huge leap in class on the playing field during the 1960s, Coventry City's most famous manager was ably backed by a Chairman who was at least 30 years ahead of the game.

In 1963, after narrowly missing out on promotion to Division Two the first piece of work on a grand redesign of Highfield Road began with the construction of the new Sky Blue Stand on the Thackhall Street side of the ground. Throughout the 1963/64 season, progress on this fine new stand continued and it was ready for the start of the following campaign when Coventry had achieved promotion back to the Second Division for the first time in 12 years.

Improvements on the ground did not halt there and in 1968, after the Main Stand was gutted by fire, £150,000 was spent on a new one. In 1973, the Sky Blue Stand was replaced and expenditure on the ground over the last decade was rapidly approaching £1 million.

After 14 years as Chairman and over 20 years involvement with the Club, Robins eventually stepped down in April 1975 to settle in South Africa. His departure marked the end of an era for the Sky Blues he had effectively created. People with his vision, combined with immense generosity, have been hard to come across since then.

DA

# the Swinging Sixties 1962-19

Think of the Sixties in Great Britain and you will conjure up images of the country, and in particular London, being the cultural centre of the globe. Britain was setting trends in, among other things, industry, fashion and popular culture that the rest of the world followed.

While the majority of books and films which have been produced since then tend to focus on events in the capital city, approximately 100 miles away, in sleepy Coventry there was a revolution occurring which would change the shape of Coventry City Football Club for evermore.

The five-year spell between 1962 and 1967 is known as the Sky Blues Revolution and under the Chairmanship of Derrick Robins and management of Jimmy Hill, Coventry City were spectacularly catapulted from the lower reaches of the Third Division to the First Division.

Coventry supporters under a certain age have been spoilt, having grown up to know the Club as a top flight outfit and nothing else – something which perhaps makes these days in the lower half of the Championship (or Division Two as it would have been called in the Sixties) seem like the ultimate low, when in actual fact it is relatively high compared to where Hill brought his team from 40 years ago.

Unless you have read the countless history books covering the Club, you may know little more than the climactic match of the 1966/1967 season against Wolves, when a record crowd of 51,455 watched the Sky Blues defeat their local rivals by three goals to one to all but clinch the Second Division title. (see right)

City and Wolves had both already assured themselves of promotion but the scenes of jubilation on the pitch afterwards will never be forgotten. Two pitch invasions during the match led the referee to warn that any more encroachment from the supporters would lead to him abandoning the game. Afterwards though, the playing surface was flooded with thousands of ecstatic fans, and the scenes were repeated a fortnight later when City finally secured top spot with a 3-1 win over Millwall.



## The Sixties: From Zeros to Heroes

**December 1961:** Former PFA Chairman Jimmy Hill succeeds Billy Frith as manager of Coventry City to an indifferent response from the fans, who had grown accustomed to seeing managers come and go at alarming regularity. Coach Alf Wood, chief scout Arthur Jepson and assistant trainer Ted Roberts were sacked at the same time as Frith – a massive upheaval. City win their first match under Hill's control by a goal to nil against Northampton.

### 1962

**January:** Hill makes his first signing in Roy Dwight (cousin of Elton John). Alan Dicks is appointed assistant manager

**March:** Bill Myerscough and Ron Hewitt sold to Chester for £5,000 and Hill signs Ernie Machin on a hunch.

**May:** Coventry won only two of their final eight matches and finish 14th in Division Three in front of crowds as low as 6,000 but Hill's restructuring was well underway having signed left winger Willy Humphries and full-back John Sillett.

**June/July:** Squad is strengthened further with forwards Hugh Barr and J Whitehouse arriving along with left winger Bobby Laverick. Biggest signing is that of Terry Bly for £10,000 from Peterborough where he had scored 52 goals in 1960/61.

**August:** Season begins with Coventry wearing all new sky blue kit. (see right) Coventry Evening Telegraph's Derek Henderson dubs them the Sky Blues – the rest is history. 2-0 win over Notts County on opening day.

**October:** Left winger Ronnie Rees breaks through into the first team.

**November:** Talented Coventry schoolboy John Docker chooses Coventry over Aston Villa, West Brom and Birmingham – a significant turning point for Hill.





**December:** City are fifth by Christmas, but there are no league games between December 29 and February 23 with sub-zero conditions making it impossible to play Third Round of the FA Cup against Lincoln.

**1963**

**March:** Lincoln Cup tie is played at the 16th attempt, 60 days after it was meant to be staged. City win 5-1, and in Round Four beat Portsmouth 2-1 in a second replay.

**March 25th:** Coventry play Sunderland in legendary Cup game in front of approximately 100,000 supporters. Two goals in final eight minutes from Dietmar Bruck and George Curtis give Coventry the victory amid jubilant scenes from the crowd.



Dietmar Bruck

**March 30th:** All-ticket Sixth Round tie against Aston Villa ends in 3-1 defeat but Sky Blues are lucky. Bly opened scoring after five minutes and a blatant penalty appeals turned down as well as seeing an effort hit the underside of the crossbar and stay out. Two Charlton goals helped them through.

**April:** Hill pays a Club record £21,000 for striker George Hudson from Peterborough, pushing fans' favourite Bly down the pecking order. Hudson scores a debut hat-trick to silence the critics.

**May:** Hills' first full season sees City finish fourth in Division Three.

**August:** Terry Bly joins Notts County causing uproar among the supporters. City thump Crystal Palace 5-1 on opening day.

**October:** Crowds up to as high as 30,000 and Coventry thrash Shrewsbury 8-1 as they sit top of the table.

**1964**

**February:** After establishing a nine-point lead at the top of the table, it is reduced to just one point after terrible run of form in the New Year.

**March:** Crystal Palace overtake Sky Blues and establish four-point lead.

**April:** 12,000 Coventry fans travel to watch a rejuvenated side lose 2-0 at Peterborough. Other results mean City can still go up and 36,901 see Hudson's goal give the Sky Blues a 1-0 win over Colchester to finish top of the table on goal difference. **PROMOTION TO DIVISION TWO.**



George Hudson's goal gave City a one nil victory and clinched promotion to Division 2

**August:** Win first five games in Division Two, including a 5-3 win against Bolton in one of the finest attacking displays of all-time from two teams at Highfield Road, before losing the next five.

**November:** Bill Glazier signs from Crystal Palace for a world record transfer fee for a goalkeeper of £35,000. "When you want the best you have to pay for it," states

**December:** City fall into relegation zone and lose 8-1 in the League Cup to Leicester.

**1965**

**April:** Bill Glazier breaks his leg, having established himself in the England Under 23 team, where he kept three clean sheets in three appearances.

**May:** City finish in a respectable 10th place as average gate goes up to 26,500

**August:** Two goals from Hudson give Sky Blues 2-1 opening day victory over local rivals Wolves.

**October:** First away game is relayed back to huge screens on the Highfield Road pitch from Cardiff.

**1966**

**March:** Hudson sold to Northampton for £29,000 after a relatively poor run of form. Local youngster Bobby Gould plays up front for the rest of the season.

**May:** City finish in their highest ever league position of fourth in Division Two, missing out on promotion by two points.

**July:** Scottish striker Ian Gibson signs for a record £55,000. Bill Glazier returns from his broken leg.

**October:** After a good start to the season, Gibson has a blazing row with Hill and is transfer listed.

**November:** Gibson recalled and Sky Blues embark on 25-game unbeaten run, including a 3-1 win over Wolves at Molineux in December. The next time the two sides would meet goes down in history as one of the greatest days in Coventry City's history.



Action from the promotion-sealing 1-1 draw at Cardiff

**1967**

**March 11:** The Match of the Day cameras visit Highfield Road for the first time for the game against Bolton. A Bobby Gould goal earned City a point in a 1-1 draw.

**April 29:** After securing promotion with a draw at Cardiff City, City beat Championship rivals Wolves 3-1 to all but seal their place at the top of Division Two. A fortnight later they are crowned Champions with a 3-1 win against Millwall.



# the midlands match *of the century*

April 29 1967  
Coventry City 3 Wolverhampton Wanderers 1  
Highfield Road Stadium  
Attendance: 51,455

The importance of this game to the Sky Blues was not so much in the end result – Coventry and Wolves were already guaranteed promotion – it merely served to underline how far Jimmy Hill had taken the Club in five short years.

Wolves were a bigger outfit than Coventry at the time and this fixture, dubbed by Hill as the “Midlands Match of the Century”, was hugely important in deciding the destiny of the Second Division Championship.

It was a day that would never be forgotten for anybody lucky enough to be watching from the terraces and also for everybody associated with Coventry City Football Club at the time. So much had changed since Hill took over at the tail end of 1961, when City were battling it out in Division Three, and this was the culmination of it all – a fitting climax to Coventry’s greatest ever season up to that point.



The week beforehand, both teams had assured promotion, the Sky Blues with a 1-1 draw at Cardiff and the supporters turned out like they had never done before to see which of these two Midlands rivals would secure the top spot.

Over 51,000 fans crammed Highfield Road beyond its capacity. Thousands of children sat on the touchlines with other, braver souls scaling floodlights and the roofs of the stands to make sure they did not miss any of the action.

The travelling support were treated to an encouraging first half display as Wolves dominated up until the interval. In the 40th minute Peter Knowles took advantage of George Curtis’ mis-hit clearance to Derek Dougan’s feet and made it 1-0 to the Black Country side.

City emerged re-invigorated after the break and on the hour they were level. Ronnie Rees sped past Bailey, centred to Ian Gibson who in turn touched the ball onto Ernie Machin and he made no mistake with a close range finish.

Gibson added a sublime second only five minutes later to cap off what had been

a fine season for him. The Scottish international had become a firm favourite of the fans during 1966/67 having forced his way back into the team after a period of fall outs with Jimmy Hill saw him transfer listed.

He made it 2-1 on the day when he received a pass from John Tudor, flicked the ball over a defender’s head and then ran on to lob his shot accurately past Wolves goalkeeper Phil Parkes. The strike, just as the equaliser had, triggered a major pitch invasion as Coventry fans could barely contain their delight. The referee warned that any more encroachment would lead to the game being called off. Thankfully the supporters managed to hold back the next time City scored.

It did not come until four minutes from time, before which Wolves had threatened to get back into the match. Knowles hit an upright and Mick Kearns headed off the Coventry goalline with Bill Glazier beaten to maintain City’s slender advantage.

And in the 86th minute it was all over – an interchange of passes between George Curtis and Machin set up a chance for Rees who completed the scoring. Not a single one of the thousands sat on the touchlines dared to run onto the pitch, that was the final whistle blew when they engulfed their heroes.

Hordes of fans congregated in front of the Main Stand and waited for the players to emerge in the Directors’ Box. Jimmy Hill led a rousing rendition of the Sky Blues Song as the champagne flowed.

A fortnight later a 3-1 win over Millwall at Highfield Road secured promotion to the Championship and amid similar scenes, the Sky Blues had done it – they had reached Division One where they would proudly remain until the 21st Century.

**Coventry:** Glazier; Kearns; Bruck; Lewis; Curtis; Clements; Key; Machin; Tudor; Gibson; Rees.

**Wolves:** Parkes; Bailey; Thomson; Hunt; Hawkins; Holsgrove; Wharton; Knowles; Dougan; Burnside; Wagstaffe.

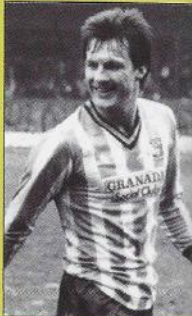
**Referee:** N Callender (Yorkshire)



## ~ MEMORY ~

Keith Houchen, player 1986 - 1989

“I’ll always remember the game against Spurs at Highfield Road in the same season that we won the FA Cup. It was a cracking match and we ended up winning 4-3. I’d had a bit of a rough time with injuries since I signed for the Club that summer and the Spurs match was the first one I had any real influence on. I scored the opening goal – my first for the Club and I nearly got the last one as well but big Cyril got there just a fraction of a second before me. I’ve played for a lot of clubs and the actual football clubs themselves aren’t normally the nicest place to spend time at. Highfield Road is different because it was a hub of activity for us. We always ate in the restaurants and it was a great place to be.”



# 5

## of the best in the sixties

### Reg Glazier

Coventry City Football Club has always had an eccentric knack of either producing or signing top-notch goalkeepers. From Reg Matthews to Steve Ogrizovic, Arthur Lightening to Chris Kirkland – it is not just one or two who have been on our books. City have regularly had at least one first class stopper within the squad. Jimmy Hill bought Glazier in October 1964 for a world record fee for a goalkeeper of £25,000. In eleven years with City he became a huge crowd favourite, making 392 appearances for the Sky Blues as well as picking up three Under 23 caps. He may have become Gordon Banks' understudy for the 1966 World Cup were it not for a broken leg and a year on the sidelines.



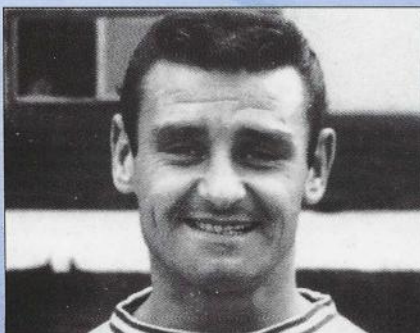
### George Curtis

"The strongest man in the blessed world" was how Jimmy Hill described Curtis when he made him captain at the tender age of 21. An uncompromising centre half around whom the successful side of the Sixties was built, Curtis gave the Sky Blues solidarity at the back and was an inspiring skipper. After making his debut at the back at the age of 16 in 1957 he went on to make 534 full appearances for the Club – a record which was only surpassed by Steve Ogrizovic relatively recently. As if achieving success in playing wasn't enough, he and fellow Sixties teammate forged the management team which brought the FA Cup to Coventry in 1967.



### George Hudson

The superlatives for Hudson still ring off the tongue for those who either played or managed him. Jimmy Hill was a full back in the same side as him and summed it up so: "If George were playing today, he would be worth millions. And I mean twenty or thirty million!..." Coventry City historian Jim Brown puts it another way: "For many fans who



first visited Highfield Road in the City's golden era of the early 1960's George Hudson is the greatest City player of all time..." When he signed the fans weren't so keen as Hudson came in when fans favourite Terry Bly was dropped from the side. However, a record of 75 goals in 129 games in four years speaks for itself and Hudson was undoubtedly a prolific scorer as well as having amazing ball control and coolness in possession.

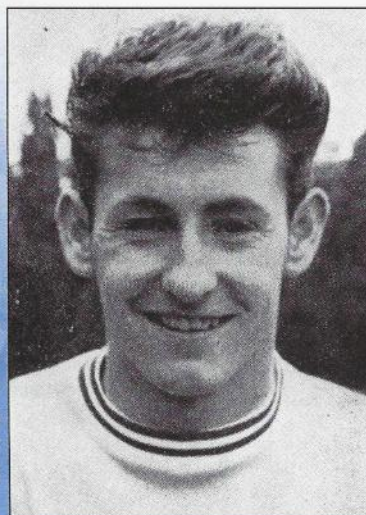
### Ernie Machin

Considering Jimmy Hill signed Machin on a hunch – he went up to see him play for non-league Nelson when City weren't playing one Saturday and signed him up – Machin went on to be one of the most integral players of the Sixties. Hill still recalls the day he first met him: "Somebody had recommended him to me on a whim, and even though he didn't have the greatest game in the world when I went to see him, he held his own against better and older players. He was so enthusiastic and he said to me that he didn't have the greatest game but he wouldn't let me down." Indeed he didn't, and his tigerish displays in the midfield were hugely important to the Sky Blues, as was his knack of scoring vital goals such as the ones against Wolves and Ipswich when City won promotion to the First Division.

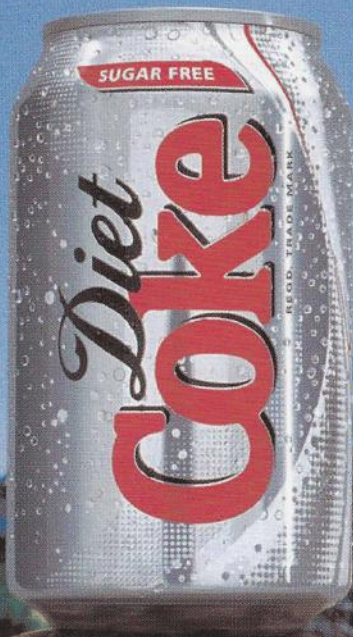


### Ronnie Rees

Another player who benefited from Hill's willingness to put youth ahead of experience if he thought it would benefit the team, Rees came in for one of the manager's own purchases, Bobby Laverick at the tender age of just 18. He revelled in the responsibility afforded to him and made the left wing his own between 1962 and 1968. His slight frame and diminutive stature did not hamper him and his ability to leave full-backs in his wake created goals galore for the likes of Hudson, Bly and Gould. Still, he got among the goals himself and netted 52 times in 262 appearances before he was sold to West Brom by Noel Cantwell.

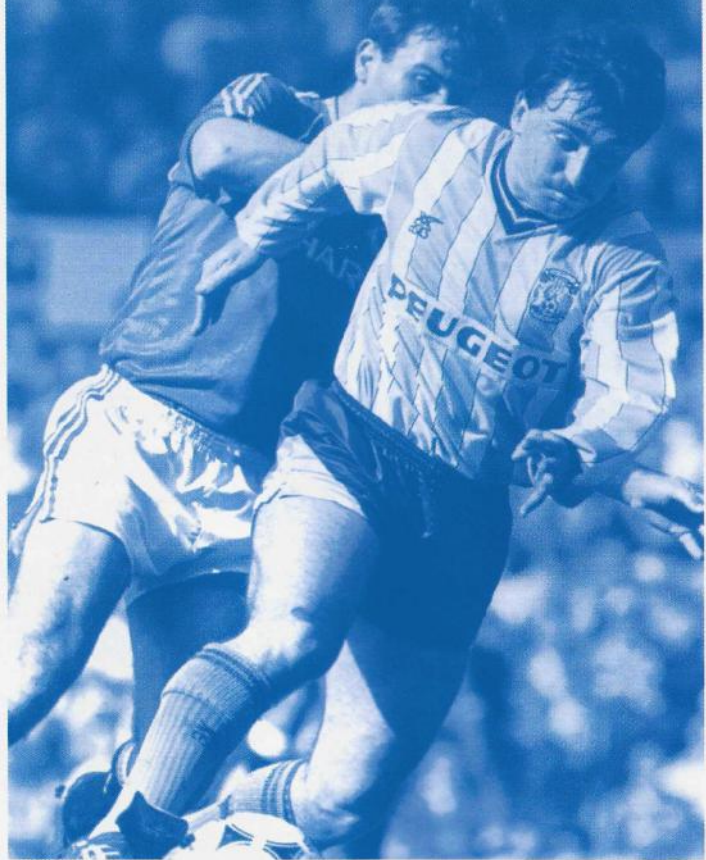


***I'm better  
with me  
left foot***



***for those  
who love life***

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# Micky Gynn

Spent ten years as a player at Highfield Road and it goes without saying that this stadium holds a special place in my heart because I have so many happy memories of my time here.

The first one that I can recall is of my home debut against West Brom in October 1983. I had to wait quite a while for it because I'd pulled my hamstring on the opening day of the season at Watford and although it was a great day, we lost 2-0 and I remember Cyrille Regis scoring one of their goals.

My memories since that day are far too many to mention and I would definitely need more than a page in the programme to tell you about them all.

My first season with the Club was an odd one because up until Christmas we were bottom fourth in the league and absolutely flying. One of the greatest games I ever played in was against Liverpool just a couple of months after I had made my home debut and we beat them 4-0 with Terry Gibson scoring a hat-trick.

That match ranks as one of my all-time Highfield Road highlights because Liverpool were an amazing team back then. They were the reigning champions and players like Hansen, Lawrenson, Dalglish, Rush and Souness were playing for them that day but we hammered them. I'm sure it was Gibbo's favourite game for City as well. I always got on well with him, being the same size and all! We were teammates as well and it was great to see him score a hat-trick against such a big side. Unfortunately results like that don't tend to go unpunished and around Easter time they hammered us 5-0 at Anfield in a match I remember because once Grobelaar took a throw-in!

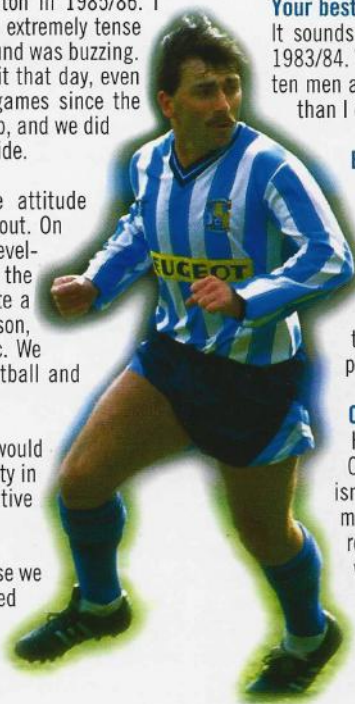
That defeat pretty much summed up the second half of the 1983/84 season because after starting so well, we beat Sunderland at the start of the New Year but then didn't win again for ages. We left it until the last day of the season and ended up thanks to a 2-1 win over Norwich.

In my first three seasons I was at the Club we needed to get a result on the last day of the season and all three of the matches took place at Highfield Road. We beat QPR that first year, QPR in 1984/85 and Everton in 1985/86. I remember the atmosphere on those last days being extremely tense with the exception of the Everton game when the ground was buzzing. It seemed to me like the crowd all felt we could do it that day, even though I don't think we'd won three consecutive games since the 1983/84 season. That is what we had to do to stay up, and we did it in the end with a 4-1 win over yet another great side.

For me, that fighting spirit and never say die attitude summarises what that squad of players were all about. On any day we could beat anybody and we instantly developed a great spirit because so many of us signed at the same time from the lower divisions. There was quite a mix of us in a hotel at first – me, Benno, Terry Gibson, Steve Bamber, Ashley Grimes and Raddy Avramovic. We were all out to prove ourselves at that level of football and pretty much all of us managed to do that.

You have to say that as a player, I always thought we would win those battles and you have to have that mentality in a relegation battle. If we'd have allowed any negative thoughts in our minds we wouldn't have won.

From that point on our fortunes changed and of course we believed so much in 1987, but most of it happened away from Highfield Road. I remember being drunk in the bath for the first time after we'd won the semi-final! We did so many interviews and had so



much champagne on the pitch afterwards that I was actually drunk by the time I was in the bath. And I will always remember Houch's header in the Final. I was really close to him when he scored it and he went off to celebrate with the City fans behind the goal. I wanted to join him but the advertising hoardings came up to my waist and I can recall thinking that if I tried to jump over I'd get injured!

After 1987 there were some great games as well. There was the 5-4 win over Nottingham Forest in the League Cup where Kevin Gallacher and Nigel Clough scored hat-tricks. Unfortunately Booby Gould coming back to the Club did me few favours but I enjoyed so much of those 10 years I tend not to focus on the end. I've always felt it was a shame that I didn't get my testimonial earlier than I did but I eventually had it earlier this month and I hope by the time you're reading this it has been a great success.

## Quick questions for Micky

### Best game you played in at Highfield Road?

I'll always remember my home debut but I'd say the game where we beat Spurs 4-3 in the 1986/87 season. It was a fantastic game between two footballing teams. I remember Cyrille Regis scored the winner in the last minute, heading home his own header which had come out off the crossbar.

### Your best performance at Highfield Road?

It sounds silly but I think it was in a goalless draw against Southampton in 1983/84. We had Steve Hunt sent off for nutting Steve Williams. We were down to ten men and I remember coming off and thinking I couldn't have given any more than I did. You found yourself chasing players 80 yards or so to get the ball.

### Best manager you played for?

It has to be George and John and you tend to class them as one entity. John did most of the coaching while George was sort of the go-between between the Club and us.

### Most influential player you played with?

I honestly cannot answer this because our achievements were down to the whole team, not just one individual. No one player dominated that period of time.

### One over-riding memory:

Having spent ten years with the Club, from the ages of 20 to 30, Coventry City and Highfield Road have played a major part in my life and there isn't one memory to sum it all up but the Club and the city mean a lot to me. I have moved here and started a family here and Coventry's is the first result I always look out for on a Saturday. There are still so many people who come up to me on a daily basis and want to talk about the club and there are a lot of people who still want us to do well. Hopefully the move to the new stadium can bring back some of those happy times and although I'm sure it will take some adjustment, if we start winning games on a regular basis it will soon feel like home.

# Staff memories

HIGHFIELD RD

They're the unsung heroes of Coventry City Football Club, the people who put the wheels in motion behind the scenes and players and managers can come and go in the blink of an eye, other workers have been involved with the Club for years. David Antill went around Highfield Road & the Ryton training ground to hear from some of the longest serving members of staff at the Club.

*Pam Hindson, Personal Secretary to Graham Hover*

**How long have you worked for the Club?** 15 years

**What does your job entail?** Apart from secretarial duties for Graham and occasionally the Chairman, I also undertake the administration aspect of players' contracts and related documentation, First Team and Reserve Team match correspondence and confirming match officials. I am also the Club's Customer Charter contact/co-ordinator.

**What's the best/worst thing about working for Coventry City?** Best job in the world! Worst thing is when we lose.

**Were you a Coventry fan when you started working here? (If not are you now?)** I was a fan before I started.

**What is your fondest memory of Highfield Road?** Queuing at the Ticket Office to buy an FA Cup Final ticket and getting one of the last left!! Phew what a relief that was.....

**What is your favourite ever game seen at Highfield Road?** 28th November, 1990 Rumbelows Cup match v Nottingham Forest. We eventually won 5-4.

**Who's the best/your favourite Coventry player of all time?** Best I think is Robbie Keane. My favourite - well that is very difficult but David Speedie just pips Kevin Gallacher, Noel Whelan and Peter Ndlovu.

**Who's your favourite current player?** Ady Williams.

**Who's your favourite ever Coventry manager?** Can't pick just one manager, but from a personal point of view my favourite management team is Bobby Gould, Phil Neal and Brian Roberts.

**What will you miss the most about Highfield Road?** Rene Parsons our lovely tea-lady and also my office wall full of picture memories. (see below)

**Tell us something nobody else would know about Highfield Road?** My husband was one of the two-man team who climbed up the old floodlight towers to dismantle them. (I think the lights ended up at Hamilton Academicals)



*Jenny Poole, Manager's Secretary*

**How long have you worked for the Club?** I have just started my 37th year.

**What does your job entail?** I take the telephone calls, deal with the manager's correspondence, keep a diary for his appointments, book the team coaches, accommodation and pre-match meals. I put together monthly bulletins for directors, management, players, staff, press, etc. with details of all matches, match reports and book scouts tickets. Also I do any work required by the coaching staff, physios, club doctor and players.

**Were you a Coventry fan when you started working here? (If not are you now?)** No because I had only just moved to the City. I am now a very keen fan.

**What is your fondest memory of Highfield Road?** The warm welcome I received from everyone when I walked through the doors of Highfield Road in July, 1968.

**What is your favourite ever game seen at Highfield Road?** The most memorable one would have to be Everton (on 3.10.70) when Ernie Hunt and Willie Carr performed the 'donkey kick'.

**Who's the best Coventry player you have seen here?** I think it has to be Tony Hutchison - a great player and a great character.

**Who's your favourite ever Coventry manager?** Noel Cantwell, Bob Dennison, Mercer, Gordon Milne, Dave Sexton, Bobby Gould, Don Mackay, George Curtis, Sillett, Terry Butcher, Don Howe, Phil Neal, Ron Atkinson, Gordon Strachan, Ron Nilsson, Gary McAllister, Eric Black, Peter Reid and Micky Adams.

**What will you miss the most about Highfield Road?** Taking the familiar walk to matchdays from the car park in Thackhall Street, down Nicholls Street, via the ticket office in King Richard Street and into the Club. En route there are so many wonderful people, some of whom have worked at the Club for many years either full or part time. The car park attendants, ticket office staff, security staff, secretaries, receptionists, stewards, catering and groundstaff - and not forgetting the supporters. All there in all weathers with welcoming smiles and cheery welcomes.

**Tell us something nobody else would know about Highfield Road?** Many years ago when the late and much loved Phil Mead was Chairman, he arranged a friendly match at Highfield Road between a CCFC XI and a team from the University of Warwick. This was followed by dinner in the Grandstand Restaurant. Eddie Plumley who was the Coventry City Secretary at that time was about to join Watford F.C. and to our surprise, Elton John came along. After dinner Elton came over to our table and spent quite some time chatting with us. He was charming.



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*Michelle Ridley, Thackall Street Receptionist*

**How long have you worked for the Club?** 18 years

**What is your fondest memory of Highfield Road?** Standing on the Spion Kop with my family when I attended my first match when I was only six years old.

**What is your favourite ever game seen at Highfield Road?** Against Manchester United when Darren Huckerby scored the winning goal.

**Who's the best Coventry player you have seen here?** Cyrille Regis

**Who's your favourite current player?** Richard Shaw

**Who's your favourite ever Coventry manager?** Gordon Strachan - he always had a smile and made you laugh.

**What will you miss the most about Highfield Road?** We all work in close proximity to each other at the moment and we get on so well and do have a lot of good fun, we are like a small family, I hope it will be like that at the new Arena.

**Is there something nobody else would know about Highfield Road?** I think there is a secret in the Britannia Tyres Stand by the Directors Box doors. One morning when I worked around that side of the ground I walked past there and saw a person's shadow on the stairs and when I looked up there was nobody there. Needless to say I didn't go down there on my own after that.



*Dan Walker, Ticket Office Manager*

**How long have you worked for the Club?** Nine years

**Were you a Coventry fan when you started working here? (If not are you now?)** Yes

**What is your fondest memory of Highfield Road?** Darren Huckerby's goal against Manchester United.

**What is your favourite ever game seen at Highfield Road?** Coventry 5 - 0 Blackburn

**Who's the best player you have seen here?** Stephane Hadji

**Who's your favourite current player?** Louis Jorgenson or Michael Doyle

**Who's your favourite ever Coventry manager?** Gordon Strachan

**What will you miss the most about Highfield Road?** The familiarity. It's like leaving home, you know your moving to somewhere exciting and new but you miss everything you have grown up with.

**Is there something nobody else would know about Highfield Road?** In the nine years I've worked here the average attendance for league matches is 18,044.

*Dave Blair, Stadium Manager*

**How long have you worked for the Club?** Nine years

**What does your job entail?** I am responsible for the fabric of the Stadium, Training Ground and Shops, all of the utility services, repair and maintenance, Health and Safety, company cars, certification from the FA and local authority, and Televised Football matches etc.

**What's the best/worst thing about working for Coventry City?** The best thing is that every day the job has different challenges and no repetitive work. The worst is that I have to travel 37 miles each way to work so the traffic is the biggest problem.

**Were you a Coventry fan when you started working here? (If not are you now?)** No I don't follow football



**What is your fondest memory of Highfield Road?** When we were going to build the new stadium in 1999.

**Who's the best/your favourite Coventry player of all time?** Richard Shaw

**Who's your favourite current player?** Richard Shaw

**Who's your favourite ever Coventry manager?** Eric Black

**What will you miss the most about Highfield Road?** The constant breaking down of equipment.

**Tell us something nobody else would know about Highfield Road?** I am not obliged to say!

*Raj Athwal, Commercial Manager*

**How long have you worked for the Club?** 10 years

**Were you a Coventry fan when you started working here? (If not are you now?)** Born and bred in Coventry there's only one team to support!

**What is your fondest memory of Highfield Road?** Standing with Phil Neville in the George Curtis Suite whilst Coventry beat Man Utd 3-2 - we both agreed the best team won (we watched the match on TV - there were no spare seats)

**What is your favourite ever game seen at Highfield Road?** Coventry thrashed Liverpool 4-0 with a superb Terry Gibson hatrick

**Who's the best Coventry player you have seen here?** Terry Gibson

**Who's your favourite current player?** Micky Doyle

**Who's your favourite ever Coventry manager?** Sillett and Curtis

**What will you miss the most about Highfield Road?** The unique feeling of being at a ground where some of the best Coventry players have graced Highfield Road.

*Rene Parsons, Tea Lady*

**How long have you worked for the club?** 15 years

**What will you miss the most about Highfield Road?** I enjoy everybody's company and as I am not going to the new stadium I will miss it when I'm not here.

**Were you a Coventry fan before you started working here?** Yes, I was a fan but I didn't come to games very often. I have lived in the area all my life though.

**What is your fondest memory of Highfield Road?** When we won the Cup in 1987 all of my family went to the game but I stayed behind and we had a street party for the kids. It was a great day.

**Who is your favourite ever Coventry manager?** My favourite managers are George Curtis and John Sillett. They were here when I started and still speak to me now when they see me. George comes in every now and again.



*Karen Bennett, Retail Operations Manager/Buyer*

**How long have you worked for the Club?** 12 years

**What's the best/worst thing about working for Coventry City?** The best is coming to work after a win, the worst is coming to work after we have lost.

**Were you a Coventry fan when you started working here? (If not are you now?)** Always been a Coventry fan.

**What is your favourite ever game seen at Highfield Road?** It was in November 1995 and Wimbledon were leading 3-1. We went down to nine men when Williams and Shaw were sent off but we ended up drawing 3-3.

**Who's the best/your favourite Coventry player of all time?** Peter Ndlovu

**Who's your favourite current player?** Richard Shaw

**Who's your favourite ever Coventry manager?** Eric Black

**What will you miss the most about Highfield Road?** The closeness of the departments working together.

*Lorraine Mulvey, Mail Order Manager*

**How long have you worked for the Club?** 17 years

**What is your fondest memory of Highfield Road?** Meeting my first boyfriend on the West End

**Who's the best/ your favourite Coventry player of all time?** Paul Telfer (gorgeous)

**Who's your favourite current player?** Richard Shaw

**Who's your favourite ever Coventry manager?** John Sillett

**What will you miss the most about Highfield Road?** My draughty office

*Lesley Walsh, King Richard Street Receptionist*

**How long have you worked for the Club?** Nine years, two months

**What's the best/worst thing about working for Coventry City?** Best: Meeting Sven Goran Eriksson. Worst: Going down to Division One.

**Were you a Coventry fan when you started working here? (If not are you now?)** No and no.

**What is your fondest memory of Highfield Road?** Being an arm's length away from Alan Shearer, Peter Beardsley and Ally McCoist.

**What is your favourite ever game seen at Highfield Road?** I never get to see games because I am always on duty on a match-day.

**Who's the best/your favourite Coventry player of all time?** George Curtis because my Dad said so. Gary McAllister was mine.

**Who's your favourite current player?** Richard Shaw

**Who's your favourite ever Coventry manager?** Gordon Strachan

**Tell us something nobody else would know about Highfield Road:** The Main Stand Boxes on King Richard Street are haunted!!



Lorraine (far right) with the club shop team



*Roger Essex, Security Supervisor*

**How long have you worked for the Club?** Since August 1997

**What's the best/worst thing about working for Coventry City?** Being a City fan, the thing is obviously being close to the team I support. The worst thing is being on match days and therefore unable to watch the match or give support to the team.

**What is your fondest memory of Highfield Road?** 1987! Need I say more?

**What is your favourite ever game seen at Highfield Road?** I enjoyed the game against Wolves when we attained the highest gate figure in our history 51,455. I was the Kop with my wife and the result made the over crowding worth while.

**Who's the best/your favourite Coventry player of all time?** The best, I would say was Tommy Hutchinson. Our own wizard of the dribble, but my favourite was George Curtis. A real character and faithful servant of the club for many years.

**Who's your favourite current player?** I currently like Andy Morrell. He always gives 100%.

**Who's your favourite ever Coventry manager?** In spite of what happened during his reign, I always got on well with Gordon Strachan, but the George and John era has to be the top of my list.

**What will you miss the most about Highfield Road?** Living locally as I do, and having been associated with the Club throughout my working life, I will miss the family atmosphere which was always present.

**Tell us something nobody else would know about Highfield Road?** As security supervisor, I have many stories about Highfield Road and the goings on behind the scenes. Unfortunately I cannot tell you any of them without being either assaulted, or sacked.



Roger in his sky blue outfit for the FA Cup Final



~ MEMORY ~

Micky Quinn, Player 1992 - 1994

"I think it would have to be the Liverpool game over Christmas in 1992 - they didn't have a bad team at all but we battered them. On our day, I think we were as good as anyone in the league, as we proved. To beat any Liverpool side 5-1 was some achievement. I must admit that after I scored my second goal - I think it was the side's fifth - I went back to the halfway line and took the mickey a little bit. I put one hand over my eye like an eye patch and hopped all the way back! In football, it's a way of teasing the opposition and Bobby Gould pulled me off because of it! He told me we had to go up to Anfield later in the season to play them and I shouldn't take the mickey and he was right, because they beat us 4-0 at Anfield and started doing the same to us! But the home game was very special to me. As I'm from Liverpool, I had lots of family down here that day and as they were my boyhood team, to rub their noses in it was fantastic."









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1. 1920's, 2. 1930's, 3. 1940's, 4. 1960s, 5. 1975-1981/81, 6. 1981-1983, 7. 1985/86, 8. 1986/87, 9. 1987-1989, 10. 1991/92, 11. 1992-1994, 12. 1996/97, 13. 1998/99, 14. 2000/01, 15. 2003/04, 16. 2004/05.



### AwayKits

Coventry City away kits always seem to have caught the imagination of fans. Here are a couple that got everybody talking – the glorious chocolate brown number worn between 1978 and 1981, the purple and yellow combo of 1998/99 along with a relatively tame all-yellow strip from 1987 to 1989.

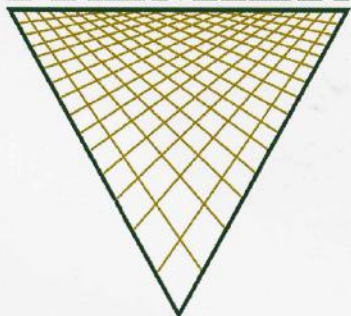




# The Great Escapes

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**I**t is something the Sky Blues excelled during their years as a top-flight club. A record no other club could come close to touching yet it was a stigma that became a little irritating when fans of other outfits repeatedly used against our exploits.

"If the Titanic was Sky Blue it would never have gone down," was the most commonly used phrase to illustrate Coventry's propensity to secure safety until the very last minute. In an ideal world, those day escapes would never have been necessary. But then again, in an ideal world Coventry City would be Champions of Europe with a trophy cabinet to match.

So while we may never have been blessed with a squad full of winners and beaters what we have witnessed over the years is the sort of courage and bravery in the face of adversity that most teams could only dream of.

The most recent "great escape" against Spurs at White Hart Lane in 1997 is one which differing members of that squad regularly regard as a highlight of their time with the Sky Blues. There is no doubting that staying up on the last day is a moment to savour.

Seven times in 34 years City left securing safety until the last minute. Here we take a look at the greatest escapes that ever took place at Highfield Road.

# Liverpool

April 22, 1969

Coventry 0 Liverpool 0

This game was a cliffhanger for both teams – Liverpool had to win to stand any chance of catching Leeds at the summit of Division One, while the Sky Blues required at least a point to stay up. And that is what they got in a fiercely fought encounter at Highfield Road where Maurice Peters was sent-off on the hour mark for an altercation with Alun Evans before the scores remained 0-0.

But the true tale of City's survival that season revolved around themselves and two other teams – Manchester United and Leicester City. Coventry faced Leicester at home on 1 April in a relegation four-pointer (only two points were awarded for a win until 1981). The Foxes were controversially allowed the lead in the 82nd minute when the referee awarded a penalty after Greenhalgh went down in the box under pressure from George Curtis. However, the linesman gave a free-kick Coventry's way and bizarrely it was his decision that stood. Six minutes later and Martin volleyed home from a Coop cross to give the Sky Blues a vital win.

Week later Coventry picked up another home win in front of the highest crowd of the season of



45,402 against a Manchester United team containing Best and Charlton which had collected 12 points out of 14. In their penultimate game of the season the Sky Blues drew with Nottingham Forest, after which Leicester were five points

behind with four games in hand. The Foxes earned five points from those games but lost by three goals to two against United on the final day of the season meaning City's draw with Liverpool was enough to stay up.



# Bristol City

May 19, 1977

Coventry 2 Bristol City 2

This relegation battle ended in bizarre circumstances, albeit familiar ones for the Sky Blues as they stayed up by the skin of their teeth. Sunderland were playing Everton at Goodison and any result other than a draw at Highfield Road would have seen them avoid the drop. A run of four games without a win meant City went into the final game of the 1976/77 needing a result to guarantee safety as did Bristol City. After the kick-off was delayed for traffic reasons, the Sky Blues typically put their fans through it by surrendering a two-goal lead.

Tommy Hutchison netted in the 15th and 51st minute but Bristol responded and were level with eleven minutes to play. At that stage a winner for either side could have meant relegation but with only five left on the clock, Sunderland's defeat was flashed on the scoreboards, meaning both sides were safe and they settled for a 2-2 draw. Bristol and Coventry players were more than happy to let the other team pass it around among themselves and at the final whistle it was as if both teams had won the Cup.



**Coventry City's greatest achievement in the club's history is remembered for numerous reasons – the fact that the Sky Blues were massive underdogs, Houchen's diving header and Gary Mabbutt's knee to name just three. But the FA Cup Final victory over Spurs is put into even clearer perspective when you look at where that team of winners came from. In each of the three seasons leading up to 1986/87 Coventry were on the brink of relegation and required last day get-outs:**

# Norwich

May 12, 1984

Coventry 2 Norwich 1

The advent of the three-point win meant that the safety mark in Division One had gone up from between 35 to 40 points to around 50 points, which was exactly what City ended up with in 83/84 thanks to a last day 2-1 win against Norwich. Bobby Gould had been installed as manager before the start of the season with the club in disarray. The term before Jimmy Hill left as Chairman as fans were outraged at the huge exodus of players. Gould's extensive knowledge of the lower leagues enabled him to snap up some bargains such as Dave Bennett, Terry Gibson, Trevor Peake, Michael Gynn, Micky Adams and last of all Stuart Pearce for just £25,000.

With the squad assembled at such a cut price the bookies had City down as favourites for the drop but thanks to immense workrate and spirit, by December the Sky Blues were fourth. A home win to Sunderland on January 2 signalled that things could possibly continue in the same vein, but Coventry only collected two wins from their next 19 fixtures meaning Norwich was a must-win game. At the start of the game City were level on points with Birmingham and Stoke with Blues having the better goal difference. Until Dave Bennett put Coventry 2-1 up in the 70th minute the Sky Blues were down and that would have been the



case had future Sky Blues striker Robert Rosario's late header for Birmingham gone in to earn them a 1-0 win rather than clattering the woodwork.

The upshot of the victory – achieved his aims of keeping Coventry in the division after assembling a core of the 1987 FA-Cup winning squad.

# Everton

May 26, 1985

Coventry 4 Everton 1

If fans thought City's escape the previous season had been dramatic it was a mere warm-up for perhaps their greatest ever, which cemented Coventry's title as the "Great Houdinis" of Division One. The Sky Blues were dead and buried with three games remaining and had to win all three. One victory in their last six outings left them rock bottom but they battled out 1-0 victories against Stoke and Luton to give themselves a glimmer of a hope.

But with an outstanding Everton team – who had romped to the league title losing only once since Christmas and picked up the European Cup Winners' Cup – coming to town there were few tipping the Sky Blues to beat the drop this time. A week beforehand the Toffees had missed out on a unique treble when Manchester United beat them in the FA Cup Final – would the blow serve to motivate them into one final swansong or would they be too demoralised to worry about finishing the season on a high?

With Peter Reid leading the charge of the midfield you would not have fancied Everton to roll over and die. But they left the lynchpin of their side out along



with three others who had played in the Cup Winners Cup Final and Coventry took full advantage. A goal within four minutes from Cyrille Regis calmed the nerves before the striker teed up Adams for number two, but City missed opportunities to kill the tie and Everton pulled one back before the interval.

A nervy 15 minutes passed and once again it was Regis who delivered the instant sedative for the City fans, netting just 90 seconds after the restart. Terry Gibson capped a fine display with his 19th of the season to complete the scoring although it could have been six or seven by the end.

Nobody expected the win – not the fans who invaded the pitch on a gloriously sunny day and least of all the Norwich players whose season had finished a fortnight ago. An outbreak of 'flu among the Coventry squad over Easter led to the postponement of three games and their season had stretched practically into June.

Some of the Canaries players were probably reclining on a beach somewhere when news of the unlikely victory which condemned them to relegation filtered through. Proof, if it were needed, that it really isn't over until the fat lady sings.



# Queens Park Rangers

May 3, 1986

Coventry 2 Queens Park Rangers 1

City's twentieth season in the top flight should have been a celebratory one but it was a campaign of unrest. Rumours of aggravation between the players and manager Don Mackay were abound during pre-season and a return of two points on the first five matches left Coventry second from bottom. Home form was particularly disappointing as Mackay bemoaned a lack of discipline on a regular basis.


Something had to give and three matches before the end of the season City parted company with the manager as they sat just one point above the drop zone. Executive Director George Curtis and Youth Team Coach John Sillett took temporary charge and it did not take long for the legendary duo to instil the belief which

would take the Sky Blues so far the following season. After a home win against Luton, the same was required on the last day against QPR.

Things did not look good after 28 minutes when John Byrne's shot deflected off Peake and flew past Ogrizovic. But with George and John bellowing encouragement from the sidelines, Coventry were 2-1 up by half time thanks to a Kilcline free-kick and a cool finish by Dave Bennett. Ipswich and Oxford lost their games but the Sky Blues held out for victory and avoided the drop by two points.

Curtis and Sillett had done enough to be given the manager and first team coach roles on a permanent basis later in the summer and they provided the key tactical changes that would turn City from relegation fodder to top ten material and FA Cup winners in less than 12 months.






~ MEMORY ~

*Stuart Pearce, Player 1983 - 1985*

"For me it would be the friendliness of everybody there. I'm 40-odd now and it's easy to look back and think of how you coped with experiences. I tell you, turning up for the first time when you're 21-years-old and naïve as they come, just being looked after and the friendliness of the place was the main thing for me. The feeling at Highfield Road – it was a great club to come into when you'd turned pro and I'll be forever grateful to the club for giving me my chance in the professional game."



# Dream Team



**T**hey were 1960s teammates who would later go on to oversee one of the Sky Blues' greatest ever achievements. John Sillett and George Curtis are rightly considered as Coventry City legends and without them the history books would undoubtedly make vastly different reading for Sky Blues supporters.

The duo first met in 1962 when Sillett joined the Sky Blues from Chelsea. Curtis was already a first team regular, having first broken into the side as a 17-year-old in the 1955-56 season and Jimmy Hill instantly made "the Ironman" captain of his successful team.

Curtis played through both promotions during the Sixties but a broken leg suffered in his second game after City had won promotion to Division One ruled him out for the rest of the 1967/68 season and we never really got a chance to see the centre half at full strength in the top flight.

Sillett arrived at Coventry with bags of top flight experience having spent a decade with Chelsea and he still clearly recalls his early encounters with Jimmy Hill and Derrick Robins.

"I was Jimmy Hill's first signing along with Willie Humphries but I had come across him before," he says. "I played against him while I was at Chelsea and he was at Fulham and met him again when he had taken over at the PFA. He came to Stamford Bridge and talked us all into joining and I thought if he could do that he must be a persuasive bloke!

"I had been at Chelsea for ten years and I must admit it took a lot of persuasion to get me to leave the club. I had never even been to Coventry and I think the only Midlands pitches I had played on were Aston Villa, Birmingham and West Brom.

"To leave London was going to be a hell of a wrench for me and there were three clubs interested in signing me, one of which was my hometown club of Southampton. It was where I was born, my Dad had captained them and my brother played for them so there was a big attraction there but I met up with Jimmy Hill and Derrick Robins for dinner and a drink and it must have been that that won me over!

"I knew from the very first meeting that they were two special people. Robins impressed me a great deal and I would say he was the perfect Chairman. He put his money where his mouth was and not many chairmen do that. If he said he would give such an amount of money he would do exactly that. I remember thinking that I've got no chance of getting away from these two without signing for them and I pretty much made up my mind straight away. I've certainly got no regrets and I've only got praise for Coventry City and I'd like to say a big thank-you to the Club and the fans for everything they have done for me.

"When I arrived I saw the ground was on a slope and thought I'd need one leg longer than the other to play full-back on that but I knew that special things were happening. The ground was being redeveloped, the pitch was levelled out and Jimmy had started a youth policy and was building a team and you just knew you were involved in something good.

"What made Jimmy different from other managers in that day and age is that he was very tactically aware. You didn't really have coaches in those days, training would quite often consist of somebody telling you to do two laps of laps then kick a ball. His approach was very different and he treated you as a man as well."

Sillett's experience was integral in the Sky Blues' promotion to Division Two in 1964, although his over-riding memory of his playing days is of a legendary tie the year before hand.

"Until I slipped my disc I was pretty much ever present and I enjoyed some days at Coventry and I think I'm right in saying that Jimmy rated me. Of all the games I played in the Sunderland FA Cup tie is the one that stands out. The atmosphere inside Highfield Road that day was absolutely amazing and what attendance they gave you could add at least 10,000 onto the gate.



"I took the free-kick that led to the first goal. I remember George saying he was going to go forward for it but I told him he should get in there and he scored the equaliser and when Dietmar got the second it was amazing. Sunderland were a top side in those days and I will never forget that day."

After setting up that goal the partnership that would go on to bring Coventry their happiest day nearly 25 years later was well and truly formed. Sillett says the two of them always got on as players and he roomed with the City skipper and his wife Inga in his early days at Highfield Road.

After going their separate ways in 1966 when Sillett signed for Plymouth, they were reunited long before they became a managerial double act in 1986.



We've followed the Sky Blues for over  
**100 YEARS**



Now we're following them to  
their new home



**Evening Telegraph**

Whether it was a nine-goal thriller or a drab goalless draw, our first match is an occasion which lasts in our memory forever. Quite often that game is enough to get us hooked for life so we thought we'd find out from a few Sky Blues supporters what made their first visit to Highfield Road so special.

Here are some of our favourites from the many that were sent in...

#### Coventry 2 Burnley 4, May 1962

My first visit to Highfield Road was in May 1962. Coventry City played Burnley during the Cathedral Festival, this was my first visit to Highfield Road. I was 10-years-old and had never been to a football match before. The impression was to stay with me for the rest of my life.

In the early Sixties there were two stands and a corrugated covered end (the Cowshed) where the West Stand is now and a Kop with a section built at the back like the Mini Kop. I walked to the ground from the bus station at Pool Meadow with my brother in the company of a steady stream of City supporters making their way out of the terraced houses. The standard dress for the average City supporter back then was a grey Mackintosh with a buckled belt and a cloth cap. City were in the lower half of the old Third Division and this seemed to reflect in the body language of the fans trudged on their way.

As we walked closer I saw the floodlights glowing against the night sky, heard the hum of the crowd inside Highfield Road. I smelled tobacco smoke and as it lit up into the lights I felt a thrill of excitement in the pit of my stomach. I stood on the North Terrace and watched the drama unfold on the brilliant green pitch.



Burnley had recently been League Champions and had only weeks beforehand played in the FA Cup Final, so about 12,000 turned up to watch. I can't remember the players who played but a certain George Curtis made an impression in his baggy shorts, as did Arthur Lightening in goal for City. West Ham's English international Johnny Burns played as a guest for City and Ray Pointer, who later played for City, was Burnley's centre forward.

Johnny Burns scored a tremendous goal from about 30 yards but City lost 4-2.

None of us will have our own special memories of Highfield Road, I have many: The wonder of the crowd as they banged the back of the old stands following a City back or a corner. From the elation of the best goal I have ever seen by the great George Hudson against Southampton, to the tear jerking free kick that Gary Macgregor scored against us for Liverpool.

The humour, the drama, the laughter and the tears. The spirit of Highfield Road will live on. It has grown from a 1950s football ground to a theatre and the old tea bar has grown into airport lounge style burger bars with televisions. From grey Mackintoshes to designer labels. From cold, wet concrete terraces to under-cover seating.

It is the time to move on – a better side, a state-of-the-art stadium. Back to the Premier League? Europe?

Of course, as long as we all sing together.  
Peter Lea

#### Coventry City v Norwich City, Saturday November 19 1994

I had just turned 13-years-old and it was to be the greatest achievement of my life at the time... I had managed to persuade my parents to let me go to a football match with one of my friends. After all, I had been trying for a couple of years with little success. It wasn't a big match but that didn't matter, everyone was excited to start somewhere.

It was a miserable, drizzly day so we got a lift into Coventry with parents where we

were dropped off in town to grab a Maccy D's. After eating we headed up to the ground and bought two tickets in the Main Stand, which cost about £14 as far as I can remember. By now, I was full of excitement and could not wait for kick-off. We walked around to the other side of the ground to watch the team coaches arrive, and this is where I first noticed the fans all wearing CFC kits, scarves and hats etc. Well obviously I didn't want to feel left out and promptly headed to the Club Shop where I bought a hat and a scarf – spending the money that my mother had given me for emergencies!



After what seemed like weeks, the ground opened and it was time to go in, so we made our way towards the turnstiles and gave our tickets to the steward upon arriving. We followed the crowds into the bar area and bought a pie, listening to the various conversations regarding the team and previous matches. Slowly, people began to filter into their seats so again we followed suit.

The feeling I got when the doors were opened and the atmosphere hit me like a herd of stampeding buffalo, getting my first glimpse of the Highfield Road pitch and the stands is something that I will never forget and a feeling, which to date, has never been matched! A shiver went down my spine and my legs turned to jelly. That was it, I was sold and I knew that day would be the first of many.

The match itself wasn't brilliant, and the attendance was a disappointing 11,891 although nothing would have ruined my day other than a defeat for City. I wasn't to find out if a poor result would affect my day as late in the second half Cobi Jones netted from a goalmouth scramble resulting from a corner as I remember.

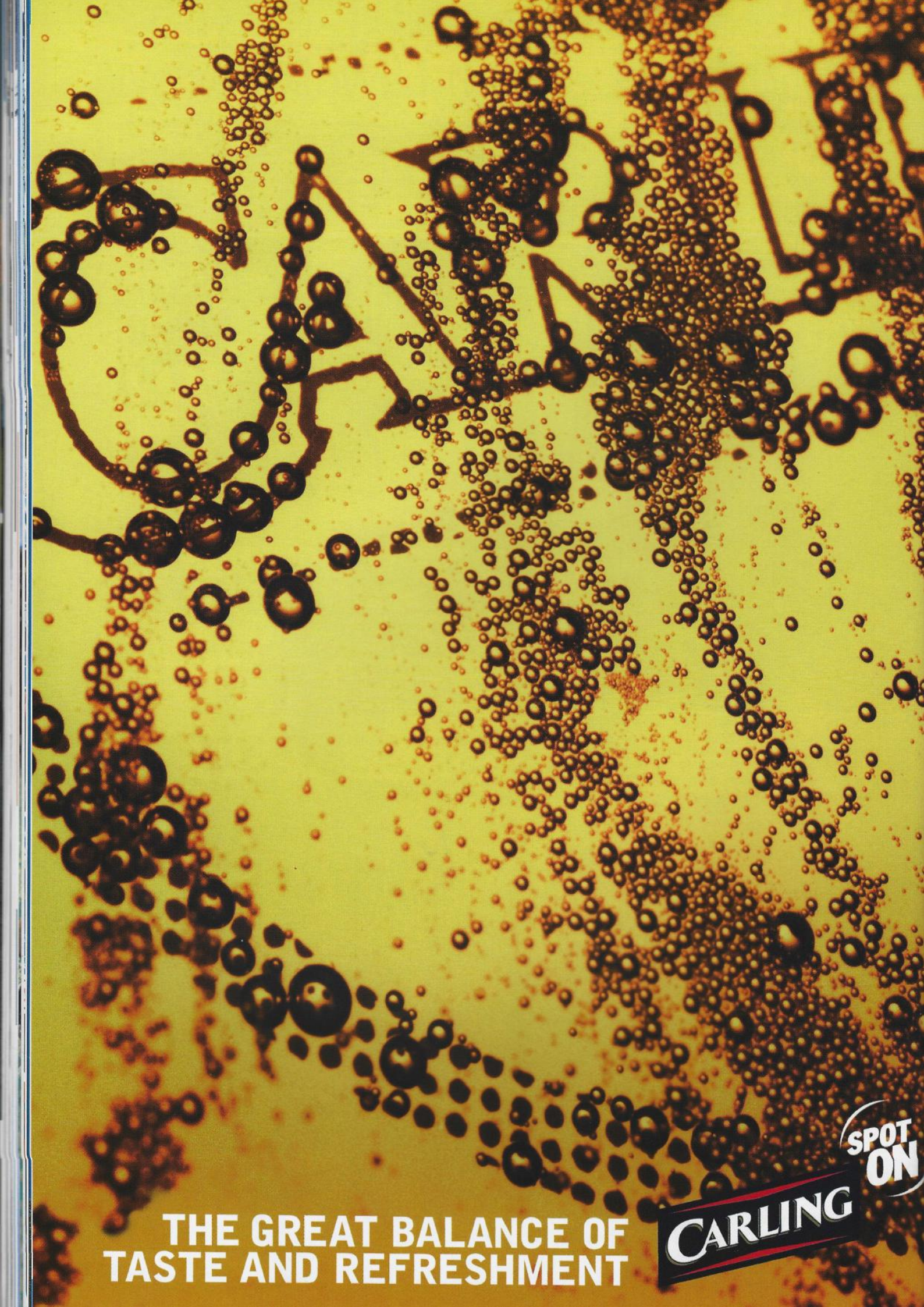
The scoreline remained the same until the end making it a perfect day, that I will NEVER forget.

I will miss Highfield Road a lot but have some very fond memories, this being the one that made the most impact. I do, however, look forward to going through a similar routine when the new ground opens in 2005 and hopefully we will get back to the Premiership where we belong – see you all there!

By Paul Gussin

continued on page 121.

Fan's Memories 1



**THE GREAT BALANCE OF  
TASTE AND REFRESHMENT**

**CARLING**

**SPOT  
ON**

# Highfield Road firsts at

Highfield Road was perfectly described by Coventry Evening Telegraph sports writer Derek Henderson as the "Ideas Factory" of League football during the 1960s.

While the Sky Blues were making strides on the pitch they were also setting trends off the field, leaving every other club in their wake when it came to developing ideas to woo fans to the ground.

It would be naive to think that crowds of 50,000 and above would have come along had the results been going badly but it's fair to say that the regime in charge of the Club back then never became complacent and always tried to entice as many

people into Highfield Road as possible.

There was also foresight from those in charge because even when Coventry were still in the Third Division, the off-field activities were outpacing the progress of the team. To those who referred to them as gimmicks, Hill would retort: "A gimmick is a word used by other people to describe an idea they wish they'd have thought of first."

Here are just a handful of examples of how Coventry City started trends, back in the Sixties up until more recent years.

## The Sky Blue Song

Among the most effective and certainly the longest lasting of all the brainwaves Jimmy Hill had while in charge of Coventry was the introduction of the Sky Blue Song, which remains the most popular of the City fans' anthems to this very day. Club songs were nothing new in football – many other outfits had a trademark song but not Coventry so one night Hill and Club Director and journalist John Gamkin – Hill's cohort in many of the ideas dreamed up during the Sixties – came up with the Sky Blue Song to the tune of the Eton Boating Song. The original lyrics were:

"Let's all Sing together,  
Play up Sky Blues,  
While we sing together,  
We will never lose."

"Proud Posh or Cobblers,  
Oysters or anyone,  
They can't defeat us,  
We'll fight 'til the game is won."

## Radio Sky Blue

Pre-match entertainment dates back to 1963 for Coventry fans with the birth of Radio Sky Blue, compered first by England wicket keeper Godfrey Evans and then Fleet Street journalist Charles Harrold. City would kick-off at 3.15 on a Saturday and the programme started an hour before the game, continuing until just before kick-off. On it were record requests, interviews, away team information and the like.

This branched out to show-biz stars such as Jimmy Tarbuck and Frankie Vaughan or pop groups appearing before the crowd. It didn't suit everybody obviously but new ideas quite often don't and one thing could not be denied – Coventry City did everything to ensure that fans were entertained, not just for 90 minutes of football, but from the minute they entered Highfield Road until the minute they left. Netball matches, trampolining, sky diving and exhibitions from the RAF dog handlers were also common place.

## Sky Blue Rose

This was a club information service, so-named because it was recorded each morning by receptionist Rose McNulty. Supporters could hear what she had to tell them by calling a Coventry number and listening to the 30-second message but would often hear an engaged tone due to its popularity. Sky Blue Rose was a pre-cursor to the likes of ClubCall which is a flourishing business today, and demonstrated Coventry City's awareness that there was a huge demand for football information some 40 years ago.



As City progressed through the leagues the names of the enemy teams changed and nowadays Peterborough, Northampton and Colchester have been replaced by Tottenham, Chelsea and United (originally Manchester although which United this currently stands for is open to debate).

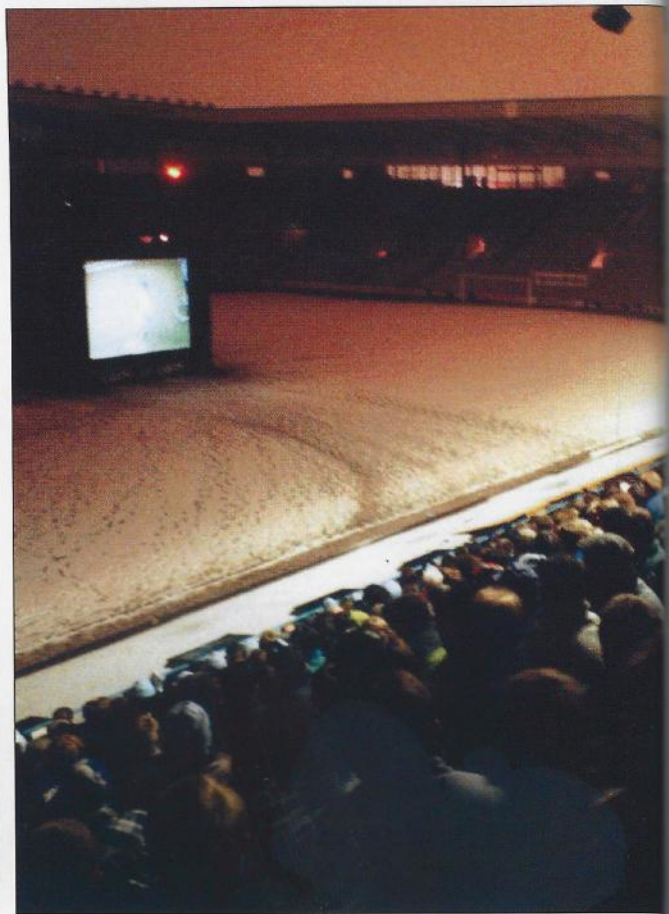
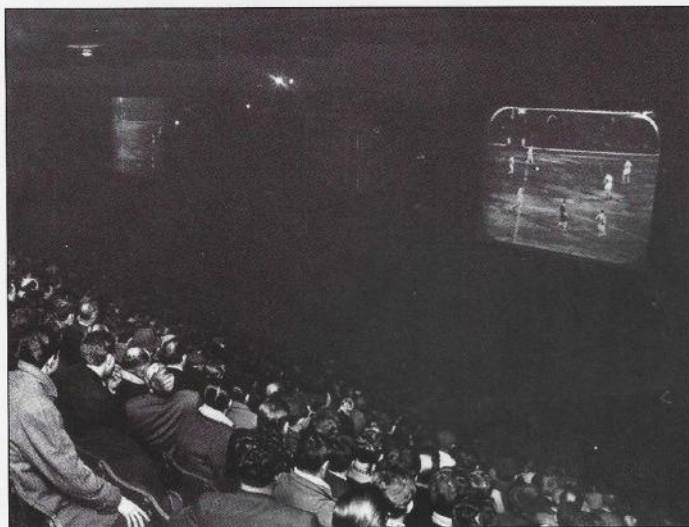


Rose McNulty on the pitch with skipper George Curtis.

# Highfield Road <sup>firsts at</sup>

## Closed circuit TV

Quite often, things that seem like new ideas were tried many years ago and Coventry City was beaming images of away games back to Highfield Road from 1965. They first did it on October 6 of that year, when footage of the game at Cardiff was projected onto huge screens set-up on the playing surface via closed circuit television, nowadays more commonly used at football stadia as a method of ensuring crowd safety. Usual league admission prices were charged and 10,295 people came along to watch Coventry beat the Bluebirds 2-1 – a remarkable attendance when you consider Ninian Park held 12,600 supporters that day. It was used again for an away game at Charlton but ultimately the novelty wore off when crowds dwindled due to poor results.



## Electronic Scoreboard

Donated by the Coventry Evening Telegraph as a congratulations gift for being promoted from Division Three, this really set Coventry apart from other outfits at the same level. It cost £3,000 and could be electronically operated at the touch of a few buttons, giving the score, scorers along with details of the next fixture. In much the same way that those giant televisions give a club a great image nowadays, our scoreboard was something to be proud of back then.



## Vice President's Club

Set up in the summer of 1964, the original Vice President's Club was restricted to 62 members – all leading businessmen – and you could join by invitation or well as being wealthy enough to pay the 100 guineas entrance fee. The establishment of the VPs showed that while City catered for the average fan in a better way than the majority of clubs, they were also aware that there was a market for all classes at a football match.

Members got a stand seat and entrance to the luxurious Vikings Club where they would dine at lunchtime before taking their seats for the match. It was the epitome of corporate hospitality, but more than that, the VPs allowed businessmen to mingle and use the Club as a common meeting ground and an ideal networking location and it has remained popular to this very day.

## Sky Blue Special

Special train services put on for away football supporters were shrouded in controversy because of violence and vandalism on board but Coventry City was of the opinion that if the trains were manned by club officials all this could be avoided. The idea was simple – Coventry hired a train, British Rail ran it and over the years the service was provided not a single piece of vandalism was reported. The Club ensured fans were occupied on what were otherwise long, arduous journeys across the country with bingo being introduced along with regular interviews with Jimmy Hill and the broadcast of Radio Sky Blue. Those travelling on the Sky Blue Special for the first time were amazed and it attracted a whole new breed of away fan, especially when a first class section of about 75 people was provided for the first time on a journey to Newcastle in September 1967.



## Sponsorship

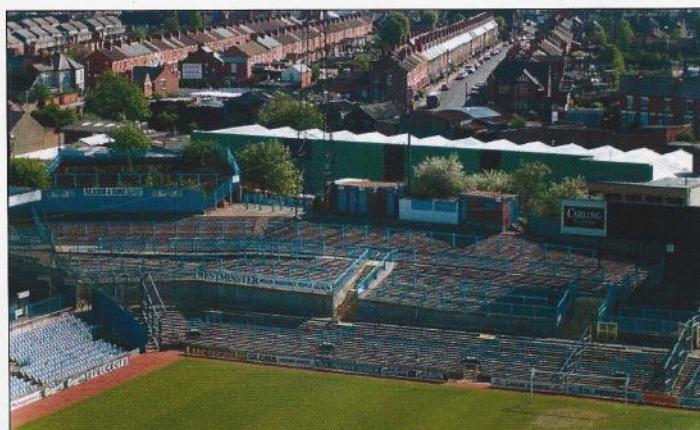
Nowadays a shirt would look slightly odd without the branding of a business emblazoned all over it, but back in the early 1980s shirt sponsorship was rarely seen and Coventry City secured their first shirt sponsor as recently as the 1980/81 season. Fans above the age of 30 will recall the kit as the one with a giant T running across the front of the shirt and the sponsors were local car firm Talbot. New Chairman Jimmy Hill – renowned for his ability to spot a new idea during his time as manager in the 1960s – secured the deal which provided a welcome injection of cash. The FA however, rejected an application for the Sky Blues to be known as Coventry Talbot – in hindsight perhaps that was a good thing. Since then the following companies have put their name to the Sky Blues: Elliotts, Glazepa, Tallon, Granada Bingo, Peugeot, Subaru.



## All Seater Stadium

The 1981/82 season started with Highfield Road becoming the first all-seater stadium in England, long before clubs were required to install them – Hillsborough. The vision of Hill was once again responsible for the change but it did not go down too well with the fans. Seats were installed on terrace areas but only 10 rows were placed on the Kop leading to a reduction in capacity from 36,000 to 21,000 and gates fell by a quarter to 13,000.

Nowadays it is accepted as a safety feature at modern stadia. Back then supporters could not comprehend why there was a need for such measures nor why they should have to buy a ticket for every match. Within two years the standing area at the back of the Kop was re-opened and in 1985 all seats were removed from the Kop.





1969 1970 1971 1972 1973 1974 1975 1976 1977 1978 1979 1980 1981 • 1967 1968

# Start as you mean to go on 1967-1981

**W**ith the entire football club and all the supporters fully prepared for a top flight adventure under the watchful eye of their Messiah, Jimmy Hill, a bombshell of extraordinary proportions was dropped on them just two days before the start of the 1967/68 season.



The 1967/1968 team line up before Jimmy left the club

Hill announced that he would be quitting his post as Sky Blues manager to pursue a career in TV with London Weekend Television and instantly the mood went from one of excited anticipation to uncertain nervousness in the space of a few hours.

When the campaign did kick-off at Turf Moor, 7,000 anticipant Coventry fans witnessed an ominous 2-1 defeat against Burnley. It signalled there could be tough times ahead and when skipper George Curtis broke his leg against Nottingham Forest before August was out meaning he would be sidelined for the rest of the season, the only thing on the cards was a relegation battle.



Noel Cantwell replaced Jimmy Hill

In fairness to Hill he did not just desert the club and had a hands-on role in helping to find a new manager. In October 1967, his successor was chosen as the former Manchester United captain and Republic of Ireland star Noel Cantwell.

Although there was no doubting his class as a player, he had no managerial experience but was given £300,000 to spend on players, of which Maurice Setters was his best signing at £25,000.

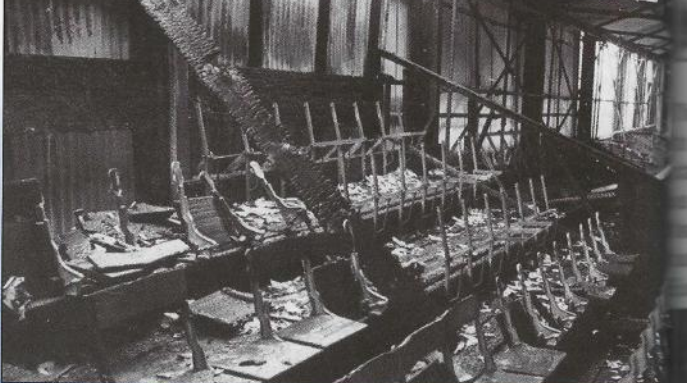
Staying up was imperative for the Sky Blues. Had they been relegated, the momentum built up under Hill over the previous five seasons would have been shattered so when City finally achieved safety with a goalless draw against Southampton on the final day of the campaign it was perhaps as big an achievement as any which had gone before. Division One football certainly captured the imagination of the Coventry public as an average of 34,715 supporters turned up for home matches at Highfield Road, a record which still stands to this day. The first step towards consolidation had been achieved although little did people know how quickly City would rocket to as near to the top of the tree as they would ever get.



Maurice Setters argues with the ref

## Dark Day

March 6 1968 marked a dark day in the history of Coventry City Football Club when a raging inferno destroyed the Main Stand, leaving among other things, a mangled and twisted Second Division Championship trophy in the ashes, along with the vast majority of the Club's archives.



The Stand was patched up sufficiently to enable the match against European Champions in waiting Manchester United to go ahead ten days later, in front of 47,111 fans as City secured a famous 2-0 victory thanks to goals by Ernie MacKenzie and Maurice Setters.

A good benchmark of the Club's ambition was the speed at which a new Main Stand was constructed. The concrete was in place in just 64 days and the start of the 1968/69 campaign was delayed by only a week. The new stand was the fastest that had been constructed at Highfield Road in the space of four years, making it one of the most modern in the country.

## To Europe and Beyond

Seven points from the first 25 games of the 1968/69 season meant another relegation battle was on the cards for City who managed yet another miraculous escape. They finished five games before fellow relegation candidates Leicester who had reached the FA Cup Final and the Foxes needed seven points to stay up. Thanks to a defeat against Cantwell's former club Manchester United on the last day of the campaign they only mustered five and City were safe.

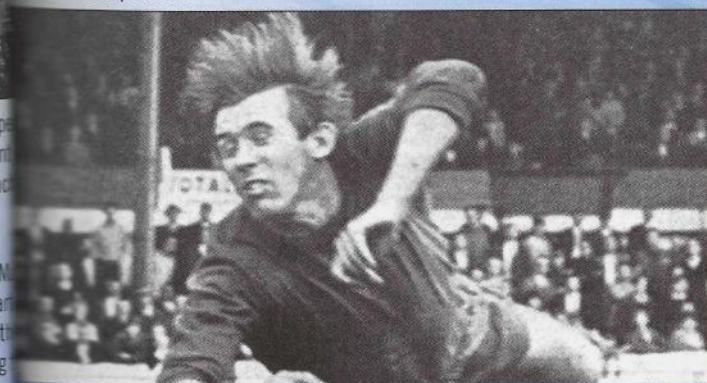
It must have been hard to conceive how City could be anything but relegation candidates in the 1969/70 season but what followed was an incredible campaign that registers as Coventry's best ever. A fantastic start saw City lose only twice in their opening ten fixtures and by Christmas they were fourth. A fine away record and travelling fans were treated to ten victories on the road and on yet another international night against Wolves, City secured sixth place and a spot in the Fairs Cup with a 1-0 win at Molineux courtesy of a Brian Joicey goal.

It was, that in the 1970/71 season, Coventry City embarked on their one and only European campaign, just seven years after Jimmy Hill had achieved his first promotion of achieving promotion from Division Three and only 12 years after Coventry occupied the 91st position in the Football League's 92-rung ladder. The Sky Blues were drawn against Bulgarians Trakia Plovdiv in the First Round and after winning the away, they achieved a 2-0 victory at Highfield Road.



Coventry's first night in Europe away v Trakia Plovdiv - City won 4-1

The Second Round drew them against European giants Bayern Munich but the trip to Germany was a disaster. With inspirational goalkeeper Bill Glazier injured, stand-in shot stopper Eric McManus had a night to forget on a water-sodden pitch. City went down 6-1. With a mountain to climb in the return leg, City saved some face with a 2-1 win in the second leg. The European odyssey may have been over but Coventry still have the enviable reputation of being unbeaten at home in European competition.



Bill Glazier - injured for the trip to Bayern Munich

In the league, City's form was patchy and lacking punch in attack. A haul of 37 goals was the worst for 51 years, although one of the iconic moments in Coventry City's history occurred in October. Fans' favourite Ernie Hunt scored one of the most memorable goals of the century with his "Donkey Kick" – a sublime volleyed effort from Willie Carr's deftly flicked free-kick – in a 3-1 win over Everton. The pair tried it again in a goalless draw with Tottenham in April before it was outlawed.



"Donkey Kick": Willie Carr tries it again v Tottenham Hotspur

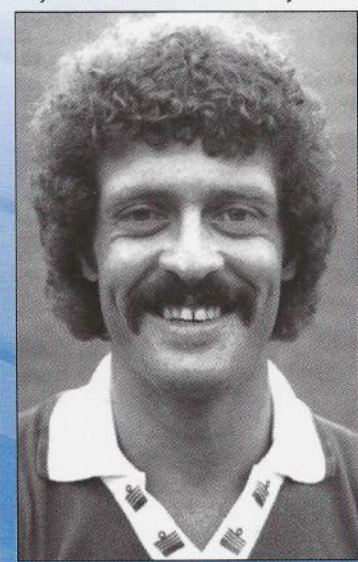
An embarrassing FA Cup exit at the hands of Rochdale put pressure on Cantwell and when a repeat occurred 12 months later with a defeat to Hull, the manager was sacked as City slumped to an 18th place finish in 1971/72.

## New Regime

In the summer of 1972 Gordon Milne and Joe Mercer took over as a managerial duo at Highfield Road, and one of the first decisions made was to sell the influential Jeff Blockley to fund the purchase of Colin Stein and the inspirational Tommy Hutchison – definitely the Coventry City player of the era and arguably of all-time.

A good FA Cup run, culminating in a Quarter Final defeat to Wolves was allied with decent league form although the disappointment of exiting the Cup instigated a late slump and City finished 19th.

In 1973/74, City got off to their best ever start in the top flight, winning six and drawing two of their opening ten matches. Milne was reported as saying he felt City were one centre half away from having a Championship winning side but



Influential Jeff Blockley was sold, and in came Legend-to-be Tommy Hutchison





financial worries were looming large, not helped by the fact that Coventry paid a club record £240,000 for centre back Larry Lloyd, only for outgoing deals to fall through after the purchase.

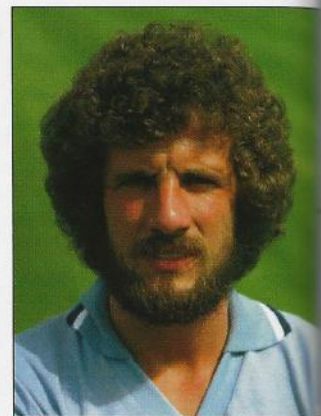
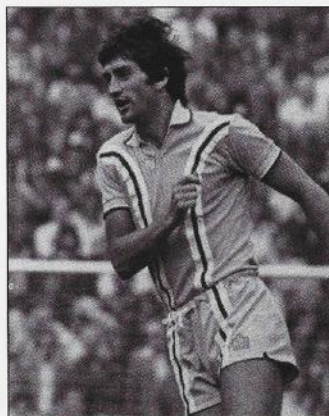


City are knocked out of the Cup at Wolves, Kenny Hibbitt's penalty won the game

Derrick Robins withdrew from the Board and with it went the millions which made the Sky Blues such a success story. Over the subsequent 18 months many of the best players were sold to balance the books.

At Christmas 1975, star player Dennis Mortimer was sold to Aston Villa which proved to be the final straw for many fans as crowds fell as low as 13,000. Finishes around the mid-table mark were the norm for the three seasons between 1973 and 1976 before one of the greatest escapes from relegation of all time in 1976/77 took place.

City looked safe in December but 13 games without a win saw them go into freefall and it took a final day draw with Bristol City to survive. Once again though, the Sky



Out went Dennis Mortimer (left) and in came Mick Ferguson pictured right.

Blues went from fighting for their lives at the wrong end of the table to European hopefuls. In 1977/78 they put the worries of the previous campaign behind them to finish in seventh place, missing out on a place in Europe by a whisker. The free-scoring days had returned with Ian Wallace and Mick Ferguson forming a potent strike force, helping the Sky Blues to an impressive tally of 75 goals.

More than anything else, it was in the late Seventies that the Sky Blues demonstrated some superb form at Highfield Road, winning 13 and losing only three of their home ties in 77/78 as they did the following season when they finished tenth. Away form was wretched though and while it cost City a top six finish the term beforehand it meant some humiliating defeats against local rivals including one 7-1 drubbing at the hands of Ron Atkinson's West Brom.

1979/80 saw more inconsistency on the pitch along with some unsuccessful signings and in the summer of 1980 there was Boardroom reshuffle as Jimmy Jones – who had returned to the Club as a Director in 1975 – took over as Chairman. It was what a troubled period, but one which would ultimately lead to our biggest success.



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1970 1971 1972 1973 1974 1975 1976 1977 1978 1979 1980 1981 • 1967 1968 1969 19

# 5

## of the best in the seventies



**Jimmy Hutchison**

...ing to stories of what Hutchison was capable of is enough to instil jealousy... those who weren't around to witness the flying winger's scintillating dribbling... joining from Blackpool at the same time as Colin Stein in 1972, "Hutch"... to make 355 appearances for the Sky Blues in nine years, scoring 30 goals... the way, although the major component of his game was the ability to take... marker once, twice or perhaps even three times if necessary before sending... perfect cross for Stein to nod home. The regular choice of fans for Greatest... ever of all time, Hutch picked up 17 Scotland caps while with the Sky Blues.

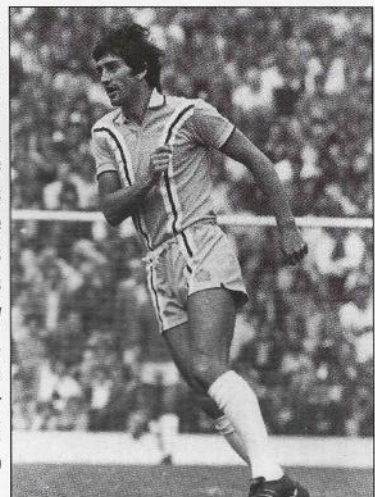
**Wally Wallace**

... was the most consistent of... strikers during the Seventies, ... 60 goals in 140 appearances... between 1976 and 1980. A brave, ... aggressive forward who formed a... partnership with Mick ... his best season was ... 1978 when the two of them scored ... goals between them. He joined ... Birmingham Forest for a club record ... million but he could not repeat ... feats he achieved at Highfield ... alongside Ferguson.



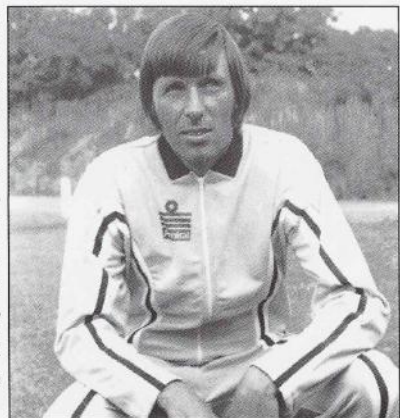
**Dennis Mortimer**

A product of City's youth system who broke into the first team aged 17 and within a year was a regular name on the teamsheet, Mortimer was a midfield player of undoubted class. Comfortable in possession but with the hard-working nature which always appeals to supporters, Mortimer made 216 appearances and scored 12 goals but his sale to Aston Villa in 1976 was a kick in the teeth for the fans as City went through a mid-decade slump, although he was not once booed when he returned to Highfield Road. Mortimer proved his ability at our local rivals and captained their 1982 European Cup winning side.



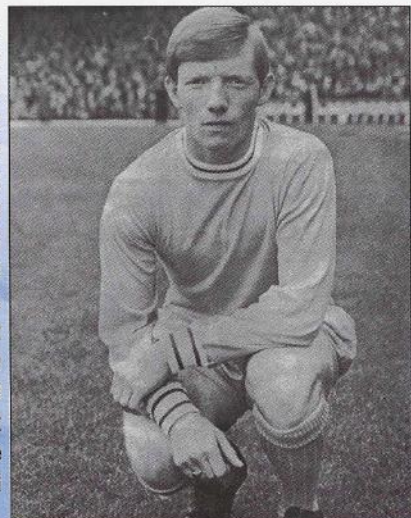
**Mick Coop**

Had it not been for injuries during the mid-Seventies, Coop would have been in the running to challenge George Curtis's record for Sky Blues appearances. As it was the defender – who spent 15 years with the Club between 1966 and 1981 – fell just one appearance shy of the 500 mark, and was one of the most consistent players of the era. At the start of his playing days he was very much an attacking full-back but later moved to centre half where he was equally competent.



**Wille Carr**

Another product of the late Sixties youth team, Carr was a stalwart of the era and did not take long to establish himself as a key midfielder in the first team. The creator of the famous Donkey Kick goal was perhaps not as much of a fans favourite as teammate and scorer of that legendary strike Ernie Hunt, but his contributions to the team were priceless. What he lacked in stature he more than made up for in workrate and commitment and his ability to spot the killer pass was second to none and earned him international appearances with Scotland.



# Highfield Road

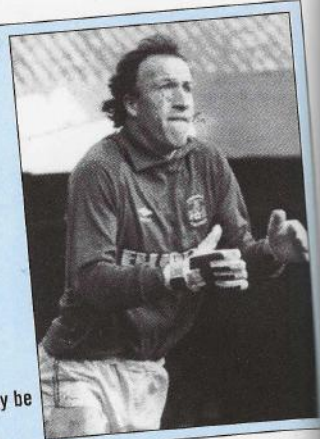
## Facts and Figures



### The ten leading appearance makers of all-time (all competitions)

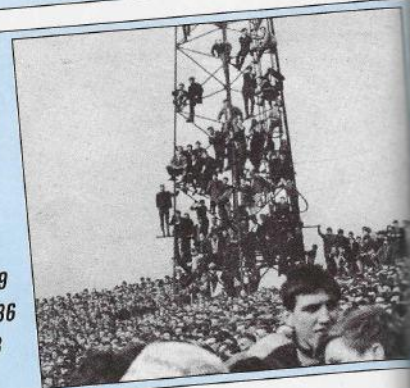
1. Steve Ogrizovic 601, 1984 - 2000
2. George Curtis 543, 1956 - 1969
3. Mick Coop 492, 1966 - 1981
4. Brian Borrows 488 1985 - 1997
5. Bill Glazier 395, 1964 - 1974
6. Mick Kearns 385, 1957 - 1967
7. Tommy Hutchison 355, 1972 - 1980
8. George Mason 350, 1932 - 1952
9. Roy Kirk 349, 1952 - 1959
10. Trevor Peake 334, 1983 - 1991

(Richard Shaw had made 331 appearances between 1995 and 18/3/05 and may be in the top ten by now)



### Record crowds at Highfield Road (all competitions)

1. 51,455 v Wolves, Division Two, April 29 1967
2. 47,111 v Manchester United, Division One, March 16 1968
3. 45,402 v Manchester United, Division One, April 8 1969
4. 44,930 v Aston Villa, Division Two, March 12 1938
5. 44,492 v West Brom, FA Cup 5, February 20 1937
6. 44,000 v Manchester Utd, FA Cup 6, March 30 1963
7. 43,689 v Manchester Utd, Division One, November 8 1969
8. 42,975 v Luton Town, Division Three (south), April 27 1936
9. 42,767 v Manchester Utd, Division One, January 27 1973
10. 42,207 v Liverpool, Division One, December 26 1967



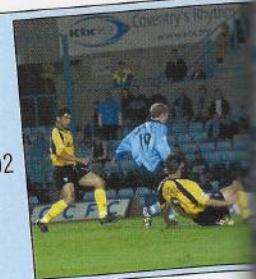
### The ten leading scorers of all-time (all competitions)

1. Clarrie Bourton: 182 goals in 241 games
2. Billie Lake: 123 goals in 244 games
3. Ted Roberts: 86 goals in 222 games
4. Ray Straw: 87 goals in 158 games
5. Frank Herbert: 86 goals in 199 games
6. Peter Hill: 78 goals in 309 games
7. George Hudson: 75 goals in 129 games
8. Leslie Jones: 73 goals in 145 games
9. Dion Dublin: 71 goals in 171 games
10. Jock Lauderdale: 63 goals in 182 games



### Record scores at Highfield Road

- League:** 9-0 v Bristol City, Division Three (South) April 28 1934  
**FA Cup:** 7-0 v Scunthorpe United, First Round, November 24 1934  
 7-0 v Macclesfield Town, Third Round, January 2 1999  
**League Cup:** 8-0 v Rushden and Diamonds, Second Round, October 2 2002  
**Southern League:** 11-2 v West Bromwich Albion reserves, April 29 1908  
**Birmingham League:** 9-0 v Ironbridge, December 20 1902  
**War-time:** 10-2 v Luton Town, March 25 1940



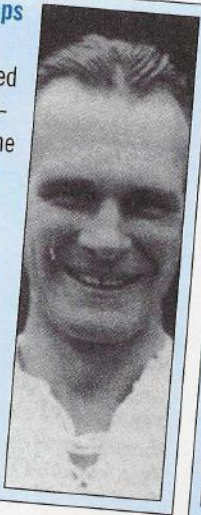
### Is that a fact?

- Clarrie Bourton scored eight hat-tricks during 1931/32
- When the Sky Blues beat QPR 7 - 0 in March 1933, they scored all their goals in the first half – a record half time

### Players who made over 100 apps during the War

Between 1939 and 1945 City used over 125 different players in war-time regional league matches. The following players made over 100 appearances:

	Apps	Goals
George Mason	172	4
Tommy Crawley	176	71
Charlie Elliott	146	8
Walter Metcalf	130	1
Harry Barratt	110	42
George Lowrie	97	64



### Giant Killings

The following non-league teams have knocked City out of the FA Cup since they joined the Football League in 1919:

- Luton Town, 0-1, 1919/20
- Rochdale, 1-2, 1920/21
- Southport, 0-1, 1921/22
- New Brighton, 0-3, 1922/23
- Worksop Town, 0-1, 1925/26
- Scunthorpe Utd, 2-4, 1935/36
- Kings Lynn, 1-2, 1961/62
- Sutton Utd, 1-2, 1988/89

Of these, only two matches took place at Highfield Road. The first was against Luton Town and the second against Kings Lynn but every cloud has a silver lining – Jimmy Hill was watching that game and as he reveals from pages 32 to 34, he decided to take the Coventry City managerial job on the back of it!

### YOUNGEST COVENTRY PLAYERS OF ALL TIME

- Mackey** – aged 16 years 167 days v Ipswich, Division 3, April 12 2003
- McSheffrey** – aged 16 years 197 days v Aston Villa, Premiership, February 27 1999

### OLDEST COVENTRY PLAYERS OF ALL TIME

- Wood** – aged 44 years, 207 days v Plymouth Argyle, FA Cup Second Round, December 7 1958
- Ogrizovic** – aged 42 years, 237 days (May 2000)
- Strachan** – aged 40 years, 83 days (May 1997)

### SMALLEST ATTENDANCE (LEAGUE)

- Crystal Palace**, 13.2.1928, Division 3 South

### SMALLEST ATTENDANCE AT HIGHFIELD ROAD SINCE THE WAR

- Millwall**, 15.10.85, Full Members Cup

### HIGHEST AVERAGE ATTENDANCE

- 1965-1967-68**, Division 1

### HIGHEST POINTS

- 19 points** a win: 66, Division 1, 2001-02
- 19 points** a win: 60, Division 4, 1958-59; Division 3, 1963-64

### HIGHEST GOALS SCORED

- 19 goals**, Division 3(South), 1931-32

### HIGHEST GOALS CONCEDED

- 19 goals**, Division 3(South), 1931-32

### HIGHEST LEAGUE WINS

- 19 wins**, Division 3(South), 1935-36; Division 4, 1958-59

### HIGHEST LEAGUE DRAWS

- 19 draws**, Division 3, 1962-63

### HIGHEST LEAGUE DEFEATS

- 19 defeats**, Division 2, 1919-20; Division 2, 1924-25; Division 3(South), 1927-28; Division 2, 1951-52; Division 1, 1984-85

### HIGHEST MATCHES UNDEFEATED

- 19 matches** (12.11.66 to 13.5.67) Division 2

### HIGHEST MATCHES WITHOUT A WIN


- 19 matches** (30.8.19 to 20.12.19) Division 2

### HIGHEST HOME GAMES UNDEFEATED

- 19 games** (11.4.25 to 13.3.26) Division 2/Division 3 (North)

### HIGHEST AWAY GAMES UNDEFEATED


- 19 games** (12.66 to 13.5.67) Division 2



## ~ MEMORY ~

**Adam Dent,**  
Coventry Evening Telegraph 1990 - 1997

"My greatest Highfield Road memory would be taken from my last game as the Telegraph's City correspondent – a home match with Manchester United on December 28, 1997. It was not my favourite game – that had come a few years earlier when Mick Quinn had put Villa to the sword on a dank Boxing Day, but one moment sticks out.




Darren Huckerby had not long burst onto the scene and had that combination of devastating speed and total unpredictability. Darren, certainly then and maybe still now, was a natural footballer and sometimes did not conform to the norm – as his offside count proved – but that made him hard to handle.

City had taken a lead through Noel Whelan, another naturally gifted player, but goals from Ole Solskjaer and Teddy Sheringham put the Champions, who included Beckham, Cole and Giggs in their side, on course for three points. But with just four minutes left, Huckerby was tripped inside the area and Dion Dublin converted from the penalty spot.


That set the stage for Huckerby who – without ever having the ball fully under control – managed to tip toe his way round four challenges and beat keeper Kevin Pilkington for the most dramatic of winners. The perfect end to a game and, for me, the perfect way to bow out."

## So much more than just silver


### Recognition Awards




### Achievement




### Commemoration



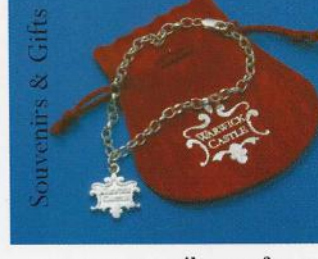
### Brand Promotion



### Identification



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Gascoigne broke his arm when he hit Lloyd McGrath. I think I got a bug straight away."

And the tales don't end there. Even once he became involved in the Club's youth system, McSheffrey still maintained his supporter's exuberance and his favourite memories would rank among most people's preferred moments of recent years.

Of all the members of the current Coventry City squad, it's fair to say that Gary McSheffrey will miss Highfield Road the most once it is gone.

That's because the 23-year-old is Coventry born and bred and this season he has completed yet another chapter in his very own Roy of the Rovers tale, much of which has taken place at this ground.

Despite his tender years it seems as if McSheffrey has been around for ages and indeed he has. Aged just 16 and 193 days when he made his debut at Villa Park, the striker has managed to weather the period where people questioned if he was just another teen starlet who would fall by the wayside.

But his association with the Club goes back way beyond that momentous day in Birmingham – he has gone from being a fan on the terraces to a member of the youth team that twice reached the final of the FA Youth Cup and is now a first team regular and huge fans' favourite.

But Sheffers has memories galore and listening to him recalling his first visit to this ground is like listening to any other supporter.

"My first memory is a Tottenham game in about 1990," says the striker who has developed an impressive goals ratio of one goal every two starts during his short career. "I remember going to sit in the Kop with my uncle and his friend. We drew 0-0 and Paul Gascoigne and Gary Lineker were playing for Spurs and I remember it because it was when

"When I've not been playing, my favourite game was against Manchester United when Huckerby scored the late winner after going on a mazy run, beating four or five players and slotting it in. It was a great goal.

"As a fan I always enjoyed watching Peter Ndlovu and Dion Dublin when Huckerby came to the Club it was like a new lease of life. The pace was electric and frightening and he used to terrorise defences. The first couple of years that Huckerby was here he was definitely my favourite player. We were an established Premiership team around – we finished tenth one season and got to the Quarter Finals of the

"There were a few years when we scraped through relegation but it was always entertaining football. I remember when we went to Arsenal at Highfield Road and went on a good seven game winning streak in the Premiership and they were great days for the club."

Of course what follows is boys' own stuff – the kid who grew up literally a stone's throw away from Highfield Road goes on to play for the youth team which twice reached the FA Youth Cup Final.

His senior debut came on February 27 1998, but that was not just an ordinary game. The Sky Blues thrashed their local rivals Aston Villa 4-1 for their first ever league victory at Villa Park and with the pressure in the bag on came McSheffrey as a late substitute to replace Huckerby who had amazed him with his Manchester United wonder goal just a few months previously.



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And the man himself admits that he was shocked at his rise to prominence.

"I was still in school when Huckerby scored that goal and I was hopeful that I would be out there one day but there's no way I could envisage that I'd be out there a year or so later. I thought I'd have to wait at least a few more years until I was 18 or 19, so for it to happen so quickly it was amazing."

It wasn't all so smooth – he did not play another first team game for seven months until starting at Prenton Park when the Sky Blues were thumped 5-1 by Tranmere in the Worthington Cup but the side at least redeemed themselves slightly in the second leg when McSheffrey made his home debut.



"I remember my first start at Highfield Road was against Tranmere in the League Cup. We beat them 3-1 but we lost the away leg 5-1 and went out on aggregate.

"I don't really think it had all sunk in at that point. I was still part of the youth team, we had a great set of lads and we had a laugh every day. We had good training with Richard Money and George Mackey and no-one around me would have let it get to my head.

"I carried on playing in the youth team and when Gordon Strachan wanted me to train or be on the bench it was a bonus. Even to get a reserve game in those days was a bonus. I got on with it by carrying on having a laugh with the lads in the youth team."

The amount of work McSheffrey does in the local community also proves that he would never forget his roots. Indeed he half jokes that he will return to his old school an average of ten times during a season but you sense for him it is not a drag – just something that goes with the territory of being the terrace idol.



And while to speak to him is like talking to any other fan, it's only when you hear him recite his favourite playing moments that you suddenly remember he is actually living the dream.

"My favourite memory was scoring a hat-trick against Rushden and Diamonds in the League Cup a couple of seasons ago – that felt really good.

"I've scored a few good goals but one against Sheffield United on the opening day of the season a few years ago stands out. It was the winner and it was a good strike so I'd go for that one."

Of course any true sporting tale has to have a twist where the going gets tough and McSheffrey has had to deal with the harsh realities of professional football during the last two seasons.

Loaned out twice to Luton Town, it appeared as if his Coventry City days could well be over, but he has managed to come back and impress different managers not once, but twice and admits he now has a renewed hunger, having had his best run in the side since breaking into the first team.

"When these sort of runs come along you can finally feel a part of the team, although you can never think you've made it and you can always improve.

"I feel I've come on this season, especially lately and I'm happy with my form. I probably could have taken more chances but I just want to stay in the team. I've been out on loan recently and I think that has made me appreciate a run like this a little bit more. Going out on loan wasn't a bad thing for me, it has developed my career, and it definitely makes you appreciate it a bit more when you come back."

Of course it would be naïve to think that this tale ends here. After all McSheffrey is still young and if anything, the last 18 months have taught him that you never know what is around the corner.

Nonetheless there could surely be no better way for all of us to bid farewell to Highfield Road than with three points against Derby and perhaps a goal or two from you know who.

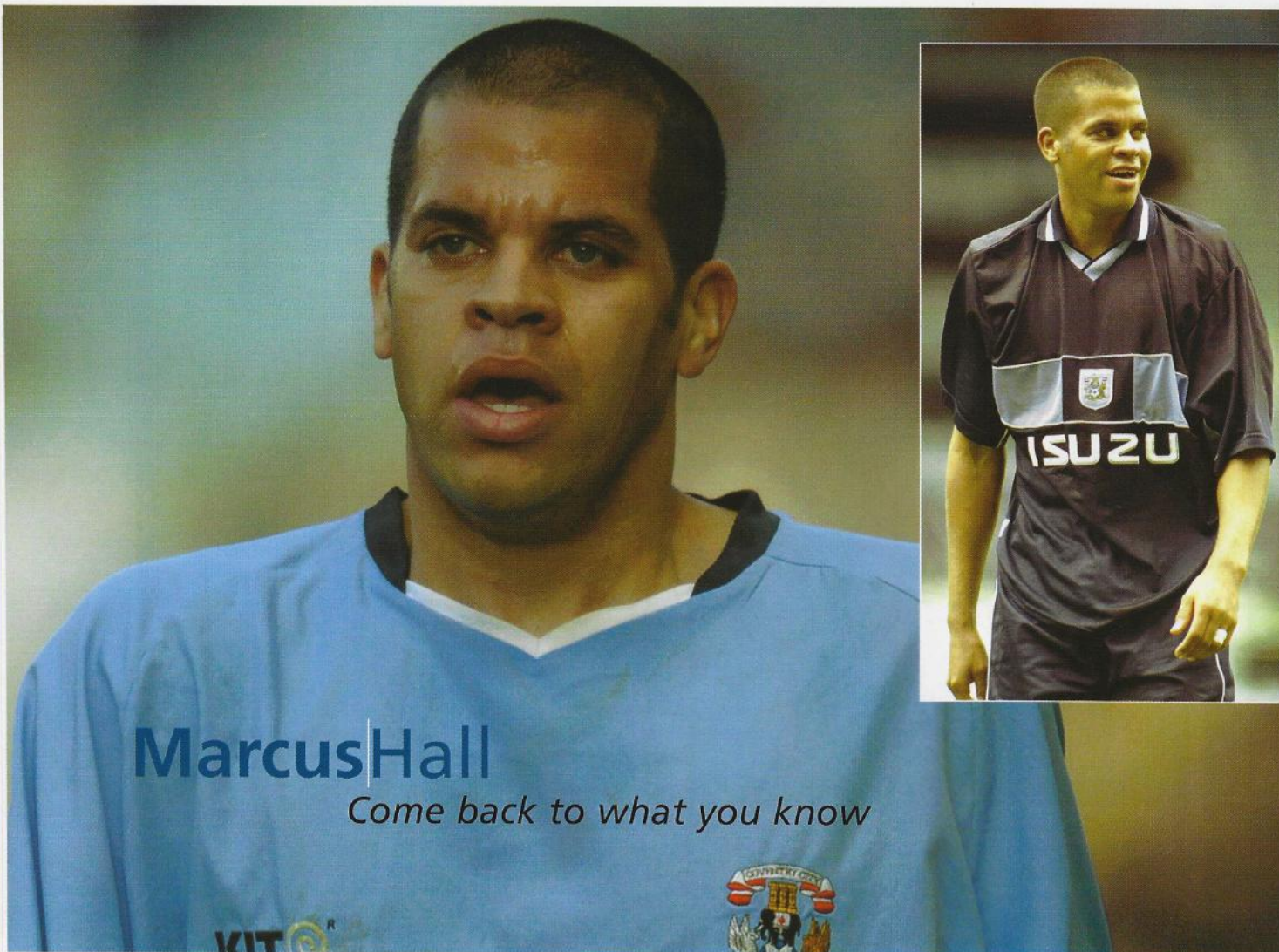
## HIGHFIELD RD

~ MEMORY ~

*Andy Turner, Coventry Evening Telegraph,  
1997 - Present Day*

"My most memorable match at Highfield Road has to be the 3-2 Boxing Day victory over Arsenal in 1999. Arsene Wenger admitted afterwards that the result had seriously dented Arsenal's title hopes, a fact that rang true when they finished second to Manchester United, but the rest of the footballing world were waxing lyrical about the Sky Blues who rustled up another thriller for the Sky TV cameras. Gary McAllister had rediscovered his touch surrounded by quality players on the same wavelength such as Moustapha Hadji and Robbie Keane. And it was the skipper who gave Coventry a seventh minute lead, firing a powerful 25-yard effort in off Keown's backside past David Seaman, before Hadji showed a touch of pure class to give the home side a two goal cushion into the break with a breath-taking curling shot from the edge of the box.

"Just when people thought Gordon Strachan's men would sit back and defend their lead, the Sky Blues oozed confidence in a determined second half display. City's defence held out until the 67th minute when Freddy Ljungberg pulled a goal back from a goalmouth scramble. But just as the classy visitors were getting into their stride, up popped the precocious talent of Robbie Keane four minutes later with a sublime angled chip that made a mug of Adams and had Seaman at full stretch. Davor Suker scored a spectacular late consolation goal, prompting a nervous last three minutes but the Sky Blues had done more than enough to win the game."



## Marcus Hall

*Come back to what you know*

**R**eturning to a former club is something that is not always advisable but Marcus Hall is confident that he has returned to Highfield Road a better player than when he left.

A product of City's School of Excellence, Hall first made his mark under Ron Atkinson in 1994 and was in or around the first team until 2002 when he left and while he confesses to not being an ardent supporter of the Sky Blues, he has happy memories dating back to 1987.

"I wasn't a Coventry City fan as such but I always enjoyed playing football and grew up wanting to be a footballer. Growing up in Coventry it was always my ambition to play for City.

"My first memory of Highfield Road, although it's not particularly clear in my head, is when I came to watch the FA Youth Cup Final in 1987 which Coventry won. Not too long afterwards they won the FA Cup and that was a great day. I watched it on TV and afterwards I remember going out to play football with my mates and trying to recreate Keith Houchen's diving header. I also remember the coaches coming back into Coventry the next day and thousands of people were on the streets to greet them."

As with most players, Hall's debut is the game which stands out in his mind and his first start at Highfield Road was a real baptism of fire.

"I think my favourite ever game has to be my debut. I know it's a little bit boring and there were some great games but my debut always stands out in my mind. I remember coming on as a substitute in a game against Spurs on New Years Eve 1994 for my home debut and then my full home debut was against Manchester United later that season in a Monday Night Football game on Sky. I think I was marking Scholes who scored once and Beckham may well have come on in the second half.

"We lost 3-2 and I remember Andy Cole getting a couple. I was only 18 or 19 and I didn't know I was going to play until the night of the game so I just got chucked in there really. It was nerve-wracking but I enjoyed it and it was a nice feeling the next day to read the papers and see you were involved in the match. As a young lad it takes a while before you feel properly established

but it was great to be involved."

From then, Hall went on to make 158 appearances for the Sky Blues in his first spell here, although he feels that he never really built up the consistency he would have liked to.

"All my memories of playing in the Premier League are happy ones apart from getting relegated. Of all the players I played with Robbie Keane was the best. Hadji was skilful but he didn't like to track back too much! Dion Dublin was a great leader and Gordon Strachan was still playing when I broke through into the team.

"Strachan was the manager I played for the longest but I think Ron Atkinson was the best man manager I played under at Coventry. He could get the best out of his players and he always let you have a laugh and a joke at the same time. He always had a bit of flair about him and if I'm being honest I'm disappointed that he's out of the game at the moment. Under Strachan the demands were much higher but that's how he went about things and he got the results that way.

"I suppose my first spell with the club was quite tricky because I had a lot of injuries and was in and out of the team. I don't think I ever got a chance to get any decent runs in the side. I had a nasty groin injury at one point and then a knee injury kept me out for a year-and-a-half on and off. I think I became a more consistent player in the three years I have been away, when I have stayed injury-free."

But now, Hall has returned a more mature individual and the 28-year-old is confident in his own ability, and while much has altered in the three years he was away, he insists it is good to be back.

"A lot has changed but the place is still the same and there are still a lot of familiar faces. The playing staff has pretty much all changed and there is obviously a new manager here but from what I have seen so far we have a good manager in place to move forward again. I'm really pleased that I have come back and I'm ready to show what I am capable of."

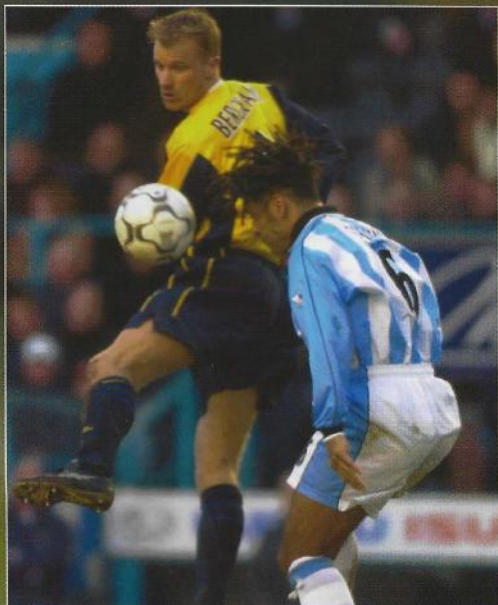
# Richard SHAW

When your happiest days with the Sky Blues revolve around the Premier League it's not surprising that these times of more modest achievement do not register as highly in your list of all-time favourite memories, and Richard Shaw believes the timing could not be better for City to leave Highfield Road for pastures new.

The loyal centre back has been with the Sky Blues for nearly ten years and had made 320 appearances before a knee injury sidelined him at the end of February, making him by far and away the Club's longest serving current player and placing him just outside the all-time top ten.

And while he admits that the last few years have been relatively disappointing he has many fond recollections from his days with the Club.

"I only really remember coming to Highfield Road once before I signed," he retells. "It was for Crystal Palace in about 1994 and we won 4-1. It was definitely one of our best performances of the season, we all played really well."



"I signed about a year later and made my debut at QPR which is always one of my memories that stands out because I grew up following QPR. We put in a good performance and drew 1-1 but the thing I remember the most was the terrible away kit we were wearing. It was some purple affair and I suppose it set the scene because we have had some atrocious kits while I've been here. Once we played against Chelsea and we were a laughing stock in our purple and yellow away strip, down in the fashion centre of London on the Kings Road!"

Aside from nightmares of horror kits, Shaw also had to cope with some adversity on the playing side early in his Coventry days.

"I made my home debut against Manchester United in the 1995/1996 season when they were on fire. We lost 4-0 and were taught a lesson really because they were right from the top drawer. They had Keane, Ince, Cantona, Giggs – the lot – and it was a tough debut. I think I might have played right back that day, which I've had to do quite a lot over the years to fill-in when needed. I didn't mind having to play there because I'd always fill in if needed but I used to hate it when I was named at right back."

Shaw's reluctance to slot in at full-back perhaps goes some way to explaining one of his choice's for the best Coventry player he has ever played alongside.

"I always thought Roland Nilsson was a quality player," he enthuses. "I suppose if he was playing there was never any chance of me playing right back because I think he was the best player in that position in the country at the time!"

"But seriously, he was a top player and a great professional but I've played with a lot of quality players here. Robbie Keane was electric the year he played for us and the list is endless. I suppose one of the best players was Dion and as well as that he was a great leader, a very nice guy and a great figurehead for the Club."

"We used to regularly turn it on against the bigger sides and there was a period from 1997 onwards where we were regularly finishing high in the league and beating the likes of Manchester United, Liverpool and Chelsea. They were quite special games to be involved in."

So if he could freeze-frame one spell from his Coventry career what would it be?

"One of the main memories I do have is of David Busst's testimonial game. The memory of when the injury actually happened is obviously not a happy one but I played in his testimonial and it was a great evening. The ground was completely sold out so I was delighted for Busst on that front and we had some great players playing that night like Gazza, Cantona, Ferdinand and McCoist."

"It seems strange that one of my fondest memories comes as a result of such a bad thing but I always remember that night. Emotionally it was an amazing week because on the Saturday before that testimonial we had beaten Spurs on the last day to stay up."

Shaw acknowledges that after enjoying so many happy years in the top flight, perhaps a move of stadium is the best thing City can do now to revitalise the team and the fans.

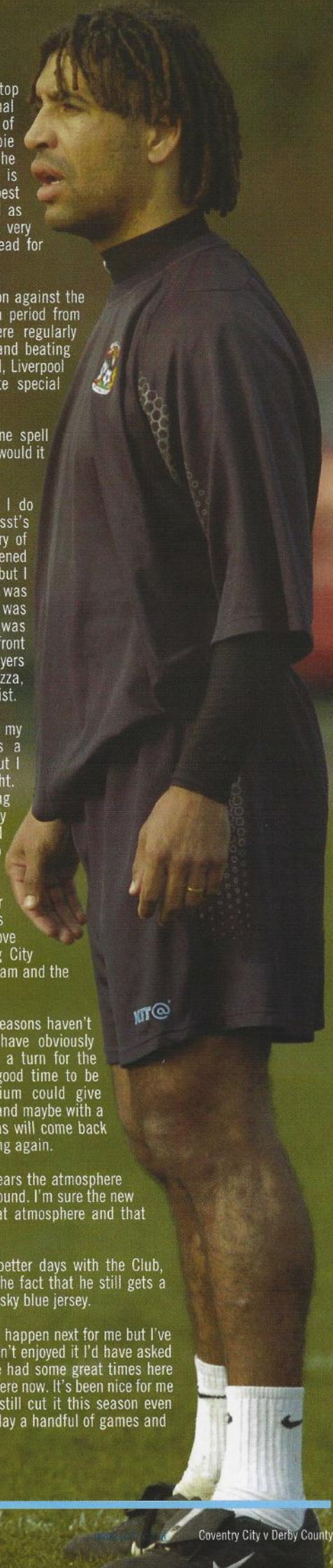
"Unfortunately the past few seasons haven't been so good. The crowds have obviously fallen as results have taken a turn for the worse and perhaps it is a good time to be moving on. This new stadium could give everybody a new lease of life and maybe with a string of good results the fans will come back and the Club can start building again."

"Over the last three or four years the atmosphere hasn't been so good at the ground. I'm sure the new stadium will generate a great atmosphere and that could be just what we need."

Despite having experienced better days with the Club, Shaw is keen to finish with the fact that he still gets a buzz every time he pulls on a sky blue jersey.

"It's too early to say what will happen next for me but I've loved it, I really have. If I hadn't enjoyed it I'd have asked to leave a long time ago. I've had some great times here and I still enjoy running out there now. It's been nice for me to show people that I could still cut it this season even though I was meant to only play a handful of games and take charge of the reserves."

By David Antill



**T**oday Tommy Hutchison will be recognised, not for the first time and almost certainly not for the last, as the greatest Coventry City player of all-time.

A poll held with fans earlier in the season via the matchday programme and official website saw the Seventies Wizard of the Wing come out on top as the supporters' favourite ever player, narrowly pipping Steve Ogrizovic to the honour.

And as if to reinforce his status as a Sky Blues legend, he also took 25% of the votes from Coventry City players past and present, when they were asked who they think is the most influential player of all time, with many of those naming Hutch never even having played with him, including Oggy.

That is a mark of how his legacy lives on, and today, a quarter of a century after he played his last game for City, he is still remembered as a true legend.

He was last at Highfield Road as a hospitality guest for the match against Cardiff last month and said how it is always good to be back at the home of a club he made 355 appearances for between 1972 and 1980.

"Coming back to the club after having been away so long, it's unbelievable really. It's hard for it to sink in," he said of the standing ovation he received from the 15,000 or so City fans that day.

"I came back once before and brought my son with me and he couldn't believe the reception I got. He was only four when I left here but I had to walk around the ground and everybody would talk to me and said they wished I was back here. My son was taken aback because he thought "Wait a minute, maybe he was a good player!" It's always good to get recognition and you don't get any better than what I get here. I left in 1980 which was a long time ago but they still remember.

"Before Manchester City came in for me, I actually felt I would end my days here. I saw no reason why I would have to move to another club because I was coming up for my testimonial year and it just came out of the blue. I had no intentions of ever leaving.

"The big thing about my time here was that everything I ever really wanted out of the game, other than winning a trophy, happened while I was here. I got international recognition, my family were well settled here, one of my kids was born here and they went to school here. The whole place was a family club and I loved it here."

Hutch admits that the memories always come flooding back when he returns to Highfield Road and on his last visit he enjoyed meeting Jimmy Hill – the man he says made this club – along with former teammates Bill Glazier and Willie Carr.

"It was nice to meet Jimmy Hill again because I can always remember when I came here the dressing rooms, and the stadium in general, were ten years ahead of every other club and Jimmy Hill did all that. The training ground was spot on, the pitches were perfect. Highfield Road itself, and everything about it, was geared towards being a big, big club. Other than going to places like Manchester United and Arsenal, this football club was way ahead of everywhere else.

"It brings back a lot of memories because it hasn't changed much since then! I was invited to Maine Road for Manchester City's last game but I only played 45 games for them and somehow I felt that it wasn't right to be there, but being back here feels right.

"When I was with Bill Glazier and Willie Carr recently there was a lot of good banter. It's good that we can meet up and still get on."

When asked of their favourite memories, City fans over a certain age will regularly recite tales of Tommy twisting an opposition defender inside out and the man himself recalls one such evening.

"I think we beat Norwich 5-4 here once and I can remember their full-back playing against me. I could have gone past him at will that day. It was one of those days where nothing he could have done would have stopped me.

"The main one though was when we were really down and out in the 1976/77 season I think. I scored at Everton in the last minute about four games from the end to get us a valuable point and it turned out that we would have to draw with Bristol here on the final day if Sunderland were beaten at Everton. There was a bit of controversy about it because we delayed the kick-off by 15 minutes which was clever. I wasn't renowned for scoring goals and I scored them both that night and the pleasure of staying up that year was unbelievable.

"The crowd were six deep around the ground – they were actually sitting on the sidelines and afterwards they wouldn't go until we came back out onto the pitch. There was champagne flowing and I thought "Wait a minute, we haven't won anything, we've just stayed up." But that was how important it was."

Hutchison will be presented with an award for his achievements with the Club during the final match at Highfield Road and he hopes that the current crop of players will not be fighting for their Championship status against the Rams.

"Although I appreciate a rest at the weekend I am really looking forward to the last game of the season. Hopefully we don't need any results – I think we'll be all right, we've been there many times before!"

By David Antill



*Simply*  
the best

# Club Badge



The importance of a club badge could not have been more perfectly illustrated than it was earlier this year.

Coventry City announced it would be unveiling a new badge to coincide with the imminent move to the Arena. Chairman Mike McGinnity pointed out afterwards that the decision was not made to alienate the fans but to celebrate the start of a new era.

However, Sky Blues fans appealed in their thousands for the Club to stick with their current badge and due to the overwhelming demand, a decision was made to revert to the badge we all know and love.



**So what makes our Club crest so special?** Here we take a brief look at its heritage, what it symbolises and also at its precursor which dates back to the Sixties.

The existing Coventry City crest was originally created in 1972 but did not appear on kits until 1983. The design is based closely on the city of Coventry crest and features imagery that relates to many different aspects of Coventry. There are no set interpretations of what they symbolise although the following is widely believed to be true.

**Elephant** – A symbol of strength, to carry the now long gone Coventry Castle on its back. It may also relate to the fall of Adam and Eve, even to the redemption of the human race by Christ. In addition, the enemy of the elephant in medieval times was the dragon who devoured newly born elephants. The defence of its young by the elephant was much admired in medieval times. The image of an elephant was originally introduced when Coventry City became the 'Sky Blues' under Jimmy Hill in 1962. Prior to that City had been nicknamed the Bantams, although it was not until later in the decade and the early 1970s that the badge began to appear on kits and programmes.

**St George's cross (on the elephant's tabard)** – In addition to the elephant giving us strength, redemption, protection and the ability to slay dragons, it is fabled that St George was born hereabouts in Coventry.

**The Eagle of Leofric** - Lady Godiva's husband.

**The Phoenix** - symbolising the rise of the City from the ashes of the bombing during WW2.

**The football** - No explanation needed there!

## What might have been!

We won't make a big thing about it but here is the badge the Club planned to use from next season onwards. It incorporated the elephant, albeit a more modern-looking one and the crest had transformed into a shield. Fans disliked its huge difference to the existing badge, pointing out just how proud City supporters are of their heritage. This is the last time you'll see it, we promise!



## ~ MEMORY ~

*Neil Moxley, Daily Mail Journalist  
& surrogate Coventry City Fan*

"I do not hail from Coventry – although I have to take an unhealthy huge interest in the club now as my fiancée is a season-ticket holder in the East Stand – but I did belong to a rare breed of people who would watch a game anywhere within reason. Perhaps that explains why I'm now in my current job. As I grew up in Solihull, Coventry was not a million miles away. However, generally speaking, I would go to watch Birmingham or Villa as it was easier to make it from where I lived to St Andrew's or Villa Park.

But on the odd occasion, I would make the hike to Highfield Road. It was during these teenage years that I watched a game that still sticks in my memory - but sadly only for the winning goal. It was in the 80s and Spurs came to visit. It was a game that ebbed and flowed in equal measure and it looked to end up an entertaining 3-3 draw. That was until Cyrille Regis popped up to smash in the ball from close range. I remember the ground almost moved with the excitement of that last-minute goal.

I can still see big Cyrille running off now in my mind's eye as the crowd went absolutely wild. But the sorry fact is, I can never get away from Highfield Road. For some reason, stuck in a cupboard under the stairs is a lump of concrete. The future Mrs M took it away with her as it was where she used to stand before they re-built the West Stand. The memories may fade but I've got a piece of Highfield Road rock to remind me of the not-so-glory days. How sad is that?"

## The End of an Era



*Here's to the next suit at  
the new arena*

*Best of luck to the Sky Blues*

**Meg & Geoff Mann**

# HALFTIME QUIZ

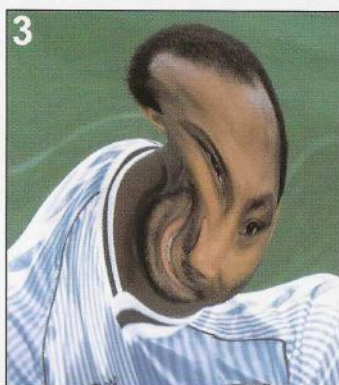
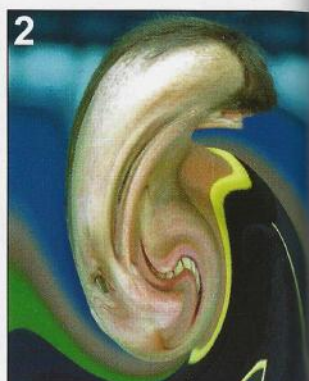
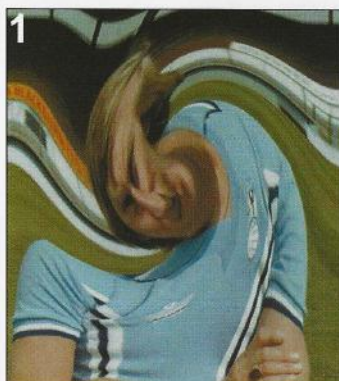
Test your Highfield Road Knowledge

END OF AN ERA

## COVENTRY CONUNDRUMS

The clues below make up the surname of someone connected to Coventry City - a player, manager or Chairman. See how many you can get!

1. A bird found in a pear tree
2. He's enthusiastic
3. Where you'll find Molly Malone
4. An automotive vehicle
5. Animals digging
6. A couple who want to get married go to the jewellers to do this
7. To be certain
8. To go and find
9. On the shoulders of a male
10. A type of metal
11. Great with tonic
12. Enjoy a book
13. Reach the highest point
14. The opposite of peace + to tap a door
15. Where you'll find the Rams
16. An energising chocolate bar
17. Take these tablets for indigestion
18. Use this to put up a picture + not a wasp
19. A Scottish cook is released from jail
20. A pale of water was here for Jack and Jill
21. Sit on knees
22. He's quick
23. To burst
24. The song says these birds likes to rock
25. Another name for a window ledge + the past tense of eating
26. A herbaceous gift
27. A unit to measure distance
28. A leg joint + a light + a cup of rosey
29. Main organ of the body + opposite of daughter



GUESS WHO?

## STARTING ELEVEN

1. What year was the Club founded?
2. What was the Club's original name and nickname?
3. Where were early matches played?
4. Who is the Club's greatest ever goalscorer & how many goals did he scorer in one season?
5. What year did Jimmy Hill take charge?
6. A record crowd of 51,455 watched which game at Highfield Road?
7. Which year was Highfield Road made all-seater?
8. Who is the youngest player to have ever played for the Club & how old was he?
9. Who is the Club's most capped player?
10. Who is the player the Club received a record transfer fee for, where did he go to and for how much?
11. Who is the player to have made the most appearances for the Club and how many did he make?

## Who's the gaffer?

As you will know, Coventry have had many managers over the years but managers whose surnames start with M or S make up almost a third of the list. Five bosses have a surname beginning with M or S. Can you name them all? (not including caretakers)



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*Play Up Sky Blues*



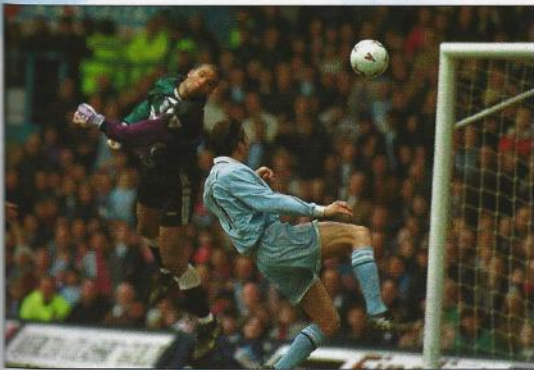
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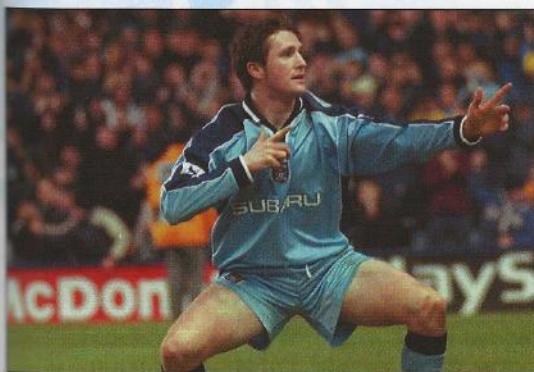
48 Queens Road, Coventry, CV1 3EB

## NAME THE GAMES

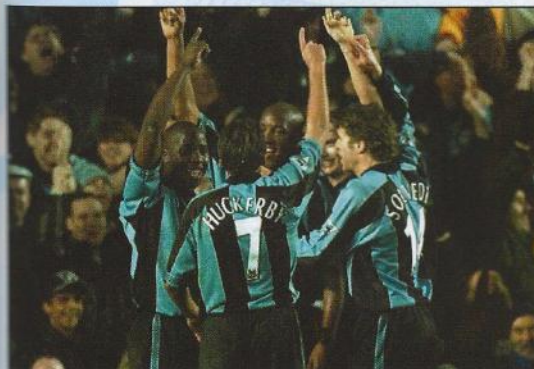
All these games are great City wins at Highfield Road. Name the opponents, scoreline and year for maximum Sky Blue supporter status.



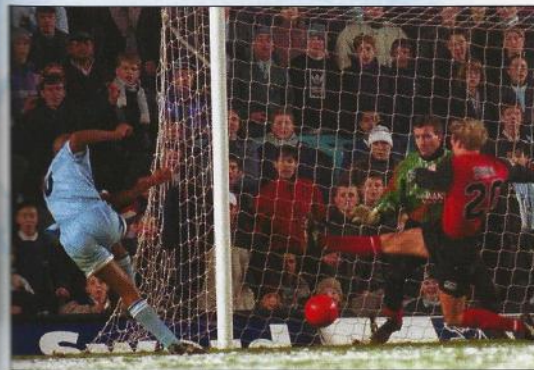
1. Noel Whelan's goal earns City three points over these title contenders, who three days earlier had beaten Newcastle United in a 4-3 thriller.



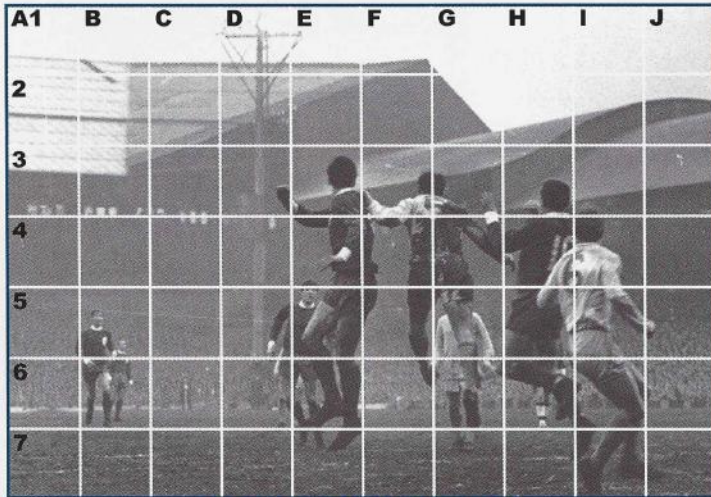
2. Robbie Keane's winner earns a valuable win over local rivals.



3. This was the first win over this team in nine years, with Whelan, Huckerby and Dublin netting for the Sky Blues.



4. A snowbound pitch doesn't stop City recording a victory over the champions.



## SPOT THE BALL

Can you spot the ball from this Liverpool v City game

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**Answers**  
Coventry Comdrams: 1. Partridge - Richie Partridge, 2. Keen - Robbie Keane, 3. Dublin - Dion Dublin, 4. Carr - Willie Carr, 5. Burrows - David Burrows, 6. Pick a ring - Alvin/Nick Pickering, 7. Sure - Richard Shaw, 8. Hunt - Ernie Hunt, 9. Head + man - Magnus Hedman, 10. Steel - Luke Steele, 11. Gim - Mickey Gym, 12. Read - Peter Reid, 13. Peak - Trevor Peake, 14. War + knock - Stephen Warnock, 15. Derby - Julian Darby, 16. Boost - David Buss, 17. Renmie - David Renmie, 18. Hook + bee - Darren Huckerby, 19. Mc, Chel, free - Gary McSherry, 20. Hill - Jimmy Hill, 21. Noel - Phil Neal, 22. Speedy - David Speedie, 23. pierce - Stuart/Andy Pearce, 24. Robins - Derrick Robins, 25. Still + ate - John Sillit, 26. Flowers - Tim Flowers, 27. Furlong - Paul Furlong, 28. Knee + lamp + tea - Nil Lamptey, 29. Heart + son - John Hartson  
Starting Eleven: 1. 1883, 2. Singers FC & the Bantams, 3. Dowells Field, 4. Clarrie Bourton & 49 goals, 5. 1961, 6. Coventry v Wolves, Division Two, 29.4.1967, 7. 1981, 8. Ben Mackey - 16 years, 167 days, 9. Magnus Hedman - 38 caps, 10. Robbie Keane to Inter Milan for £13 million, 11. Steve Ogrzovic - 601 appearances  
Name the games: 1. Coventry 1 Liverpool 0 - 6.4.1996 2. Coventry 2 Aston Villa 1 - 22.11.1999 3. Coventry 3 Manchester United 2 - 28.12.1997 4. Coventry 5 Blackburn Rovers 0 - 9.12.1995  
Who's the gaffer?: M - James McInyre, Joe Mercer, Gordon Milne, Don Mackay, Gary McAllister, S - Frank Scott-Watford, Harry Storer, Dave Sexton, John Sillit, Gordon Strachan.  
Spot the Ball: 53  
Name the Player: 1. Tommy Hutchison, 2. Steve Ogrzovic, 3. Cynille Regis, 4. Andy Morrell



1980 1981 1982 1983 1984 1985 1986 1987 1988 1989 1990 1991 1992 1993 • 1980

# Cup glory and two near misses 1980-1993

In an era where so much changed in football, Coventry City had to go through their fair share of lows before they hit the highs of 1987. Football in general was very much in the doldrums in the early Eighties as crowds dwindled and the Sky Blues supporters were becoming disillusioned at a number of decisions made by the Board.

With Jimmy Hill back at the helm as Chairman, he once again tried to make the most of changes which had seen him transform the Club during the 1960s, but this time they failed to produce the same results. The man himself no doubt stands by every choice he made and maintains they were all for the good of the Club but they tended to only alienate the supporters.

As much as his first act as Chairman was to sell Ian Wallace for a club record of £2.5 million to Nottingham Forest and given the form the striker showed under Brian Clough that was perhaps a perfect piece of timing. The money from the deal was used to fund construction of the Sky Blue Connexion at Ryton and while the local fans dubbed it the "Wallace Connexion", Hill's eye for a commercial opportunity could not be denied as he negotiated the Club's first sponsorship deal with car firm Talbot.

With City's youngsters attracting plenty of admirers and Garry Thompson, Mark Hateley and Danny Thomas collecting England Under 21 honours hopes were high for the following season.

However, those hopes dwindled as Coventry embarked on one of their most depressing ever seasons in the top flight. Gates dropped as low as 8,000 in 1982/82 and the traditionally positive relationship with the Coventry Evening Telegraph evaporated as the local paper ran an editorial entitled "A vision blurred" where the Board were dubbed as being "out of touch with the people who like to watch football."



In May, Hill stepped down as Chairman and Iain Jamieson took control and City ensured they were safe from the drop before the final game with their first win in 14 games with a 3-0 victory at Stoke. On the last day of the season, Sexton was sacked and Bobby Gould took over, instigating a mass sale of players.

The troubled times continued on the pitch as City contested three consecutive last day escapes from relegation which you can read about in this programme's Great Escapes feature. But what Gould did manage was to assemble the skeleton of the team which would go on to achieve unprecedented glory.



Jimmy Hill at the opening of the Connexion with the Duke of Edinburgh

## 1987 and all that

18 years on it remains as fresh in our memories as it ever has. City may not have won much in their history but nobody can ever take from us the glory of the 1986/87 season where everything clicked into place for Coventry City Football Club. Gould had used his knowledge of the lower leagues to bring in the likes of Steve Ogrizovic, Micky Gynn, Dave Bennett and Trevor Peake but did not get the chance to see these players fulfil their potential and was sacked in December 1984, with Don McKay taking over until April 1986.

It was at this point that George Curtis returned to the Club, taking over in the managerial hotseat for one season only, while John Sillett was elevated to first team coach. The decision to reunite two of the playing stars of the Sixties turned out to be an inspired one, even if the fans did not agree at the time of the appointment. The signing which brought with it the most success was that of Keith Houchen who started the season up front alongside Cyrille Regis.

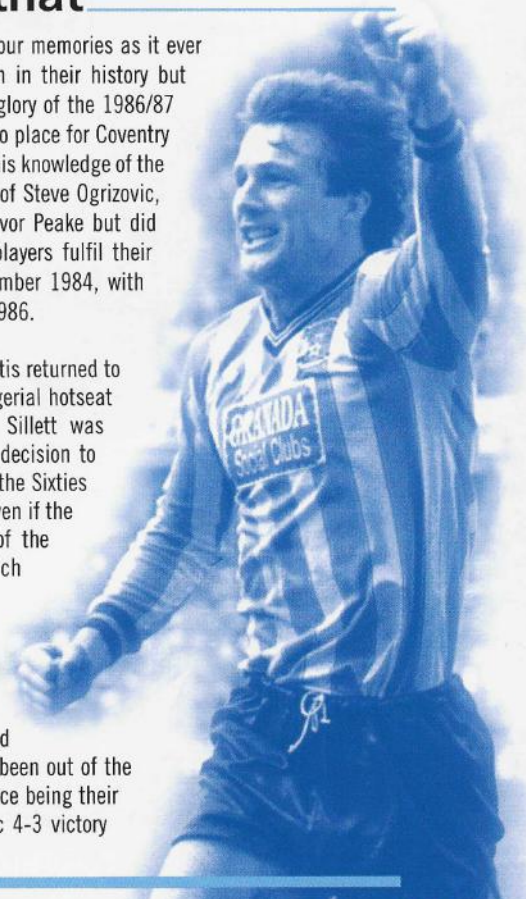
City put together a sequence of good runs and by Christmas had rarely been out of the top eight, with the biggest difference being their excellent defensive record. An epic 4-3 victory

In the 1980/81 season there was some success on the playing field as City reached their first ever semi final, when they took on West Ham in a two-legged affair in the League Cup. The achievement was all the more remarkable when you consider the team was a very young one. Unfortunately youth did not prevail and after a stunning 3-2 win over the Hammers at Highfield Road when City battled back from two-goal deficit, the Sky Blues were denied extra time at Upton Park when a last minute goal gave the home team a 2-0 win on the night and 4-3 victory on aggregate.

In May, Gordon Milne "moved upstairs" to take on a general manager role as the experienced Dave Sexton took control of team affairs but the decisions which annoyed the fans continued to come at Boardroom level and the choice to turn Highfield Road into an all-seater stadium brought widespread derision from the Sky Blues faithful.

As a result 1981/1982 saw already declining gates grow worse. The Board, keen not to get wrapped up in the overall decline within the sport attempted to invest money wisely in American soccer but came out with egg on their face - £500,000 was written off when the Washington Diplomats folded.

Sexton was working within extremely tight financial restraints and the season was a topsy turvy affair, which looked to be heading for relegation until a late charge turned things around and from March, City lost only once in 13 league outings. That period provided a couple of extraordinary results - a 5-5 draw against Southampton and a 6-1 drubbing of Sunderland as the Sky Blues finished safe in 11th spot.



# Geoff Foster

I hadn't even seen Highfield Road prior to October 12th 1963. There was no big build up to my first visit, all I can remember was being told by my dad on the Saturday morning that we'd be going to watch the Sky Blues play Wrexham. Even though I wasn't a complete chump at school and had taken what I considered to be an active interest in classroom activities, I hadn't a clue where Wrexham was, and at that particular time of my life I wasn't really bothered as to the historical importance or geographical make-up. Sad to say I'm none the wiser years on, apart from those all important tit-bits like the guitarist with the rock-rock giants Sweet - Andy Scott comes from Wrexham, as does Ricky Tomlinson's wife.



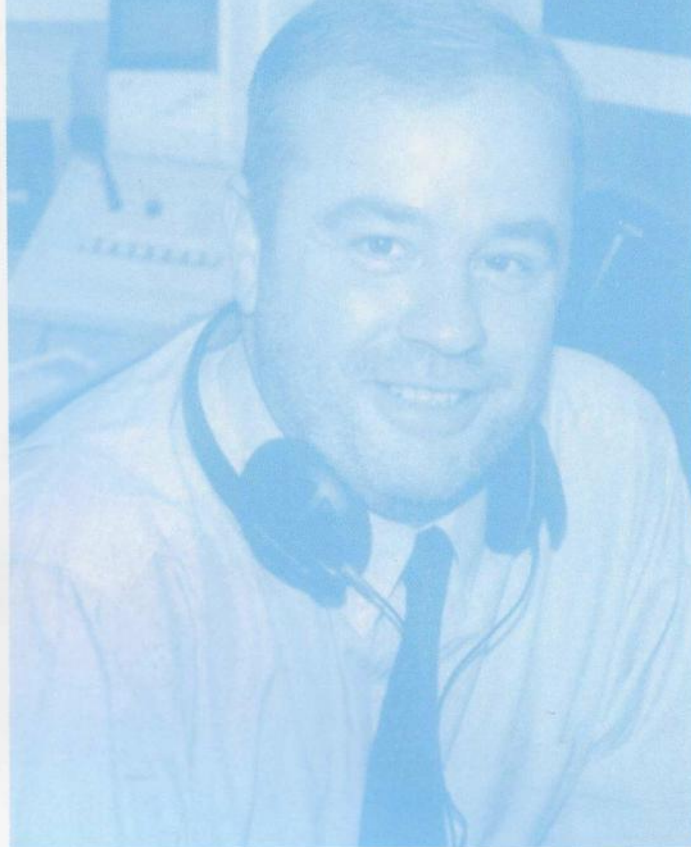
Ian Gibson: Terrace and Foster idol

This is the bit where I launch into an emotional load of codswallop about how I stood open-mouthed, gawping at the "home of the Sky Blues", an awe-inspired seven year-old gripped by the sight of my first football ground. It didn't quite happen like that for me. I remember very little of what Highfield Road was like on that day. The memory does play tricks with you, I was sure the Sky Blue Stand had been built by then, but on checking Rod Dean's Coventry City - A Complete Record, I was mistaken. The 1910-vintage stand (Cost then £1,200) was still there, the new stand on the north side wasn't built until the summer of 1964. So I was one of the first to use that stand - Block D Row N I think - and for the next eight years that's where I was every other Saturday afternoon between August and April. It was from that vantage point that I first saw Gibbo.

The team that day just rolls off the tongue: Wesson, Sillett, Kearns; Hill, Curtis, Summer; Rees, Hale, Hudson, Machin, Mitten - Willie Humphries must've been injured so Ronnie Rees switched to the right with John Mitten making one of his few appearances on the left wing. If I'm correct City played with a 4 - 5 - 1 formation switching to 4 - 3 - 3 when the Welsh side's tricky wingers Clive Chebridge or Arfon Cliffords were in possession. Or was it a conventional 4 - 4 - 2 line-up? Or am I talking round things?

Obviously in those magical days it was good times all the way. The things that are etched firmly in my thoughts are the ball boys (in those dreadful dark maroon check-suits) the brilliant atmosphere created by Glad All Over as the team came out, the pie-sellers with their Sky Blues wooden boxes, the Sam Robbins sign on the roof of The West End, and above all else, the swearing, real proper swearing! You can probably imagine how grown-up I imagined I felt the following Monday when I would proudly throw in my newly found vocabulary at school. "What does that mean Geoff?" "I haven't got a clue, but it must be very rude." So listening to swearing was a big part in my early memories of Highfield Road (how ironic that still is, but instead of the opposition, it's now directed at our own players!)

The first "special" game was the Colchester United match which clinched The Third Division Championship. My Sky Blue hero at the time was George Hudson, and that final game of the 1963-64 season saw The Hud recalled by Jimmy Hill after



losing his place to George Kirby. 36,900 plus me squeezed into Highfield Road and saw Hudson score the only goal of the game. All the other matches went our way, we were The Champions. Cue pitch invasion.

Highfield Road brings so many memories flooding back. Back in the sixties and seventies a sending-off was as rare as a perfectly timed tackle from Titus Bramble, but we had our share. Alan Ross the Carlisle goalkeeper who chinned Bobby Gould, Alun Evans & Maurice Setters, Ian St John for flooring Brian Lewis - were all dismissals that I recall.

Obviously there are matches that stand out. I'm assuming the Wolves game in April 1967 will have been covered in detail. We can safely say that game is way ahead of any other, so which other matches at Highfield Road would be in my top ten? In chronological order:

- 1) **Beating Manchester United just a couple of months before they won the European Cup in 1968 (that's United in case you're not sure)**
- 2) **3 - 1 win over Leeds United in October 1971 - we slaughtered them and Quinton Young was magnificent**
- 3) **League Cup Fifth Round replay against Watford 1980 - five-nil including a great strike from Peter Bodak**
- 4) **The home leg in the semi-final of The League Cup against West Ham in January 1981 - Garry Thompson scoring for both sides**
- 5) **10th December 1983, City 4 Liverpool (the champions) 0 - Terry Gibson hat-trick**
- 6) **Last game of 1984-85 season - City have to win to stay up, they beat Everton 4 - 1**
- 7) **League Cup 25th October 1995, two-nil down against Spurs, win 3 - 2**
- 8) **Manchester United again. Sky Blues win 3 - 2 with "that" goal from Darren Huckerby**
- 9) **Cedric Roussel and Robbie Keane score the goals as The City beat Villa 2 - 1 in November 1999. Carlton Palmer has Hendrie in his pocket.**
- 10) **A month later "the entertainers" beat Arsenal 3 - 2**

I'm sure there are a whole host of games that I've missed off but they are the matches that first sprang to mind.

*So goodbye Highfield Road...thanks for everything, especially Ian Gibson.*

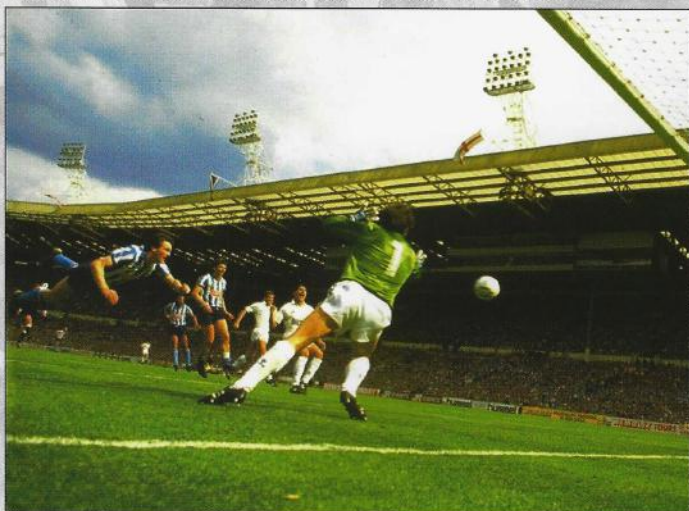
**BBC WM**  
across Coventry & Warwickshire  
94.8, 103.7 & 104 FM

over Spurs saw the fans begin to return to Highfield Road – up until then they had viewed the good results as yet another false dawn.

Coventry's only home tie of their memorable FA Cup run followed when they despatched Bolton 3-0 on an icy pitch. Houchen's goal in Round Four saw off Manchester United at Old Trafford while Gynn netted to provide another 1-0 victory in the next round at Stoke.

Then it was off for the first of two ties at Hillsborough. Regis grabbed his second goal of the campaign before Houchen netted a brace in a 3-1 win over Sheffield Wednesday to send the Sky Blues to their first ever FA Cup semi final, in which they memorably beat Leeds 3-2 after extra time to reach Wembley.

A week before the final, City's kids picked up the FA Youth Cup to lay the final omen that it was to be Coventry's year after a terrific season in the league saw them finish tenth, with their home record the fifth best in Division One.



What followed was what is generally regarded as one of the finest post war Cup Finals of all-time and its importance was recently recognised when it was voted as the Midlands Greatest Sporting Moment in a poll on BBC Midlands Today.

City twice came from behind to win 3-2 after extra time once again, with the goals coming courtesy of Bennett, Houchen and Gary Mabbutt's knee. The scenes the following day in Coventry will never be forgotten as an estimated quarter of a million fans lined the streets to welcome their heroes home.



## Back down to earth

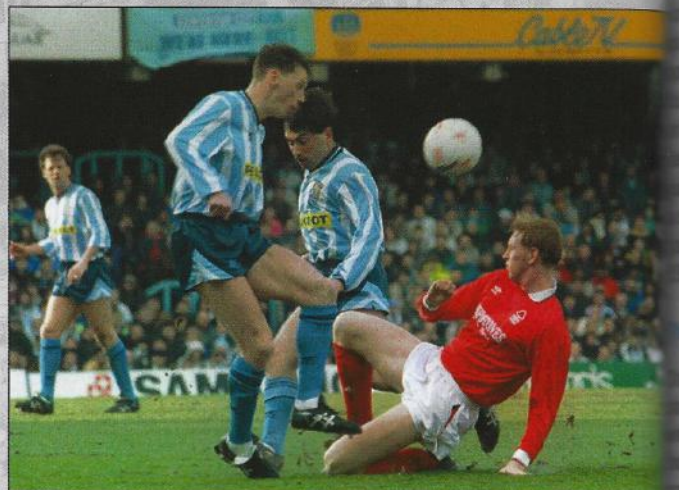
Anything that followed the Cup triumph was going to be viewed as an anti-climax and 1987/88 was not bad by any stretch of the imagination with City finishing tenth for the second season in succession.

Sillett had been promoted to first team manager as Curtis became Managing Director and £780,000 was shelled out to sign striker David Speedie.

One of the major lows in Coventry's recent history followed the next term when non-league Sutton United dumped the Sky Blues out of the FA Cup in the Third Round to register one of the biggest giant-killings of all time. A league finish in seventh place appeased the supporters but with an ageing team many felt writing was on the wall and City had developed the age old problem of raising the game for the big teams, but struggling against the so-called easier opponents.

In 1989/90 Coventry topped the Division One table for the first time in their history, albeit after the first four games of the season, three of which ended in victory. But goals were hard to come by and despite attacking players such as Speedie, Kevin Gallacher, Steve Livingstone and Cyrille Regis all being regulars in the first team, none of them got into double figures.

City did reach their second League Cup semi final in the space of ten years after losing 2-1 to Nottingham Forest at the City Ground, Des Walker produced a terrific performance at Highfield Road to shut the Sky Blues out and ensure a score finished goalless on the day, meaning Forest progressed.



The following season Coventry would get their revenge in one of the most exciting matches ever seen at Highfield Road. Sillett was sacked just 12 games into the 1990/91 campaign with Terry Butcher arriving as player manager and despite relegation worries shrouding matters, City progressed to the Quarter Finals of the Rumbelows Cup with a stunning 5-4 win over Forest. Coventry were four up at 35 minutes thanks to a Gallacher hat-trick and Livingstone's effort. Forest made it 4-3 before the interval and equalised just after half time to make it 4-4. Livingstone's second made it 5-4 to the Sky Blues just after the hour mark and that's how it stayed but City faltered against Sheffield Wednesday in the Quarter Final.

The final season before the start of the Premier League was an extremely troubled one for the Sky Blues. In the space of 12 months, City went through two Chairmen, two managers and three assistant bosses. In November, John Poynton stood down as Chairman with Peter Robins taking over, backed by Bryan Richardson. Butcher then sacked his assistant Mick Mills and replaced him with Don Howe who, in January, became caretaker boss after Butcher's departure.

The confused state at the Club was reflected on the pitch and City stayed up by the skin of their teeth. Despite losing 2-0 to Aston Villa on the final day, Nottingham County drew 2-2 with Luton to send the Hatters down. It hadn't been pretty but they had secured their place in the Premier League.



1983 1984 1985 1986 1987 1988 1989 1990 1991 1992 1993 • 1980 1981 1982 1983

# 5 of the best in the eighties

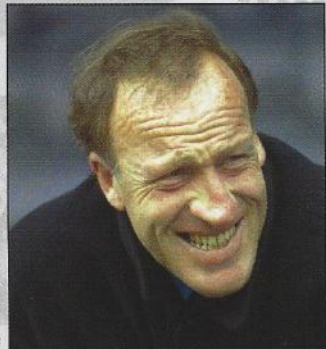
**Cyrille Regis**  
 made his name at West  
 and became only the second  
 Coventry City player to be called  
 by England. During seven  
 years with the Club, Regis' goals  
 - 61 from 270 appearances -  
 are not the greatest, but his game  
 is about more than just  
 scoring goals as he would often  
 go deep to supply other  
 players. With immense power,  
 great footwork and a power-  
 packed shot, Regis had all the attributes  
 of a top striker and on his day could  
 beat any opponent. He is also the  
 highest Coventry goalscorer in  
 a single game, having smashed five  
 at Chester in the League Cup in



**Trevor Peake**  
 one of Bobby Gould's first and definitely among his  
 earliest signings was that of 26-year-old Trevor Peake  
 who made the step-up from Third to First Division  
 football look remarkably easy. A cultured central defender,  
 many of his Eighties teammates are of the impression that  
 he played for a more fashionable club than Coventry,  
 he could have made it into the full England set-up. His  
 consistency in the rearguard was remarkable and his  
 finest moment came when he recovered from a second  
 minute slip in the 1987 FA Cup Final which enabled  
 Steve Allen to open the scoring, to mark the 49-  
 year-old man out of the game.



**Glenn Hoddle**  
 legend is the only word to sum up Oggy,  
 who holds the Club record number of  
 appearances for the Sky Blues. The giant  
 stopper was signed under Bobby  
 Gould's first tenure as manager at the start  
 of the Eighties and defied belief as he  
 stayed on until the 21st Century, making  
 his 601st and final appearance in the final  
 home game of the 1999/2000 season - a 4-  
 0 win over Sheffield Wednesday which was  
 accidentally the club he once scored against  
 in a wind-swept Hillsborough in 1986. The



number of times Oggy saved the Sky Blues is immeasurable but one thing is for certain - he will go down in folklore as one of our greatest ever players.

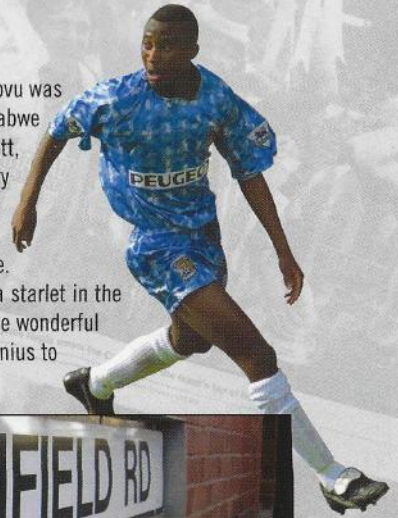
## Lloyd McGrath

What better way to celebrate your 100th first team appearance for a club than in the FA Cup Final. This is exactly what Lloyd McGrath did in 1987 having battled through adversity and a host of injuries to establish himself as a tough customer who got the better of some of the finest English players of their generation including Glenn Hoddle in the Cup Final and Paul Gascoigne in 1990. An uncompromising player, McGrath was comfortable at right back or centre half or even as a man marker in midfield.



## Peter Ndlovu

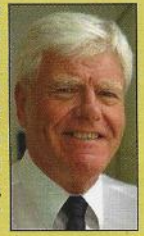
We know he's not a star of the eighties but Ndlovu was spotted during a pre-season tour of Zimbabwe while the Sky Blues were managed by John Sillett, before being signed for £10,000 by Terry Butcher in July 1991 as a precocious young talent. He was gradually drafted into the team and flourished under Bobby Gould's guidance. The Zimbabwean international went on to be a starlet in the first few Premier League seasons, scoring some wonderful solo goals and adding occasional sparks of genius to Coventry's play.



## ~ MEMORY ~

Mike Dale, Coventry News Service 1962-2002

"I've got many memories of great games like the Wolves match in 1967 but I'm going to say the Highfield Road memory that stands out to me is the Main Stand fire in March 1968 and the week that followed. I went down to the ground as a reporter and there were firemen everywhere. I also remember the doctor Peter Coghill was there dressed in his pyjamas with an overcoat over the top. When the fire was put out it became apparent that the whole middle section of the Main Stand had been destroyed, along with the Club records and trophies. There was a game against Manchester United the following Saturday and everybody thought it was going to be postponed but they built a forest of scaffolding to act as a temporary stand and I also remember a large garden shed where Matt Busby did his press conference. The game went ahead as planned and although I don't remember the score I know the likes of George Best and Bobby Charlton were playing and I also remember the Coventry manager Noel Cantwell warning me not to ask too many questions to Matt Busby because he's just shoot me down. Being a young journalist it didn't stop me though!"



# Daniel Clifford

Regular programme columnist Dan Clifford takes in some Highfield Road memories from ex-City players and fans of Championship rivals.

Although much of this souvenir edition of the matchday magazine will, quite rightly, be taken up with Highfield Road memories shared with the country's biggest clubs during City's proud run in the top-flight, many of the current Championship sides have also helped pen some of the most exciting chapters of the ground's history.

In this column, with the help of a collection of supporters who have sat in the visitors' end over the years and some players who have pulled on the Sky Blues strip, we take a look at the memories of Highfield Road that will remain with our Championship rivals.

Nottingham Forest fan Simon Bristow has made several trips to Coventry, but vividly remembers one that was almost cut short by more than half the match.

Simon and several thousand other Forest fans had come to watch the East Midlands in the League Cup, and was left rubbing his eyes in disbelief when his team found themselves four goals down before the interval.

He said: "Kevin Gallacher was causing absolute mayhem in our defence and had scored a hat-trick by about the half-hour mark – I remember the two guys next to us just getting up and leaving and we wondered if we should do the same.

"We were glad we didn't. Forest scored three before the break and then one straight after, and for about half an hour we pushed on and looked like we might get a fifth and complete the comeback.

"As it happened Steve Livingstone hit the winner for Coventry to take the game 5-4, but it was an incredible match."

Just across the East Midlands, many Derby County fans will recall leaving Highfield Road believing that they had inflicted relegation on the club after taking all three points in a must-win clash.

With time desperately running out for City in the 1996-97 season, it was widely believed that anything but victory would see the club drop out of the top-flight, and when Dion Dublin netted an early second-half penalty to level the scores at one all, it looked like Gordon Strachan's men would go on and win – that didn't happen.

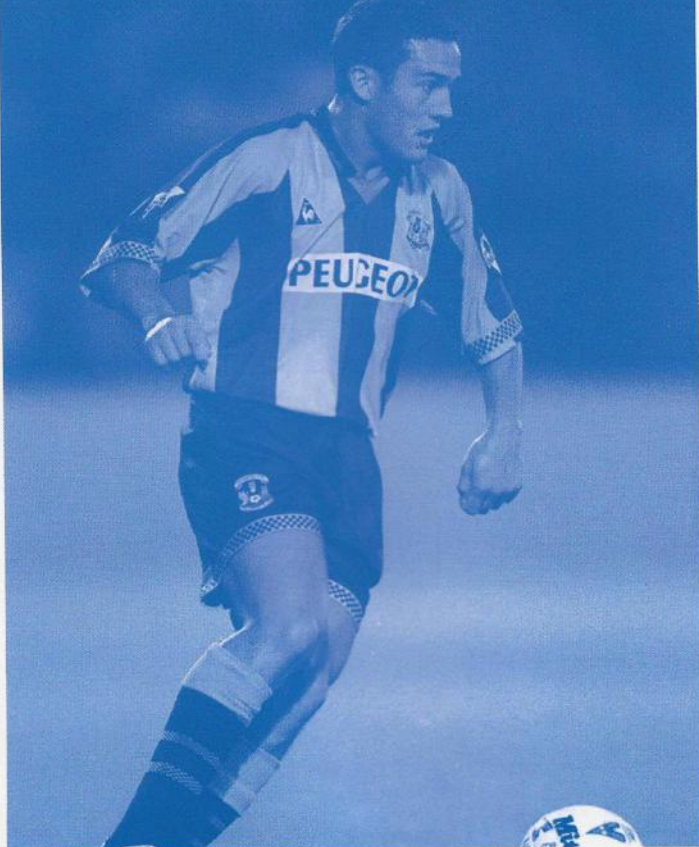
Former midfielder and current Southampton ace Paul Telfer takes up the story: "We all believed we would win and were desperate to do so, it was a massive game and when we equalised our fans went crazy and the atmosphere was electric.

"It only looked like there would be one winner so it was a hammer blow when Derby scored again, and despite piling on the pressure we just couldn't get back – it was a horrible feeling."

At the time, little did the Sky Blues players know that a week later they would be heroes, after recording one of the most historic relegation escapes ever in the famous White Hart Lane win.

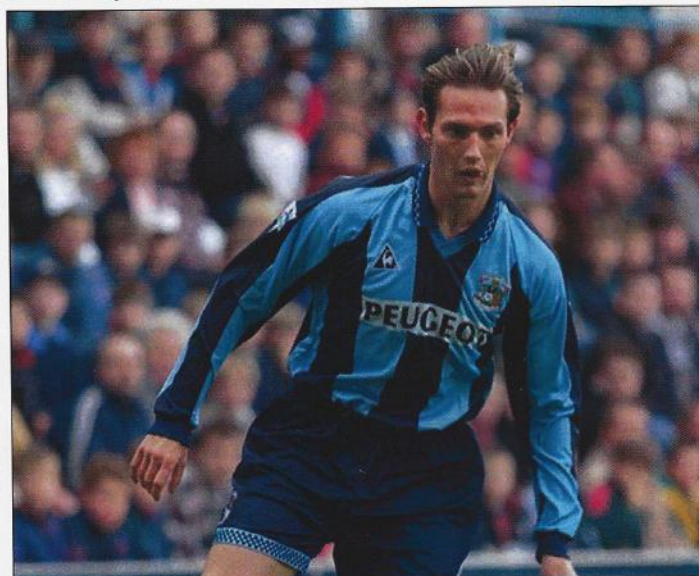
Leeds United are another Championship side who have made many visits to this ground, and in recent years several of them were very memorable to one City player – Leeds lad Noel Whelan.

Whelan was brought to Coventry by Ron Atkinson and faced his home town club for the first time in the 1995-96 season, with the Sky Blues badly needing the points and the player himself not knowing how he would feel.



He explains: "I was desperate to do well for Coventry and show the fans what I was capable of, but I supported Leeds and I wasn't sure how I would feel if I scored against them – that is exactly what happened.

"The ball broke to me and I didn't have to think twice, and I remember the absolute elation when it went in. City carried on to win the game and it was a great day, looking back now it is really strange because they are the two clubs closest to my heart."



A championship team with less than fond memories of Highfield Road are Sunderland, and Mackems fan Michael Coulson has specific reason why.

He said: "Growing up I had always heard the stories of how we were relegated because of a Highfield Road game between Coventry and Bristol City, but my own first visit was for a League Cup quarter final replay in 1990.

"We had drawn the first leg one all and, although we were a division below Coventry we thought we had a great chance of getting to the semi-final – a feeling which was boosted by the fact that, on arrival at the ground, we discovered that City had injury problems and a guy we had never heard of was playing up front, his name was Steve Livingstone.

"By the time we left the ground we had certainly heard his name – in fact we heard it over the tannoy four times when they were announcing his goals.

"The end result was 5-0 and to this day I never comment when Sunderland play a team that are giving a debut to a youngster because of injuries or suspensions!"

## HIGHFIELD ROAD – The Distant Past, by John Harris

During the years of World War II, there was very little, if any, competitive or professional football played. My only knowledge of the game was kicking an old leather "caser" around on the nearest bomb site with a gang of other scruffy "Coventry kids".

Then one day, near the end of the war, my Dad said that a series of football matches were going to be played at Highfield Road to celebrate the end of the hostilities and asked if I would like to go. Yes, of course, and so it was in 1945 when I was ten-years-old that I made my first visit to a place that, in the years to follow, made such an impact on my life.

These early games were played against representative XI teams containing such legends as George Hardwick of Middlesbrough, the RAF and England, Raich Carter of Sunderland and England and Tommy Lawton of Everton and England to name just a few.

At that time, Coventry City's players hadn't made much of an impact on me, but I soon got to know and enjoy the skills and energy of such players as George Mason – a colossus of a centre half with his hair parted straight down the middle, and as he rose to head the ball away, his arms would be right down by his side with his hands out, acting like wings to keep him afloat above the opposing centre forward.

Then there was Alf Wood, he of the baldy head and loose collared sweater, a goalkeeper extraordinaire who would make the simplest of catches look like a world-beating save as he flung himself across the goal, only to occasionally let the ball go under his body, much to the amusement of us fans behind the goal at the Spion Kop end.

Which brings me back to the ground itself. It never ceased to amaze me why the name of Coventry City Football Club was named after a street that it was not on, you know what I mean.



Highfield Road itself is a little street off Thackhall Street, and it was at the junction of these two roads, on a piece of waste ground, that I, and up to 200 others, used to leave our bikes while we went into watch the match. After the game, the bikes would still be there – no damage, none pinched, not even a tyre pump missing. (I wonder what it would be like today.)

The Spion Kop itself was an amazing structure of metal rising high above the open terrace of the east end of the ground, so high in fact that if you suffered from vertigo you were in trouble, and you would certainly need binoculars to see the match in detail. But such was the popularity of the game of football and the support for the "Bants", with the call for "The Old Five" (a legacy from the high scoring pre-War days) that the Spion Kop was always full.

But then along came God in the form of Jimmy Hill but that's another story.

4) My father bought two season tickets for the Main Stand, End Block, next to the (as now) East Stand. I think it was 1968 and the rattle was still in fashion then, which as an eleven-year-old boy was great!

Unfortunately the chap in the next row down didn't think so when City scored – as I swung my rattle he stood up – ouch! (I think we scored five that day!) I have to explain that the chap was quite thin on top and for the rest of the season he wore a cap – I don't blame him.

Malcolm John

5) I remember my friend and I standing on the Spion Kop (with dreadful fencing separating the home and away supporters) watching the Sky Blues v Tottenham

game which City won 1-0 thanks to the fastest postman in the West, John Williams!

The reason this stands out in my mind was that it was Coventry's first ever Sky game and the grief the camera man got from behind the goal, well...

Chris Brooks  
Allesley

6) It was a little ironic that a neighbour took me to my first City match, considering that my dad and grandfathers had been "home and aways" for nigh on 40 years prior to 1972, or was it 1973? Hey ho.

As I was only six or seven at the time, my memory is a little foggy, but I do remember a great hero of mine then, as he still is now, Gordon Banks, in goal for Stoke. A great man and someone who would sort of cross my path again a few months later. Correct me if I'm wrong (and I am sure plenty of City statisticians will), but we lost 2-0. I perhaps should have seen this as a portent of what was to come and bailed out there and then to stick with my local AP Leamington.

I can't remember too much about the day or the further games that season. I can't even remember what kit we wore then or who played but it didn't really matter. It was my local team and they kind of stuck from then on, through thin and thin and the occasional thick!



What I do remember is then being in hospital a short while later after a motor accident, at the same time as the great Banksy. Sadly, I came out only slightly worse for wear, whereas Gordon was not quite so lucky and the end of a career beckoned for England's finest ever goalkeeper. I also clearly remember a further short while later that my dad bought a new car, a second hand Audi 80 that registered one T Hutchison as the previous owner! When my father called him to ask about the car, it transpired that he had been given a free car for Scotland qualifying for the World Cup and the Audi was now surplus to requirements!

So, I was now a fortnightly Sky Blues fan who arrived at the ground in an ex-City car – marvellous! If only for some of those Seventies players to still be fit now. (Hutch probably is!)

Julian Gent,  
Aylesbury

FansMemories 2



# the Premiership Years 1992-2001

**A**live and Kicking was the theme tune of the Sky advertising campaign which heralded the advent of the Premier League and that's exactly what Coventry City were when the new era in English football kicked off on August 15, 1992.

While many may have doubted the aptitude of the song at a time when English football had been sat in the doldrums for some time, it did not take long for fans to realise that football in this country, especially in the top flight, was indeed alive and kicking. Thankfully, the Sky Blues got to enjoy the re-birth of the sport, as they spent nine seasons among the English elite before their relegation in 2001.

The sceptics among us may have frowned upon the American style razzmatazz which was injected into our national game, but once that had faded, what we were left with was a league that would go on to be recognised as one of the best in the world.

Some would argue that it has all come at a cost – rocketing wages have seen a decline for many clubs, including the Sky Blues,

whose over-expenditure during the boom years have cost them dearly in their first four seasons back in Division One. But ask any City fan if they would change those heady Premiership days and the majority would answer no.

Coventry will always go down in the record books as the first club to top the Premier League thanks to three straight wins against Middlesbrough, Tottenham and Wimbledon. City then went on to win at Sheffield Wednesday and Oldham to establish a club record of four successive away wins which went unequalled until the 2003/2004 campaign.

The advent of the Premier League did not instantly turn English football into the glamorous affair it is nowadays but City were there, riding comparatively high during the mid to late Nineties, and the early parts of this decade.

Here we take a look at what made those nine seasons special and why we all hope a return is not too far around the corner.



Quinn celebrates one of his hat-trick goals v Arsenal at Highbury

## the last change

At the start of the 1993/1994 season, the last major structural overhaul at Highfield Road saw the ground capacity decrease to 17,000 with only three sides of the stadium open. The old Spion Kop was to make way for the state-of-the-art new East Stand. The construction continued throughout the season and the East Stand was officially unveiled for the start of the 1994/1995.

Seating 5,300 supporters, the East Stand took Highfield Road back to an all-seater stadium with a capacity of just over 23,000.



To this day the facilities inside the East Stand remain among the best in Football League. The Mall is a 100,000 square foot concourse area, where you can buy a beer, food or just watch the TVs before kick-off and during half time. It has also been used for beambacks from away games including the Sky Blues' first in 62 years at Villa Park on Valentine's Day 1998 when thousands of fans packed the Mall to watch City win thanks to Viorel Moldovan's goal. It has also been used to meet and greet with the players along with various conferences and meetings.



At the same time, new hospitality areas were opened, including executive boxes, the Premier Club and the Ladbrokes Club, all of which helped the hospitality side of the game boom during the Nineties.

Before the start of the 1994/95 campaign, changes were also made to the East Stand roof and seating to leave Highfield Road looking pretty much as it is today.

  
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# Seasonal summaries

## Flying out the blocks

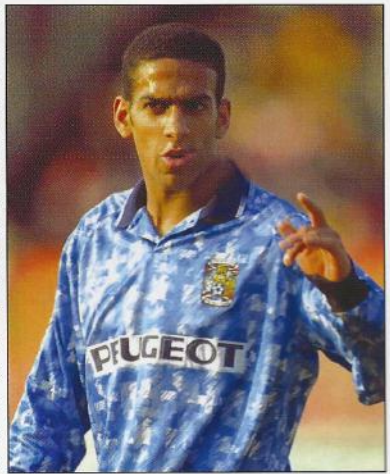
Things started well, perhaps unbelievably well, for the Sky Blues in the Premier League. Under the guidance of Bobby Gould – who once again used his knowledge of the lower leagues to snap up bargains like Phil Babb - they won their first three games of the 1992/1993 season.

They then only lost twice in our opening 12 matches and in November signed Mick Quinn who netted an amazing ten goals in his first six games. Quinn eventually scored 17 goals that season in which poor late form saw City end up in 15th spot.

The following term started in similar fashion and Quinn netted an unbelievable free-kick against Arsenal on the opening day, giving the Sky Blues a famous 3-0 victory. City were unbeaten in their first eight matches. The end of the season was excellent as well – with just one loss in nine – but the middle section of the campaign was terrible and led to the October walkout of Gould. In the summer a boardroom reshuffle had seen Bryan Richardson become Chairman and he allowed Gould's assistant Phil Neal to take over as manager. But the New Year was not a happy one with Quinn's goaldrought contributing to poor form. The highlight for many during that spell were the sensational displays of top scorer Peter Ndlovu and his subsequent rise to stardom helped City to a healthy eleventh placed finish in 1993/1994.

## Reasons for optimism

City has a season of struggle led to much optimism for Coventry fans, but that was the case in 1994/95. The World Cup had a significant effect on the squad, with City signing USA international winger Cobi Jones and saying goodbye to Babb who had played a starring role for the Republic of Ireland and went to Liverpool for £3.75 million – a British record at the time for a defender. With the transfer money, City splashed out £2 million on Dion Dublin, which may have seemed a lot of money for a Manchester United reserve team striker but turned out to be a wise investment.



Babb went for a then record £3.75 million.

After joining in September, Dublin went on to score 16 goals in each of his first two seasons with the Sky Blues, but even that couldn't prevent a close run thing in 1995. Neal was sacked in February and the high profile arrival of Ron Atkinson attracted both the media and the fans to Highfield Road. Big Ron put 5,000 on the pitch for his first match in charge against West Ham and received a standing ovation. Ultimately he helped City avoid the drop by five points and with Gordon Strachan at his side, hopes were high for the following season.

Atkinson was being given money to spend and reported offers of around £10 million for Dublin and Ndlovu were turned down. Had City turned the corner and were now a buying rather than a selling club? Certainly that seemed the case at the time.

However, many of the signings turned out to be nothing more than bit part players and a season of struggle ensued. In 1995/96, City won only once in their first 16 games and eventually avoided the drop thanks to a win and a draw against Wimbledon and Leeds at the death. The disappointment led to a poor start in 1996/97, even after the capture of Scottish international Gary McAllister for £3

million from Leeds – the biggest signing in the Club's history which again raised fans' expectations.

In November, Atkinson "moved upstairs" after spending £17 million on players and in came Gordon Strachan whose playing days seemed to be over but would be required again before the season was out. With relegation looming large, the former Scottish international played his first game of the season against Chelsea in April and inspired his team to a 3-1 win, just three days after City had overcome Liverpool at Anfield. Those results would be imperative to City's survival which was secured by the most nail-biting of final day escapes at White Hart Lane, where Oggy – shortly after breaking George Curtis' record number of appearances – was immense.

## Happy days are here again

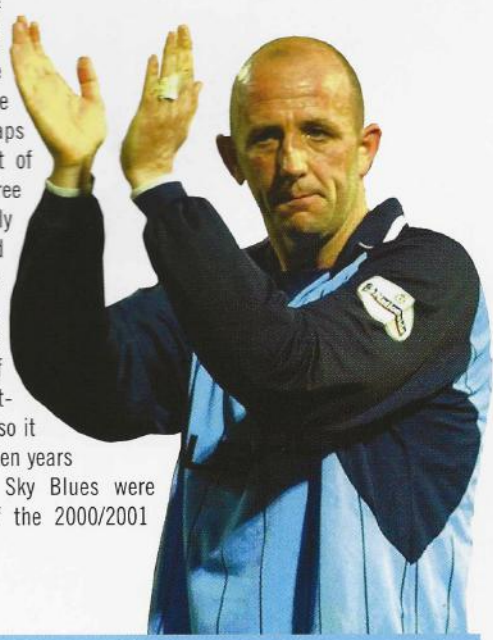
After the nerve-jangling end to 96/97 the events of 97/98 seemed like heaven. Dublin and Huckerby – who had joined for £1million from Newcastle – formed a sublime partnership, with Dion the archetypal centre forward netting 23 goals and Huck playing the ideal foil, scoring some truly memorable efforts and reaching 15 himself. League form was solid and City finished eleventh but a run to the FA Cup Quarter Finals, where we unluckily went out to Sheffield United on penalties was what really made the season stand out from the norm.



More disappointment followed in 1998/1999 when City failed to build on the momentum they had built up and slumped to 15th in the league, but it was only a minor blip before happy times returned in arguably the most entertaining league season of our nine Premiership years.

In 1999/2000 huge amounts of money were pumped into the Club and with massive profits being made on the likes of Huckerby who joined Leeds for £5.5 million, City brought in players of the calibre of Robbie Keane and Moustapha Hadji. Turn over the page for more on this memorable season where 12 wins at Highfield Road made season ticket holders happy fans, but a dismal return of no wins on the road meant travelling supporters weren't so pleased with their lot.

Unfortunately the joy of that season was followed by the ultimate low. Keane was sold for double the fee he arrived for but perhaps the bigger loss was that of McAllister who, after three seasons of comparatively average displays, proved just what a world class performer he really was. But with no replacement for these two lynchpins of the side arriving, the writing was on the wall and so it was that, after 34 unbroken years in the top flight, the Sky Blues were relegated at the end of the 2000/2001 season.





# Tonight we're going to party....



## .....like its 1999

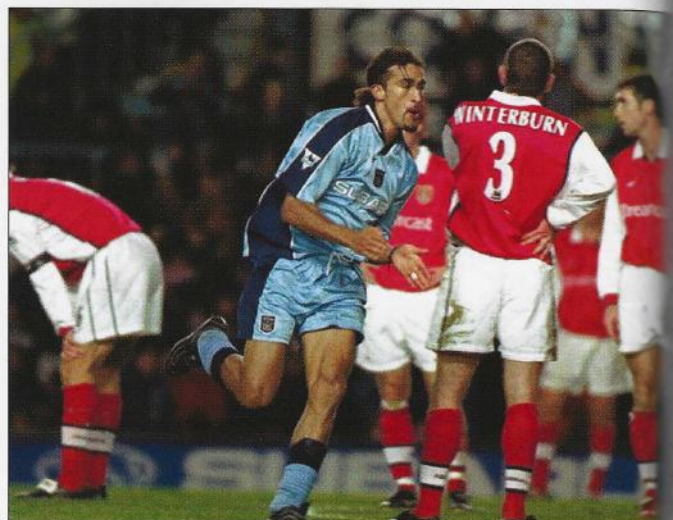
**G**ames take on an air of greatness for differing reasons. Some because of the size of the victory, others because of the opposition and some are down to an uncanny sense of timing. Then there are the rare few which combine all three elements. Coventry City's very last home game of the millennium was one such fixture.

Arsenal may not have been the force to be reckoned with at the end of the 20th century that they are five years down the line but they were Manchester United's nearest challengers and their teamsheet was enough to instil the fear of life into opposition. With current stars like Henry and Ljungberg in the side along with old stalwarts like Seaman, Keown and Adams, the Gunners were on their way to supremacy under the watchful eye of Arsene Wenger. (FACT: Graham Barrett was among the Arsenal substitutes that day.)

But there were no Christmas celebrations for them at Highfield Road as they came up against a Sky Blues side that Sky TV had tagged "the Entertainers" due to their flowing style of football. Already they had covered three City games that season including the 4-0 drubbing of Watford and their first home win over Aston Villa since 1992 and they were not to be disappointed after choosing this one.

The cogs of Strachan's exciting side were really in motion with McAllister ruling the midfield and possessing the vision to utilise the skill of Keane to the full. Indeed, it was Macca who opened the scoring from 25 yards thanks to a fortuitous deflection off Keown's backside and just before half time Hadji made it 2-0. The Moroccan international was in full flow at this point and the precision of his strike from the edge of the 'D' was top class.

City came out in the second half looking to put the result beyond doubt and



nearly succeeded but the inevitable comeback started with Ljungberg's scrappy effort. With the Gunners looking ever more threatening, it took a moment of magic to restore the two-goal advantage. In what became a trademark finish for the youngster during his City days he somehow managed to flick the ball goalwards with the outside of his boot as he was running in the wrong direction. Seaman may have been there and done it but he had probably never seen such nonchalance in front of goal.

A late Davor Suker effort could not spoil things and it was a very Happy New Year for the Sky Blues.



1995 1996 1997 1998 1999 2000 1990 1991 1992 1993 1994 1995 1996 1997 1998 1999

# 5

## of the best in the nineties

The flood of money that came into the game with the advent of the Premiership meant that clubs like Coventry could attract a high calibre of players, some of whom would go on to be considered legends.

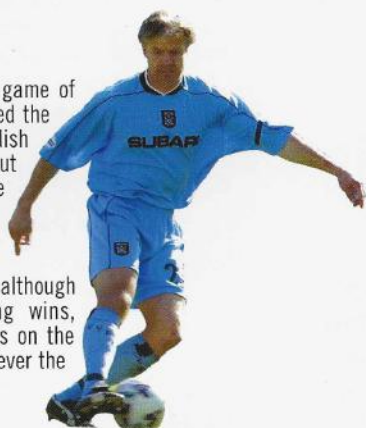
### Dion Dublin

Everyday Dion is unlikely to come into most Coventry City fans' minds as one of their favourite players, mainly because of his choice of club when leaving the Sky Blues. And while he will always be remembered with a boo and a hiss on a return to Highfield Road there is no doubting how good a forward the £1.95 million signing from Manchester United was. 72 goals in 168 appearances make him one of Coventry's all time greats by the statistics alone and when you take into account the importance of many of those strikes, his value to City during a four-year spell is amplified even further. His best season saw him take the Golden Boot award with 18 Premiership goals which fired the Sky Blues to an eleventh place finish. Five goals in cup competitions helped Coventry reach the Quarter Finals of the FA Cup only for a penalty shootout heartbreak against Sheffield United to stop them further progress. As prolific a striker as he may have been, when called upon, Dion also did a sterling job at centre half.



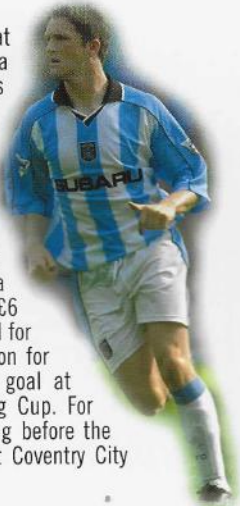
### Roland Nilsson

Nilsson's seemingly effortless ability to play the game of football is a rare commodity and he was nicknamed the Legend for obvious reasons. A record-breaking Swedish international, the right back hardly ever put a foot out of line and added a reassuring calmness to the Coventry City backline during 79 appearances after his £200,000 move from Helsingborgs in 1997. He later went on to manage the Sky Blues following the departure of Gordon Strachan in October 2001, although despite leading the team to some convincing wins, inconsistency in results led to his departure. It is on the pitch where he will be remembered though and if ever the word classy belonged to a player it was Nilsson.



### Robbie Keane

Every now and again a player makes a brief stop at Highfield Road, and does enough during a relatively short space of time to ensure he is regarded as highly as players who have spent their whole career with the club - Robbie Keane is one such player. A skilful attacker whose career was in the ascendance when he joined City in 2000, Keane spent just one season at Highfield Road and netted 12 goals to establish himself as a real force to be reckoned with. His £2 million move to Inter Milan netted the Club a healthy profit on their original record £6 million outlay and signalled that he was destined for great things. He has since proved his admiration for the Sky Blues, choosing not to celebrate his goal at Highfield Road for Spurs in last year's Carling Cup. For young fans whose memories do not stretch long before the nineties, Keane is a regular choice of greatest Coventry City player and it is not hard to see why.



### Moustapha Hadji

When Hadji joined the Sky Blues from Deportivo La Coruna in 1999 it was met with a mix of anticipation and perhaps slight disbelief. The Moroccan international had been one of the stars of the World Cup in France the year beforehand and signed for City for what was then a club record £4 million. He netted 13 goals in 68 games but his creativity added an extra dimension to City's play and he was an integral member of the side that was dubbed "the Entertainers" in 1999/2000. It may only have been a brief stop, but his two-year spell at Highfield Road was a hugely exciting one, with world class performances wowing the crowds.



### Warren Huckerby

"In his day a world beater, on another a carpet beater," was the quote from former manager Gordon Strachan which epitomised Huck. Snapped up from the Newcastle reserves for just £1 million (and sold for £4 million) City had purchased a player with so much raw ability and pace he could instil the fear of life into any Premiership defender. Players like Huckerby are what make football the beautiful game it is. There were times when he could frustrate but it was his ability to produce something out of the ordinary that made him a special player and brought City some memorable victories. His virtuoso performance at Anfield in the Third Round of the FA Cup in 1998 set up a wonderful win over Liverpool and an exciting run in the competition ensued, while his winning goal in the 3-2 win over Manchester United that same season will always give you goosepimples, no matter how many times you have seen it.



### ~MEMORY~

Sam Allardyce, Player 1983 - 1984

"My greatest memory of Highfield Road was when Terry Gibson - who now works as a scout for Bolton Wanderers - netted a hat-trick in a 4-0 defeat of Liverpool in 1983. It was highly memorable and a tremendous achievement for the Sky Blues because, at the time, Liverpool were a successful European team, and eventually went on to win the old First Division title."



# steadying the Ship 2001-2005

The last four seasons may not have been the happiest in recent memory by any stretch of the imagination but when you look at the amount of time we have spent in the Championship, or Division One as it was known when we dropped down in 2001, it is a mere blink of the eye in our overall history.

There is no getting away from the fact that these have been troubled times, both on the pitch and off it, with City's financial worries well documented since relegation from the Premiership.

But history has proved time and time again, that our greatest days have come not long after some of our toughest periods and who's to say that better fortune is not waiting just around the corner.



The Eighties are remembered for the joy of 1987, but in the three seasons prior to the FA Cup victory, City escaped the drop on the last day of each campaign. The Sixties were a whirlwind of success, but the 1950s were a torrid time when City were twice relegated and crowds dwindled to record lows. And before the successful 1930s, Coventry fought relegation battles galore and were embroiled in scandals during the Twenties.

So when you read these pages, think of them not as a huge anti-climax to 34 years in the top flight, but as more of a transitional phase that we inevitably have to go through before the good times can return.

## Unfamiliar surroundings

Thirty-four years is a long time by anybody's reckoning and the difference between life when City were last in the second tier of English football in 1967 compared to when they found themselves back there in 2001 are simply staggering. Back then we had two television channels compared to the hundreds offered in the 21st Century. Man had not set foot on the moon when City were and rather than 30-plus years of hurt for England fans, the memory of World War glory was barely 12 months old.

Much had changed in the world in the years that Coventry City were a top flight outfit and football had altered at an even greater pace.

So when a bitter defeat to local rivals Aston Villa condemned us to the drop in 2001 we were all scared about what lay ahead and in hindsight perhaps a little naïve as to how easy it would be to make an immediate return to the Premier League.

## 2001-2002

City had a squad still littered with quality players from the Premier League and brought in personnel for big bucks with the sole intention of only spending one season at this level. Roland Nilsson was due to act as assistant boss to Gordon Strachan but due to a shortage of fit players he continued his playing days and was involved in an opening day 2-0 win over Stockport to lead everybody to believe that we were merely passing through. However a 1-0 home defeat to Wolves in a game with the ridiculous kick-off time of quarter past six on a Sunday evening (Thanks for nothing ITV Digital!) started a run of five matches without a win and immediately the size of the task came into view for the fans and manager. Gordon Strachan's lengthy tenure as boss of the Sky Blues came to an end in September.

Nilsson became manager and immediately oversaw a run of 11 league matches without defeat, including a memorable 4-3 triumph over eventual runners-up champions Man City and hopes were raised once again but the story of the season was one of inconsistency.

In January, Chairman Bryan Richardson received a vote of no confidence from fellow board members and in came Mike McGinnity. The immediate challenge was to finish in a play-off spot at the very least and four straight wins in February made this look more than possible. But a dismal end saw City finish tenth and Nilsson and his assistant Jim Smith were sacked.

## 2002-2003

A new regime for the Sky Blues began with the return of Gary McAllister – a player of undisputed class who had achieved his best form in his fourth and final season as a player with the Sky Blues before moving on to help Liverpool lift the FA Cup trophy in the space of 12 months. Macca became our player-manager, bringing with him Eric Black as assistant. Whereas the squad still had Premier League quality within it a year beforehand, McAllister had to wave goodbye to many of our most valuable assets very soon into his tenure. Out went the likes of David Thompson and Lee Hughes for disappointing transfer fees as the collapse of Digital and subsequent demise in the domestic transfer market led many clubs to the brink of financial ruin.

Rather than putting out a team who could challenge for a top six spot – although this always remained the aim – the Board's focus switched to keeping Coventry City afloat with debts reported at around the £60 million mark. Over the next



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months administration would become a frighteningly tangible proposition for Coventry City and huge cutbacks would have to be made.

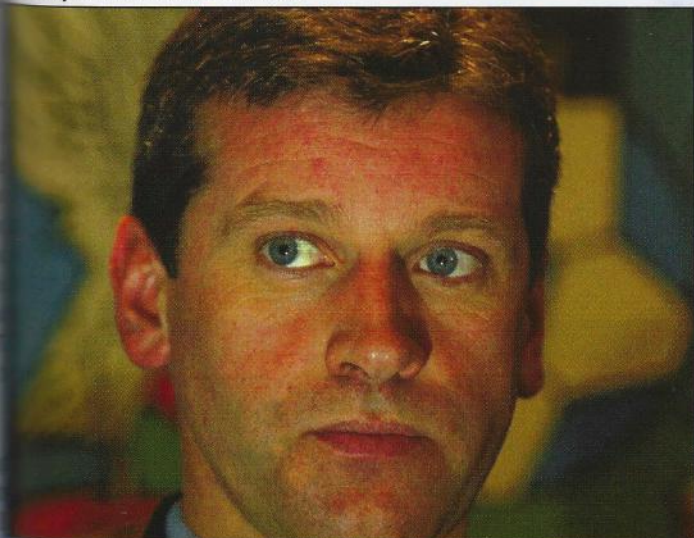
McAllister's first job in management became an increasingly tough proposition but there were signs we had what it took to make the top six. Autumnal indifference led to a winter of contentment as the Sky Blues went eight games unbeaten during December and January and Macca proved he still had it with a wonder goal against Derby. But after the highs came the inevitable lows and City won only once in 18 league fixtures from January to May to take themselves precariously close to the relegation zone.



### 2003-2004

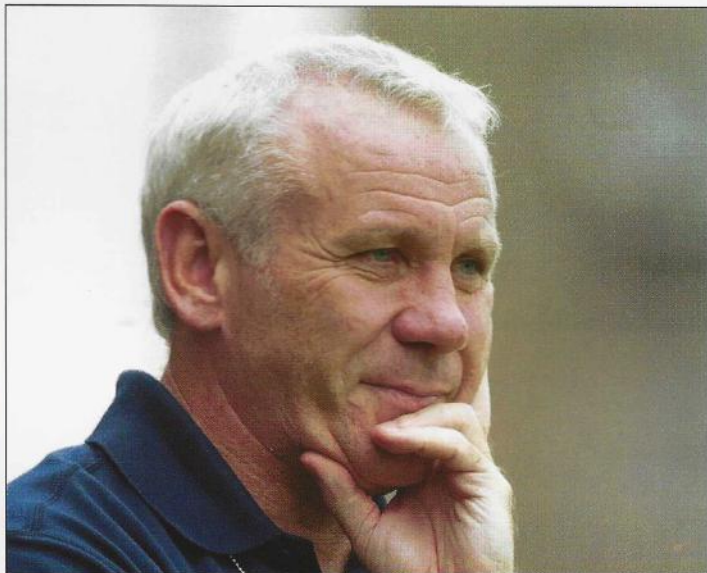
The previous season had been one of consolidation this term was meant to see us go on the up again – little did we know the drama that would unfold. Things started poorly and showed little sign of improvement prior to Christmas. Victories were few and far between and in December, McAllister took a step back from the position due to a family illness. After marking his 200th league appearance for City with a 1-1 draw against Sunderland, Eric Black became caretaker boss and in January took over permanently.

Fans knew little about Black but he brought smiles to their faces as he introduced a brand of attacking, exciting football. City came close to a play-off finish but ultimately fell short of the mark although nobody saw what was coming next. After a 5-2 thumping of Gillingham, Black and his assistant Archie Knox were dismissed and a week later Peter Reid came in for the final match of the season against Crystal Palace. City beat the eventual play-off champions to appease the disgruntled supporters, unhappy at Black's dismissal, although there was inevitably another twist to the tale...



### 2004-2005

Reid's first full season was one packed with pressure. Comments made during pre-season that Reid had been brought in to take City to the play-offs created a rod for the manager's back that would not disappear. Had Coventry enjoyed more favourable fortune and results in the first half of this season who knows what situation we might be in now, but when performances consistently dwindled something had to give.



Reid called it a day in January with his assistant Adrian Heath taking temporary control before fans' choice Micky Adams was given the nod. With confidence low and City just three points above the relegation zone at the time of his appointment, Adams had a mountain to climb but after recording back-to-back victories at Highfield Road at the start of April, the Sky Blues were well on the way to safety.

Now we look ahead to a brand new era and it would take Nostradamus to predict what will happen next. But don't forget the thought from the start of this article – from the bad can quite often come the good and under Adams there have been glimpses of a revival. Perhaps he's the man to guide City back to their glory days...

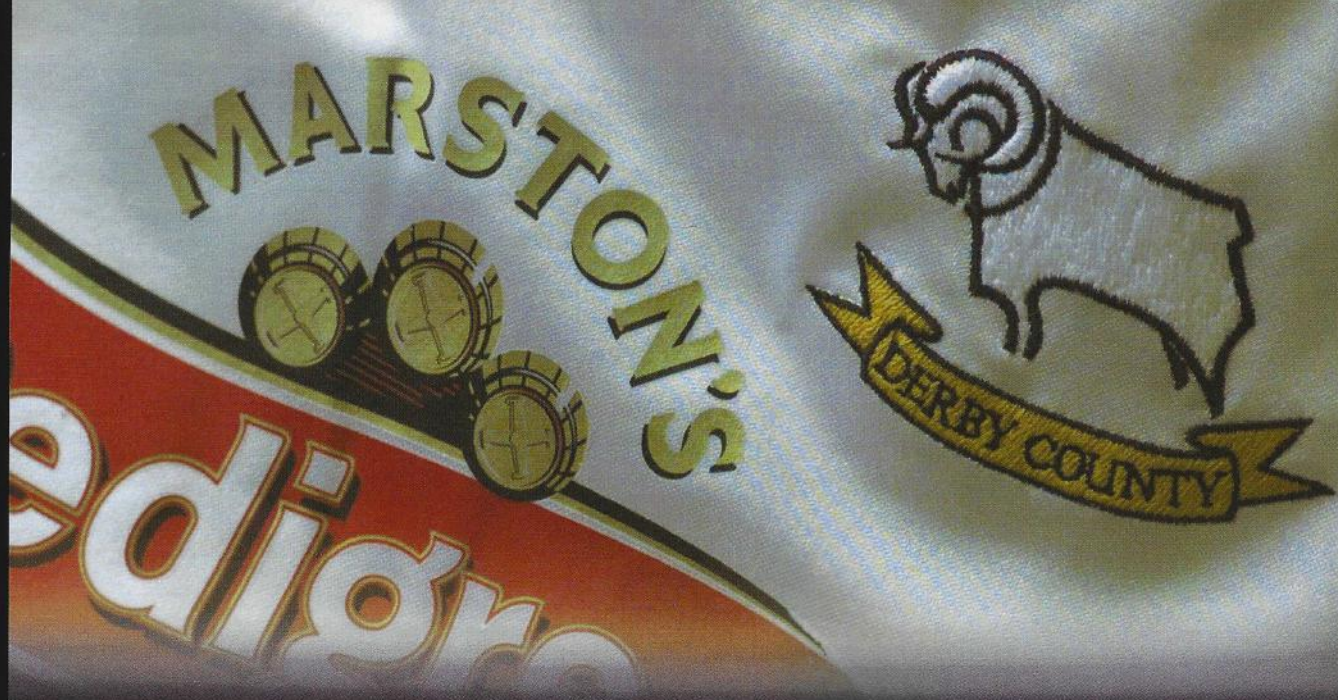


### ~MEMORY~

**Ron Atkinson, Manager 1995-1997**

"I would say the best performance while I was in charge was the 5-0 win over Blackburn, the year after they had won the Championship. They had a great team back then with the likes of Shearer, Sutton, Batty and Sherwood and we absolutely ripped them apart. I remember Peter Ndlovu and Dion Dublin having great games and they both got on the scoresheet. Dion was a great leader and Nuddy was one hell of a talent – I always think that if he'd gone to a big club he'd have been a massive success. One of the main reasons I remember that game is because I had lined up a double signing after that weekend – Noel Whelan was one and Chris Coleman was the other. Coleman was all set to sign but after we tore their defence to shreds, Ray Harford went out and signed him for Blackburn and scuppered the deal. Our best performance in my time there was away to Spurs when we stayed up on the last day, but at Highfield Road I can't remember us playing better than we did against Blackburn."





today's visitors

# Derby County

A look at the very last visitors to Highfield Road, Derby County, who at the time of writing occupied a top six spot and were among a number of clubs vying for a spot in this year's play-offs – not bad for a side who have staved off relegation by the skin of their teeth in the last two seasons.

## the gaffer

George Burley took over at Pride Park in March 2003 and in that time has managed to turn the Rams from a club in turmoil into genuine Premiership contenders.

Relegated from the top flight one season after the Sky Blues in 2002, Derby's first two seasons at this level were troublesome affairs. The financial burdens that go hand in hand with dropping out of the top flight hit the Club hard and in 2002/2003 and last season, the East Midlands only avoided the drop by a small margin, registering 51 points on each occasion.

While Burley could not be blamed for the near miss having only been in charge for a matter of weeks in 02/03 following the dismissal of John Gregory, his first full season in charge saw the Rams go even closer to the drop, finishing just a point ahead of those who fell down to League One.

But Derby have reaped the rewards of sticking by their man and while other clubs may have been guilty of jumping the gun and dismissing a manager who had not yet had time to assemble his own squad of players, Derby backed Burley and this season has been a totally different story.

Thanks to some shrewd acquisitions last summer along with the progression of some of their talented youngsters, Burley has assembled a strong squad that has got better as the season has gone along.

He may not be blessed with the biggest or even the best squad but the consistency which is so vital to any club hoping to finish inside the play-off places has certainly been evident in the second half of this season in particular.

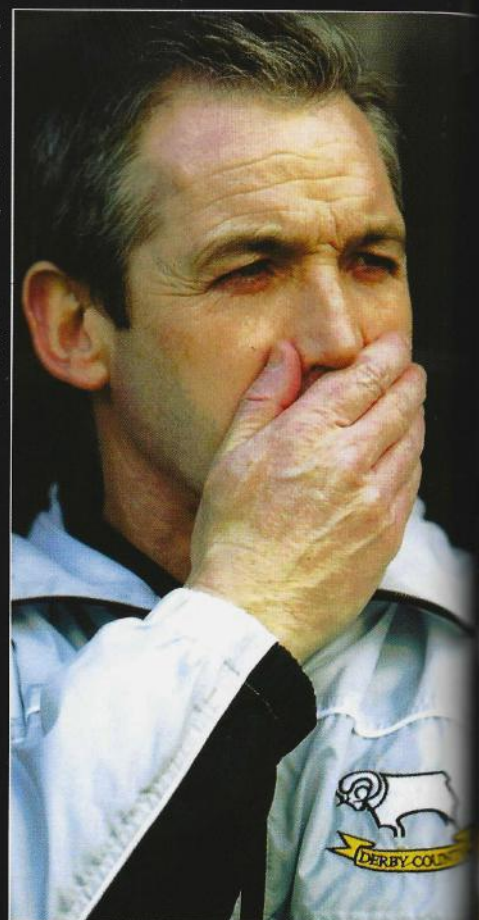
Burley's managerial credentials will stand the Rams in good stead should they secure themselves a play-off place after his experience during a nine year stint with Ipswich.

Appointed Tractor Boys manager in Christmas 1994 he led them to no fewer than four top six finishes in the old First Division before they finally achieved play-off victory in 2000 with a 4-2 win over Barnsley at Wembley.

Ipswich became the surprise package of 2000/2001 finishing in fifth position in the Premiership and claiming a place in the UEFA Cup as Burley brought European football back to Portman Road for the first time in 20 years. Quite rightly, he was showered with awards for his achievements including the Carling Premiership Manager of the Year title but the following season they failed to build on their success and were relegated back to Division One.

After a positive start to 2002/2003, when Ipswich looked well on course to bounce back to the top flight at the first time of asking, a run of eight games without a win led to Burley being sacked in October. Linked with the vacant managerial spot at Stoke, Burley bided his time until the Derby job came calling and at the time of writing it looked as if he would be calling on the experience he gained while in charge of Ipswich, to lead Derby through a play-off battle.

He certainly has the personnel to do well and providing his squad manages to stay relatively injury-free, the Rams might just upset the odds by regaining their Premiership status – something which looked highly unlikely at the start of this campaign.





### Between the Sticks

Derby-born shot stopper **Lee Camp** has experienced a terrific first full season for the Rams, being the number one choice throughout the campaign having only featured occasionally since making his first senior appearance in the 2002/2003 term. A loan spell towards the end of last season at QPR earned him rave reviews as he helped Ian Holloway's men secure an automatic spot in the Championship, and the confidence he gained from his stint at Loftus Road has been plain to see ever since the opening day of this season when he saved a penalty against Leicester.

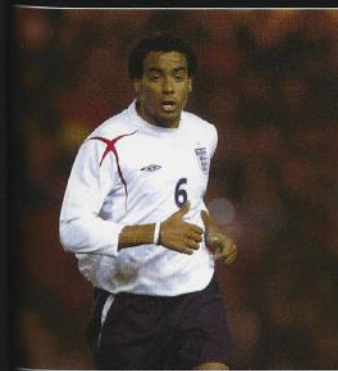
Still only 20 years of age, Camp was recently awarded his second cap for the England Under 21s in a match against Holland at Pride Park and his form will be integral to Derby's fortunes if they do make it into the play-offs. Bristol Rovers shot stopper **Kevin Miller** was drafted in on loan as back-up for Camp before the closure of the transfer window after regular second choice custodian **Lee Grant** – the man Camp kept out of the team earlier in the season thanks to his fine form – suffered a hairline fracture of his wrist. 31-year-old Miller has vast experience with the likes of Watford and Barnsley and will deliver the goods should he be called upon.



### At the Back

**Jeff Kenna** has proved to be one of the best signings George Burley has made since arriving at Pride Park. Snapped up on a free transfer in March last year, not only did he help the Rams to preserve their Championship status last time out, but he has been vital in their improved fortunes this term.

An experienced campaigner, the 34-year-old was a Premiership title winner with Blackburn in 1995 and joined Birmingham in 2001, where he captained to play-off joy in 2001/2002 before notching up 37 appearances in Blues' first top flight season. Burley was reported to be chasing him for a year before he finally landed his man and it is plain to see why he regarded the defensive rock so highly.



### In the Middle

Capable of playing either in the centre of midfield or defence is an 18-year-old who looks set to go on to big things in the future. **Tom Huddlestone** has been a first-teamer since the tender age of 16 and is all set to embark on a Premiership adventure from this summer when he will complete a move to Tottenham which could be worth up to £2.5 million for Derby. He made 44 first team appearances last season – the most by any Rams player along with captain **Ian Taylor**. Injuries to the likes of former Sky Blues defender **Mo Konjic** have seen Huddlestone return to a central defensive berth where he plied his trade as a youngster, although whether he is in the rearguard or engine room, the England Under 21 international shows a maturity that belies his age.



### Up Front

Derby's star man this season has been **Grzegorz Rasiak** – a Polish international striker whose predatory goalscoring instincts have made him the Rams' top scorer and whose goals will be vital in the final push for the play-offs. The 26-year-old originally joined on a year-long deal in September after some complex negotiations with former club Siena were finally overcome and four goals in his first eight games signalled that Burley had picked up a hidden gem. A tall target man, Rasiak is deadly in the air but is remarkably calm in possession and possesses a fine range of passing. He netted his 16th goal of the season in the 2-1 win over Crewe at the start of the month and could well be that elusive thing that every manager is looking for – a 20-goal a season forward.

By David Antill

## THE SQUAD

### GOALKEEPERS

	AGE	POS	APPS	GOALS
<b>Lee Camp</b> First choice this season	20	GK	44	0
<b>Kevin Miller</b> On loan from Bristol Rovers	36	GK	0	0
<b>Lee Grant</b> Out earlier in month with fractured wrist	22	GK	70	0

### DEFENDERS

	AGE	POS	APPS	GOALS
<b>Jeff Kenna</b> Signed from Birmingham last March	34	CB	46	0
<b>Chris Makin</b> On loan from Leicester	28	C/RB	8	0
<b>Pablo Mills</b> Product of Academy	20	C/FB	61	0
<b>Michael Johnson</b> Signed from Birmingham in 2003	31	CB	73	2
<b>Richard Jackson</b> Former Scarborough player	25	FB	90	0
<b>Jamie Vincent</b> Not played since November	29	LB	23	2
<b>Mo Konjic</b> 155 apps for Coventry	34	CB	10	0
<b>Paul Boertin</b> Loaned to Notts County last season	26	LB	115	2

### MIDFIELDERS

	AGE	POS	APPS	GOALS
<b>Ian Taylor</b> £1m signing from Aston Villa	36	CM	81	15
<b>Morten Bisgaard</b> Eight caps for Denmark	29	CM	33	1
<b>Adam Bolder</b> Former Hull player	24	C/RM	120	8
<b>Tom Huddlestone</b> Joining Spurs in summer for £2.5m	18	CM/B	88	0
<b>Inigo Idiakez</b> Signed last summer	31	CM	41	9
<b>Marco Reich</b> German international	27	W	50	7
<b>Nathan Doyle</b> Four apps this season	18	CM	6	0
<b>Lee Holmes</b> On loan at Swindon	18	LM	30	2

### STRIKERS

	AGE	POS	APPS	GOALS
<b>Tommy Smith</b> Former Sunderland and Watford player	24	S/M	39	10
<b>Grzegorz Rasiak</b> Top scorer this season	26	S	33	17
<b>Marcus Tudgay</b> Championship player of month in Feb	22	S	74	16
<b>Junior</b> Two goals while on loan with Rotherham	28	S	31	5
<b>Paul Peschisolido</b> Signed last March	33	S	39	10

Stats correct up to 15/03/05.

## HIGHFIELD RD

~ MEMORY ~

**Mo Konjic, Player 1999 - 2004**

"Highfield Road is a very special stadium, not only for me but for the supporters as well because there is such a good atmosphere and there are so many memories there and great games, like the FA Cup matches. I think it's important for the supporters that City finish this season well before going into the Arena. Hopefully Coventry can avoid any trouble with relegation because they have a great team. The supporters can only help and they will go into the Arena with great spirit, great feelings and great ambition. I have so many good memories of Highfield Road, every game I played, even the reserves, was brilliant for me because the supporters were always behind me. If I had to choose one game then I would choose the game against Manchester City when we won 4-3 and I scored. That kind of game was amazing because we were in the top five chasing a play-off space and we had great support at Highfield Road."

# Hospitality at the Arena

Corporate sales have exceeded the Club's expectations at the new Arena, with supporters hurrying to snap up seasonal memberships in the three hospitality lounges, while other companies have pledged their support to the Sky Blues by investing in advertising at Coventry City's new stadium.

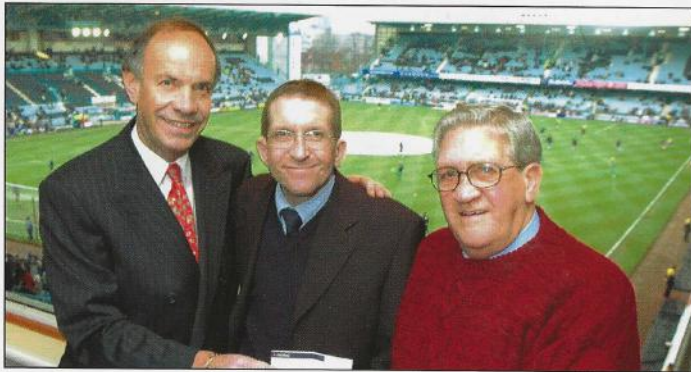
## The Legend's Club

The Legend's Club package is proving extremely popular and is set to be the ultimate fans' dream on a matchday. Situated in the Legend's Suite on the ground floor with direct access from the Atrium, fans are offered the nostalgia of Coventry City's past, with memorabilia on display depicting the Sky Blues' illustrious history. Every game, a different Sky Blues legend will be in the suite before and during the match – dining and socialising with Legend Club Members.

The Legends Club is the most affordable of Coventry City's seasonal hospitality memberships. Call 0870 421 1987 for more information.



Pictured above are Legend's Club members Simon and Beverley Griffin of Coventry-based firm Oil Control. (Left to right) Suzette Johnson, Natalie Stevens, David Speedie, Simon and Beverley, George Curtis, Keith Houchen, Raj Athwal, Trevor Peake, Caroline Lissaman.



Pictured above is Club Director Joe Elliott with Legend's Club members Reg and Neil Watkins

## Advertising at the Arena

Stadium advertising at the state-of-the-art Arena offers an effective vehicle for companies to reach a large captive audience, both at the game and on television.



With 2005/2006 the inaugural season at the Arena, media interest in the Sky Blues is set to be at an all-time high, so there is no better time to advertise with Coventry City Football Club.

Call the Marketing Team on 0870 421 1987 if you would like more information on advertising at the Arena.

## Executive Boxes

All Executive Boxes on Level Three at the Arena have now sold out but there are a small number of Executive Boxes available on Level Two at the Arena. To find out more and to view the boxes first hand call Raj on 0870 421 5021 or email [raj@ccfc.co.uk](mailto:raj@ccfc.co.uk)

## The President's Club

Many existing hospitality members at Highfield Road have opted for the exclusive President's Club which offers the crème de la crème in matchday hospitality.



Pictured above are existing Vice Presidents choosing their seats on-site in the President's Club.

**Top Row:** Des Grundy of the Woodhouse at Princethorpe, Graham Maddox, James and Pete White from D-Drill. **Bottom Row:** CCFC Marketing Executive Natalie Stevens with MD of Superfloor, Julie White, Steve Lenton and Commercial Manager Raj Athwal.

## The Ambassador's Club

The Ambassador's Club Lounge offers superb panoramic views overlooking the pitch where members can enjoy leisurely pre-match refreshments. Executive Seats for the game are located on an exclusive balcony on the halfway line.



Pictured above are Yvonne and Simon Loveitt from CAT Security who have joined the exclusive Ambassador's Club

*Yvonne explains why the Ambassador's Club was the best choice for her:*

"The Ambassador's Club that we have joined gives us the options that we need here at Highfield Road. We love watching the stadium come to life before the game, and we are looking forward to seeing our old friends there, and making new ones. As a business it is important for us to support the Club, and look forward to other local businesses joining us"

If you would like to request more information on any of the commercial opportunities featured on this page, please contact the Marketing Team on **0870 421 1987**

# It's almost there.....

The Arena as it looked from the A444 in mid-April 2005. For the full story on the Arena, from the demolition of the old gas tower to how it will look when it's finished, make sure you don't miss out on the souvenir programme for the first match there, available from the Club shops later this year.



**Pointing to the future:** Sky Blues boss Micky Adams takes a look at the Arena with Commercial Director Alan Stevenson earlier this year.



## ~MEMORY~

*Stuart Linnell, Former Mercia and BBC presenter and CCFC corporate hospitality host and matchday pitch announcer*

I will never forget the game against Norwich on the last day of the 1983/84 season when Robert Rosario's header for the Canaries came back off the woodwork and into Perry Suckling's arms to keep City up. After the game Bobby Gould came into the press box, sat down next to me and went out live on air. He was talking about how it was great to stay up and how much it meant to all the wives and families and then he started crying. Well that got me going and I started crying too and it just showed how much emotion was involved. It was a strange reason because Bobby Gould had assembled his squad from the lower divisions and the media referred to us as "Mis-fits and Journeymen" and we were totally written off. In the first half of the season we were brilliant and beat a great Liverpool team 4-0 with Terry Gibson getting a hat-trick. But we fell apart in the second half of the season so to stay up and prove everybody wrong was fantastic."



**sh smith hodgkinson**

A GORDON BROTHERS GROUP COMPANY  
Over a Century of Solutions

*An invitation to all fans and friends of Coventry City Football Club:*

### End of an Era Auction

Coventry City Football Club will be offering for sale its collection of memorabilia and relics acquired during its 106-year occupation of Highfield Road at an End of an Era Auction on Sunday July 3.

### Lots to be offered include:

Shirts and balls signed by the team and legends of Coventry City; fittings from the home and visitors dressing rooms including kit hooks treatment tables and tactics board; contents from the Directors and Vice Presidents restaurant and bar; contents of the Manager's office; turnstiles; signs from around the ground many incorporating the Club Crest; programme stands; flag poles with flags; door signs (Directors, Home Dressing Room, Ball Boys etc); Managers and Chairman's seat from the Directors box, Corner flags from the last game, Corner quadrants and penalty spots.

*Viewing takes place at Highfield Road Stadium on Saturday July 2 between 10am and 2pm, with auction held the following day (Sunday July 3) at the stadium from 10am.*

**sh smith hodgkinson**

A GORDON BROTHERS GROUP COMPANY  
Over a Century of Solutions

Upon Instructions of Coventry City Football Club due to their relocation from Highfield Road Stadium

### FOR SALE BY PUBLIC TENDER:

Floodlights; Turnstiles; Stadium seating (in quantities of 100) including upholstered and padded seats; Extendable players tunnel; CCTV system; Emergency lighting; PA system; Pitch irrigation system; Changing room equipment; Catering equipment; Fast food concession equipment; Conference furniture; Contents of hospitality boxes; Bar and cellar equipment and furniture; Office furniture and equipment; Shop fittings; industrial hot water boilers.

### At:

Highfield Road Stadium, King Richard Street, Coventry, CV2 4FW.

### Tender Closes:

On Friday May 13 2005 at Time 5.00pm

### Viewing:


By appointment only on the May 4 & 5 2005 between 9.00am & 5.00pm

*For Catalogue & Details visit [www.shm-group.com](http://www.shm-group.com)  
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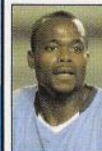
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**Andy Morrell**  
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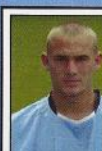
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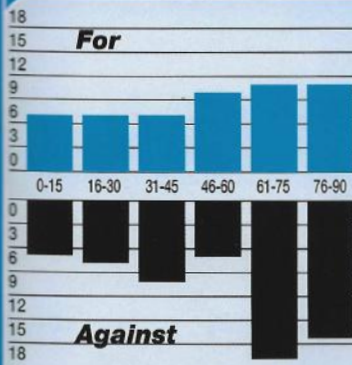
# Coventry v Derby



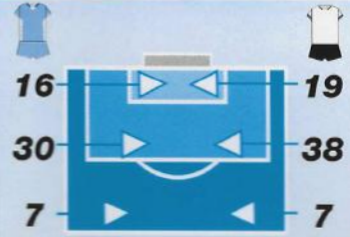
## When Scored

## How & Where Goals Scored

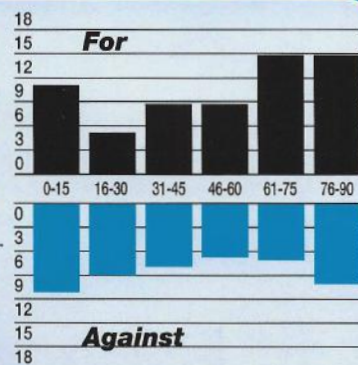
## When Scored



Shots	20
Headers	9
Volleys	12
Penalties	9
Free Kicks	2
Own Goals	1



Shots	30
Headers	21
Volleys	7
Penalties	2
Free Kicks	3
Own Goals	1



Shots on Target	224	273
Goals Scored	53	64
% of Shots Scored	23.7	23.4

## Discipline

## Top Scorers in each Category

## Discipline

Red Cards	3
Yellow Cards	52
Fouls Committed	544
Average per Game	12.65
Conceded from Free Kick	11
Fouls Suffered	581
Average per Game	13.51
Scored from Free Kick	5
Caught Offside	148
Average per Game	3.44

Headed goals	Rasiak	8
Long range shots	Idiakez	4
Inside 6 yards	Rasiak	7
Shots from 6-18 yards	Smith, Rasiak	4
Volleyed shots	Tudgay	3
Penalties	Idiakez	2
Scored 1st Goal in match	Smith	7
Most goals in last 10	Rasiak	3
Points gained from goals	Rasiak	16.5

Red Cards	3
Yellow Cards	50
Fouls Committed	492
Average per Game	11.71
Conceded from Free Kick	10
Fouls Suffered	550
Average per Game	13.1
Scored from Free Kick	8
Caught Offside	132
Average per Game	3.14

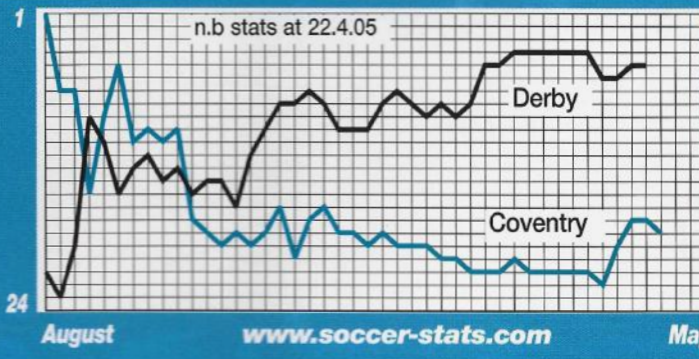
## Last 6 & Swings

## Seasonal Progress Comparison

## Last 6 & Swings

Opponents	H/A	Score
Wolves	H	2-2
West Ham	A	0-3
Forest	H	2-0
Brighton	H	2-1
Sunderland	A	0-1
Millwall	A	1-1

Won when Behind: 4  
 Drawn when Behind: 3  
 Drawn when Ahead: 7  
 Lost when Ahead: 4

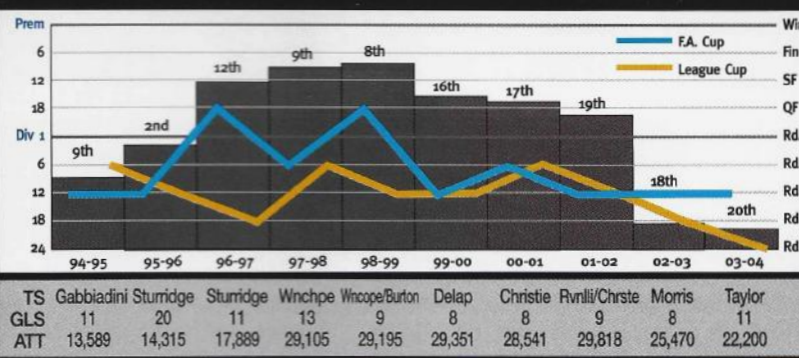


Opponents	H/A	Score
Sheff Utd	A	1-0
Stoke	H	3-1
Crewe	A	2-1
Ipswich	A	2-3
QPR	H	0-0
Plymouth	H	1-0

Won when Behind: 5  
 Drawn when Behind: 6  
 Drawn when Ahead: 5  
 Lost when Ahead: 1

## Derby's Last 10 Years

Games Played	546
Won	193
Drawn	140
Lost	213
Goals Scored	701
Goals Conceded	751
Points Total	719
Biggest Win	5-0 Tranmere 94/95
	5-0 Sunderland 93/94
Heaviest Defeat	1-6 Middlesbrough 96/97
	n.b. stats from 92-93 to present



## Top Scorers

Dean Sturridge	53
Marco Gabbiadini	44
Paul Simpson	41
Paul Kitson	32
Malcolm Christie	31
Mark Pembridge	28
Tommy Johnson	28
Deon Burton	25
Paulo Wanchope	23
Lee Morris	17
	n.b. scorers from 92-93 to present

Is it the Premiership or Division 1...? Or is it the Championship...? And what's Division 2 now...? The leagues have changed again...check out how your team were doing the last time it happened...

# www.soccer-stats.com

ALL the stats since 1992



# COVENTRY CITY 2 WOLVES 2

McSheffrey (p) 18, John 90

Clarke 15, Naylor 79

SATURDAY APRIL 16 COCA COLA CHAMPIONSHIP

## WHAT'S THE SCORE?

A cracking local derby between the Sky Blues and Wolves ends all-square thanks to a last gasp equaliser from Stern John.

Wolves twice led in a thrilling match with Leon Clarke's opener quickly cancelled out by Gary McSheffrey's penalty. Lee Naylor looked to have scored the winner for the visitors late on but John netted a terrific 90th minute goal to give the Sky Blues a thoroughly deserved share of the spoils.

With Isaac Osbourne and Stephen Hughes both injured, Claus Jorgensen returned to midfield while Steve Staunton was back in the centre of defence in place of Richard Shaw.

Micky Adams was delighted with his team's performance which earned them another valuable point in the battle to avoid the drop.

"Wolves are a good side, if you look at the players they've got and who they've got on the bench you think 'how can we compete?' particularly when you think we've got one midfielder fit at the Club. To go out there and match them speaks volumes for the players.

"It would have been a travesty if we hadn't have got anything out of the game. I thought for effort and commitment that it was a tremendous honest, hard-working performance."

## WHO PLAYED?

**Coventry:** Steele, Staunton, Dyer (Morrell 74), Duffy, Adebola, McSheffrey, Jorgensen (Benjamin 83), Doyle, Hall, Page, Goater (John 66).

**Subs (not used):** Pressman; Whing  
**Booked:** Jorgensen (60)

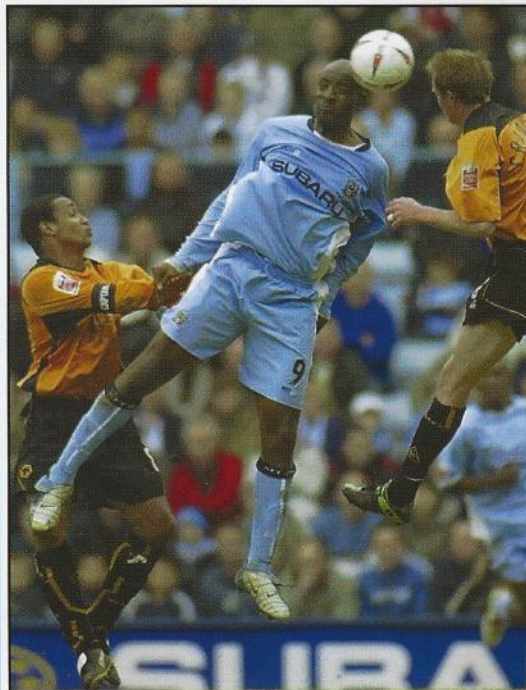
**Wolves:** Oakes; Naylor, Olofinjana, Lescott; Craddock; Ince; Cameron (Kennedy 84); Miller; Seol; Bischoff; Clarke (Ricketts 86).

**Subs (not used):** Edwards; Cooper; Clingan

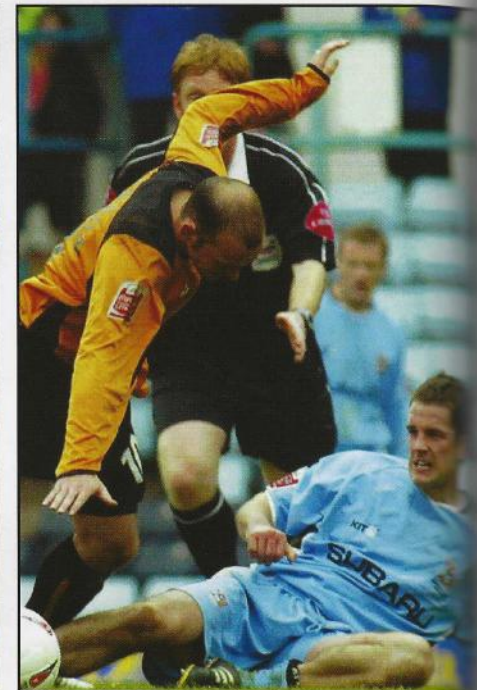
**Referee:** Mr Grant Hedgley  
**Attendance:** 19,412



Pic 1 - Goal hero Stern is congratulated by his teammates



Pic 2 - Dele gets a flick-on



Pic 3 - Doyler gets stuck in

## CLOCK WATCHING

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31 32 33 34 35 36 37 38 39 40 41 42 43 44

Olofinjana feeds Cameron who gets in behind the City defence but drags his shot wide of the far post.

Adebola is released by Dyer but he directs his left-footed shot wide of Oakes' post.

Adebola shows great strength to break into the box, but hits a weak shot straight at Oakes.

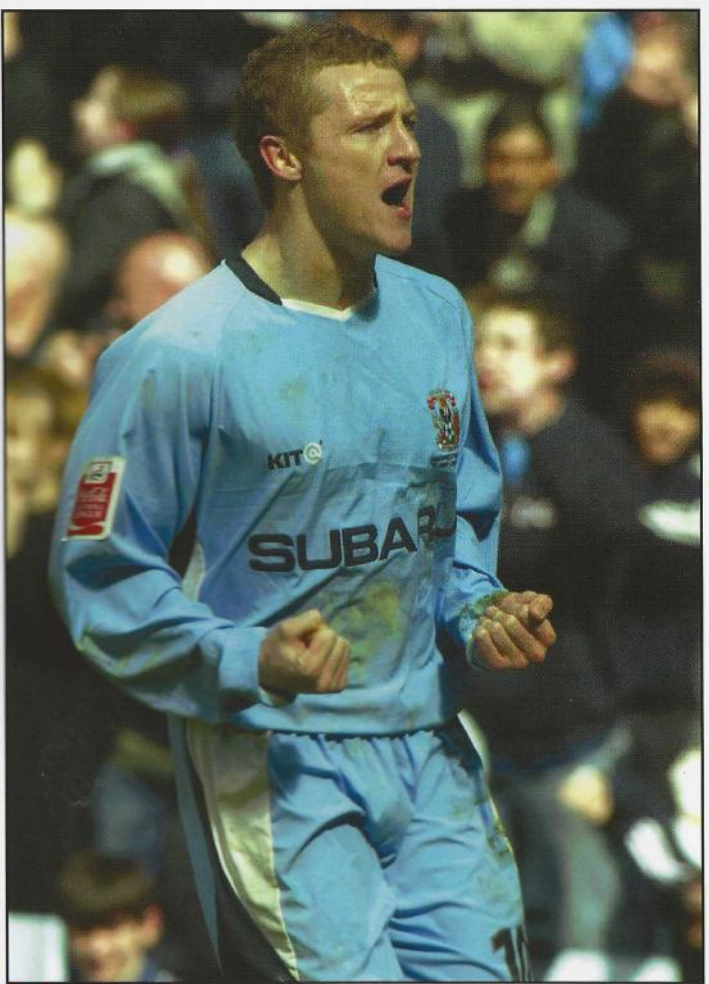
0-1 Lee Naylor whips in a free kick to the far post where Clarke rises unmarked to head in.

1-1 Naylor goes from hero to villain as he brings down McSheffrey in the box for a penalty. McSheffrey opts for power and smashes it past Oakes.

Jody Craddock gets a toe to Richard Duffy's low centre with Shaun Goater ready to pounce.



Pic 4 - Page rises above Miller



Pic 5 - Sheffers celebrates his twelfth of the season



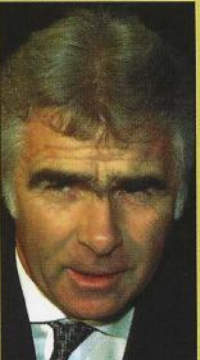
Pic 6 - Claus goes in with Ince

**HIGHFIELD RD**

~MEMORY~

**Bobby Gould, Player 1963-1968,  
Manager 1983-1984 & 1992-1993**

"My fondest memory is definitely scoring on my home debut against Manchester City in the 1964/65 season. I had played the season before that but it was always away from home and when that goal went in all my dreams came true as a local lad. To go from going along with my Dad and Granddad to watching my first game on my own on the Spion Kop to actually scoring at Highfield Road was amazing. All I had ever wanted was to play for Coventry and even though the fans didn't take to me too kindly at first I went on to score 24 goals the season we got promoted to Division One which was my best ever. As manager my favourite moment was when we managed to stay up by beating Norwich in 1984. As a local lad I couldn't have stood to have taken us down so that felt like a great achievement as well. Coventry City means so much to the entire Gould family."



46 47 48 49 50 51 52 53 54 55 56 57 58 59 60 61 62 63 64 65 66 67 68 69 70 71 72 73 74 75 76 77 78 79 80 81 82 83 84 85 86 87 88 89 90

Luke Steele saves well from Seol, tipping over the bar from close range.

Gary McSheffrey sees his header crash against the underside of the Wolves bar.

Adebola chases down a first time through ball by Michael Doyle but Oakes comes out well to smother.

1-2 Naylor's shot deflects off Steve Staunton's knee and over Luke Steele into the City net.

2-2 Good work by Stern John who weaves into the Wolves box before rifling the ball into the far corner for a deserved equaliser.

# Championship Stats

## Championship attendances

Club	Aggregate	Highest	Lowest	Average
Brighton	134,142	6,804	5,996	6,388
Burnley	273,870	17,789	7,200	12,449
Cardiff	267,911	17,006	10,007	12,758
Coventry	346,367	22,221	11,966	15,744
Crewe	151,778	9,095	5,409	7,228
Derby	521,321	30,793	22,096	24,825
Gillingham	185,323	10,739	6,089	8,424
Ipswich	561,737	30,003	21,246	25,534
Leeds	611,262	34,496	24,585	29,108
Leicester	502,791	30,231	21,249	23,942
Millwall	244,497	15,603	8,835	11,643
Nottm Forest	493,032	28,887	19,209	23,478
Plymouth	340,010	20,555	13,308	16,191
Preston	299,216	18,531	10,339	13,601
QPR	351,449	18,363	13,559	15,975
Reading	374,385	23,203	11,404	17,018
Rotherham	137,813	9,050	3,804	6,264
Sheff Utd	430,872	22,959	16,079	19,585
Stoke	363,241	23,029	12,785	16,511
Sunderland	580,709	43,253	22,267	27,653
Watford	292,051	19,649	11,084	13,907
West Ham	596,794	32,270	22,031	27,127
Wigan	234,272	20,745	7,547	11,156
Wolves	559,628	28,516	24,336	26,649

Attendance and Cards stats are ordered alphabetically

## Cards

Yellow	Red
57	6
64	5
50	4
52	3
24	1
50	3
66	2
52	1
74	7
66	8
68	8
83	7
58	3
61	4
65	5
36	0
65	1
75	5
70	1
58	2
54	6
44	1
49	2

## Last 6 form guide

Club	W	D	L	For	Agst	Pts	GI Diff	Sequence
Preston	4	2	0	12	3	14	9	DWDWWW
West Ham	4	2	0	10	4	14	6	DWWWWD
Sunderland	4	1	1	13	6	13	7	WWWLWD
Derby	4	1	1	9	5	13	4	WDLWWW
Reading	4	1	1	6	3	13	3	LWDWWW
Sheff Utd	3	2	1	10	5	11	5	WDWWDL
Ipswich	3	2	1	10	9	11	1	WDWWLD
Wigan	3	1	2	10	6	10	4	WDLWW
Wolves	2	4	0	9	5	10	4	WDDWD
Gillingham	2	4	0	6	4	10	2	WDDWD
Millwall	2	2	2	11	10	8	1	DWLLWD
Coventry	2	2	2	7	8	8	-1	DLWWLD
Burnley	2	1	3	7	6	7	1	LWLLDW
Leicester	1	4	1	8	8	7	0	DWDDLD
Leeds	1	4	1	5	8	7	-3	DDDLWD
Plymouth	2	1	3	6	11	7	-5	LLDWWL
Rotherham	2	0	4	7	9	6	-2	WLWLLL
Cardiff	1	3	2	6	9	6	-3	DDWLLD
QPR	1	2	3	6	10	5	-4	WLDDL
Crewe	0	4	2	8	10	4	-2	DDLLD
Stoke	1	1	4	6	10	4	-4	DLLLWL
Watford	1	1	4	5	10	4	-5	DLLLWL
Nottm Forest	0	3	3	3	9	3	-6	DDLLDL
Brighton	0	2	4	5	12	2	-7	LLLLDD

Ordered by points gained over last 6 games. Most recent result to right of sequence.

## Football League Championship top scorers

Scorer	Club	Lge	CC	FA	Tot	Gms	Ave	Scorer	Club	Lge	CC	FA	Tot	Gms	Ave
Nathan Ellington	Wigan	23	0	0	23	42	0.55	Marlon Harewood	West Ham	14	2	2	18	48	0.38
Teddy Sheringham	West Ham	20	0	1	21	35	0.60	Grzegorz Rasiak	Derby	16	0	1	17	35	0.49
Jason Roberts	Wigan	20	0	0	20	44	0.45	Kenny Miller	Wolves	16	1	0	17	44	0.39
Richard Cresswell	Preston	16	4	0	20	46	0.43	Andy Gray	Sheff Utd	14	2	1	17	47	0.36
Dave Kitson	Reading	19	0	0	19	35	0.54	Carl Cort	Wolves	15	0	1	16	39	0.41
Darren Bent	Ipswich	19	0	0	19	45	0.42	Shefki Kuqi	Ipswich	16	0	0	16	43	0.37
Paul Furlong	QPR	18	0	0	18	41	0.44	Marcus Stewart	Sunderland	15	0	1	16	43	0.37
Heidar Helguson	Watford	14	3	1	18	43	0.42								

## Football League Championship results and fixture grid

	Brighton	Burnley	Cardiff	Coventry	Crewe	Derby	Gillingham	Ipswich	Leeds	Leicester	Millwall	Nottm Forest	Plymouth	Preston	QPR	Reading	Rotherham	Sheff Utd	Stoke	Sunderland	Watford	West Ham	Wigan	Wolves
Brighton		0-1	1-1	1-1	1-3	2-3	2-1	8.5	1-0	1-1	1-0	0-0	0-2	1-0	2-3	0-1	1-0	1-1	0-1	2-1	2-1	23.4	2-4	0-1
Burnley	1-1		1-0	2-2	3-0	0-2	1-2	0-2	0-1	0-0	1-0	1-0	30.4	2-0	2-0	0-0	2-1	1-1	2-2	0-2	3-1	0-1	1-0	1-1
Cardiff	2-0	2-0		2-1	1-1	0-2	3-1	0-1	0-0	0-0	1-0	3-0	0-1	0-1	8.5	23.4	2-0	1-0	0-1	0-2	0-3	4-1	0-2	1-1
Coventry	2-1	0-2	1-1		0-1	30.4	2-2	1-2	1-2	1-1	0-1	2-0	2-1	1-1	1-2	3-2	0-0	1-2	0-0	2-0	1-0	2-1	1-2	2-2
Crewe	3-1	1-1	2-2	8.5		1-2	4-1	2-2	2-2	2-2	2-1	1-1	3-0	1-2	0-2	1-1	1-1	2-3	23.4	0-1	3-0	2-3	1-3	1-4
Derby	3-0	1-1	0-1	2-2	2-4		23.4	3-2	2-0	1-2	0-3	3-0	1-0	8.5	0-0	2-1	3-2	0-1	3-1	0-2	2-2	1-1	2-1	3-3
Gillingham	0-1	1-0	30.4	3-1	1-1	0-2		0-0	2-1	0-2	0-0	2-1	1-0	2-1	0-1	0-0	3-1	1-3	2-1	0-4	0-0	0-1	2-1	1-0
Ipswich	1-0	1-1	3-1	3-2	30.4	3-2	2-1		1-0	2-1	2-0	6-0	3-2	3-0	0-2	1-1	4-3	5-1	1-0	2-2	1-2	0-2	2-1	2-1
Leeds	1-1	1-2	1-1	3-0	0-2	1-0	1-1	23.4		0-2	1-1	1-1	2-1	1-0	6-1	3-1	8.5	0-4	0-0	0-1	2-2	2-1	0-2	1-1
Leicester	1-0	0-0	1-1	3-0	1-1	26.4	2-0	2-2	30.4		3-1	0-1	2-1	1-1	1-0	0-2	0-1	3-2	1-1	0-1	0-1	0-0	0-2	1-1
Millwall	2-0	8.5	2-2	1-1	4-3	3-1	2-1	3-1	1-1	2-0		1-0	3-0	23.4	0-0	1-0	1-2	1-2	0-1	2-0	0-2	1-0	0-2	1-2
Nottm Forest	0-1	23.4	0-0	1-4	2-2	2-2	8.5	1-1	0-0	1-1	1-2		0-3	2-0	2-1	1-0	2-2	1-1	1-0	1-2	1-2	2-1	1-1	1-0
Plymouth	5-1	1-0	1-1	23.4	3-0	0-2	2-1	1-2	0-1	8.5	0-0	3-2		0-2	2-1	2-2	1-1	3-0	0-0	2-1	1-0	1-1	1-2	1-2
Preston	3-0	1-0	3-0	3-2	1-0	3-0	1-1	1-1	2-4	1-1	1-1	3-2	1-1		2-1	3-0	2-0	0-1	3-0	3-2	2-1	2-1	30.4	2-2
QPR	0-0	3-0	1-0	4-1	1-2	0-2	1-1	2-4	1-1	3-2	1-1	30.4	3-2	1-2		0-0	1-1	0-1	1-0	1-3	3-1	1-0	1-0	1-1
Reading	3-2	0-0	2-1	1-2	4-0	0-1	3-1	1-1	1-1	0-0	2-1	1-0	0-0	3-1	1-0		1-0	0-0	1-0	1-0	3-0	3-1	1-0	1-1
Rotherham	30.4	0-0	2-2	1-2	2-3	1-3	1-3	0-2	1-0	0-2	1-1	0-0	0-1	1-2	0-1	1-0		2-2	1-1	0-1	0-1	2-2	0-2	1-2
Sheff Utd	1-2	2-1	2-1	1-1	4-0	0-1	0-0	0-2	2-0	2-0	30.4	1-1	2-1	1-1	3-2	0-1	1-0		0-0	1-0	1-1	1-2	0-2	3-3
Stoke	2-0	0-1	1-3	1-0	1-0	1-0	2-0	3-2	0-1	3-2	1-0	0-0	2-0	0-0	0-1	0-1	1-2	2-0		0-1	30.4	0-1	0-1	2-1
Sunderland	2-0	2-1	2-1	1-0	3-1	0-0	1-1	2-0	2-3	23.4	1-0	2-0	5-1	3-1	2-2	1-2	4-1	1-0	8.5		4-2	0-2	1-1	3-1
Watford	1-1	0-1	0-0	2-3	3-1	2-2	2-0	2-2	1-2	2-2	1-0	0-2	3-1	0-2	3-0	0-1	0-0	23.4	0-1	1-1		8.5	0-0	1-1
West Ham	0-1	1-0	1-0	3-0	1-1	1-2	3-1	1-1	1-1	2-2	1-1	3-2	5-0	1-2	2-1	1-0	1-0	0-2	2-0	30.4	3-2		1-3	1-0
Wigan	3-0	0-0	2-1	4-1	4-1	1-2	2-0	1-0	3-0	0-0	2-0	1-1	0-2	5-0	23.4	8.5	2-0	4-0	0-1	0-1	2-2	1-2		2-0
Wolves	1-1	2-0	2-3	0-1	1-1	2-0	2-2	2-0	0-0	1-1	1-2	2-1	1-1	2-2	2-1	4-1	23.4	8.5	1-1	0-1	0-0	4-2	3-3	

Is it the Premiership or Division 1...? Or is it the Championship...? And what's Division 2 now...? The leagues have changed again...check out how your team were doing the last time it happened...

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# Career Coventry Appearances and Goals

NAME	D.O.B	LEAGUE	FA CUP	LEAGUE CUP	TOTAL	GOALS
Dele Adebola	23/6/75	31 (20)	2 (2)	2	35 (22)	7
Graham Barrett	6/10/81	32 (23)		2 (2)	34 (25)	6
Trevor Benjamin	08/02/79	6 (5)			6 (5)	1
Ian Bennett	10/10/71	6			6	0
Louis Carey	22/1/77	23	1	3	27	0
Sean Cooney	31/10/83	(1)			(1)	0
Calum Davenport	1/1/83	63 (2)	5 (1)	3	71 (3)	3
Eric Deloumeaux	12/5/73	20	2	1	23	1
Michael Doyle	8/7/81	79 (3)	5	5	89 (3)	7
Richard Duffy	30/8/85	13	1		14	0
Lloyd Dyer	13/9/82	5			5	0
Stuart Giddings	27/3/86	11 (2)	1	2	14 (2)	0
Shaun Goater	25/2/70	4 (1)			4 (1)	0
Bjarni Gudjonsson	26/2/79	20 (8)	1 (1)	3	24 (9)	3
Marcus Hall	24/3/76	9			9	0
Stephen Hughes	18/9/76	37 (1)	2	2	41 (1)	5
Eddie Johnson	20/9/84	20 (7)	(1)	1 (1)	21 (9)	5
Claus Jorgensen	27/4/76	14 (10)	(2)	1 (2)	15 (14)	3
Stern John	30/10/76	24 (5)	2	1	27 (5)	10
Florent Laville	7/8/73	5 (1)			5 (1)	0
Dean Leacock	10/6/84	12 (1)	1(1)	1	14 (2)	0
Gary McSheffrey	13/8/82	60 (34)	5 (2)	5 (2)	70 (38)	34
Matthew Mills	14/7/86	4			4	0
Andy Morrell	28/9/74	43 (19)	4	3(1)	50 (20)	16
Christian Negouai	20/1/78	1	1		2	0
Isaac Osbourne	22/6/86	9 (2)			9 (2)	0
Robert Page	3/9/74	7			7	0
Craig Pead	15/9/81	24 (18)	2	1	27 (18)	2
Richard Shaw	11/9/68	272 (19)	19 (1)	21(2)	312 (22)	1
Scott Shearer	15/2/81	37 (1)		3	40 (1)	0
Tim Sherwood	2/2/69	10 (1)			10 (1)	0
Steve Staunton	19/1/69	64 (4)	3	2	69 (4)	4
Patrick Suffo	17/1/78	22 (26)	(1)	3(2)	25 (29)	12
Luke Steele	24/9/84	30	2	2	34	0
Rohan Ricketts	22/12/82	5 (1)			5 (1)	0
Andrew Whing	20/9/84	47 (9)	2	1(3)	50 (12)	1
Neil Wood	4/1/83	6 (7)	1	1	8 (7)	0
Ady Williams	16/8/71	20	2		22	2

# HIGHFIELD RD

## ~MEMORY~

*Trevor Peake, player 1983-1991*

"There's been a few great memories like when we beat Tottenham 4-3 in the year of the Cup win and I think Cyrille scored in the last couple of minutes. Then there was the Nottingham Forest game that ended 5-4, even though we were unsuccessful to get through the semi. There are many memories and I even managed to score a couple of goals here believe it or not, people do forget that but they were terrific times. The fans were magnificent as well, with me being a local boy. The intensity and the willingness they showed, especially in 1986/87 when they really wanted us to get to the Cup Final. I was in it week-in and week-out and I think some of the other players didn't really realise the importance of winning that semi-final against Leeds, that was the big, big thing followed by the day out at Wembley. Once we got there we wanted to win it and things turned out well for us."



## Appearances and Goals 2004/05

 <b>1</b> Scott Shearer Full: 9 Sub: 0 Goals: 0	 <b>2</b> Andrew Whing Full: 8 Sub: 9 Goals: 0	 <b>3</b> Steve Staunton Full: 32 Sub: 3 Goals: 1	 <b>4</b> Lloyd Dyer Full: 5 Sub: 0 Goals: 0	 <b>5</b> Ady Williams Full: 22 Sub: 0 Goals: 2	 <b>6</b> Stephen Hughes Full: 41 Sub: 1 Goals: 5	 <b>7</b> Craig Pead Full: 0 Sub: 0 Goals: 0	 <b>8</b> Richard Duffy Full: 14 Sub: 0 Goals: 0	 <b>9</b> Dele Adebola Full: 16 Sub: 8 Goals: 4
 <b>10</b> Gary McSheffrey Full: 32 Sub: 7 Goals: 12	 <b>11</b> Graham Barrett Full: 13 Sub: 10 Goals: 3	 <b>12</b> Andy Morrell Full: 26 Sub: 8 Goals: 7	 <b>13</b> Richard Brush Full: 0 Sub: 0 Goals: 0	 <b>14</b> Tim Sherwood Full: 10 Sub: 1 Goals: 0	 <b>15</b> Claus Jorgensen Full: 10 Sub: 8 Goals: 3	 <b>16</b> Eddie Johnson Full: 21 Sub: 9 Goals: 5	 <b>17</b> Michael Doyle Full: 46 Sub: 1 Goals: 3	 <b>18</b> Neil Wood Full: 8 Sub: 7 Goals: 0
 <b>19</b> Trevor Benjamin Full: 6 Sub: 5 Goals: 1	 <b>20</b> Richard Shaw Full: 34 Sub: 2 Goals: 0	 <b>21</b> Dean Leacock Full: 14 Sub: 2 Goals: 0	 <b>22</b> Craig Reid Full: 0 Sub: 0 Goals: 0	 <b>23</b> Kevin Pressman Full: 0 Sub: 0 Goals: 0	 <b>24</b> Stern John Full: 27 Sub: 5 Goals: 10	 <b>25</b> Isaac Osbourne Full: 7 Sub: 2 Goals: 0	 <b>26</b> Stuart Giddings Full: 14 Sub: 2 Goals: 0	 <b>27</b> Marcus Hall Full: 9 Sub: 0 Goals: 0
 <b>28</b> Robert Page Full: 7 Sub: 0 Goals: 0	 <b>29</b> Sean Cooney Full: 0 Sub: 0 Goals: 0	 <b>30</b> Shaun Goater Full: 4 Sub: 1 Goals: 0	 <b>31</b> Full: 0 Sub: 0 Goals: 0	 <b>32</b> Full: 0 Sub: 0 Goals: 0	 <b>33</b> Luke Steele Full: 34 Sub: 0 Goals: 0	 <b>34</b> Jonathan Tuffey Full: 0 Sub: 0 Goals: 0	 <b>35</b> Full: 0 Sub: 0 Goals: 0	 <b>36</b> Full: 0 Sub: 0 Goals: 0

# MatchFacts 2004/05



Date	Opponent	F- A	Atten	Pos/Pts	Referee	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
<b>August</b>													
Sat Aug 7	Sunderland	2-0	16,448	-	R Beeby	Shearer	Carey	Staunton	Hughes 1	Davenport	Shaw	Gudjonsson 3	Doyle
Tue Aug 10	Cardiff City	1-2	14,031	-	I Williamson	Shearer	Carey	Staunton	Sherwood 1	Davenport	Shaw	Gudjonsson 3	Doyle
Sat Aug 14	Brighton & Hove Albion	1-1	6,368	7/4	P Joslin	Shearer	Carey	Staunton	Hughes	Davenport	Shaw	Gudjonsson 2	Doyle
Sat Aug 21	Millwall	0-1	13,915	15/4	M Atkinson	Shearer	Carey	Staunton	Sherwood	Davenport	Shaw	Gudjonsson 2	Hughes
Wed Aug 25	Torquay United CC1	4-1	6,180	-	A Penn	Shearer	Carey	Staunton 2	Hughes	Davenport	Shaw	Gudjonsson	Wood
Sat Aug 28	Nottingham Forest	4-1	23,041	8/7	M Ryan	Shearer	Carey	Staunton	Sherwood	Davenport	Shaw	Barrett 3	Hughes
Mon Aug 30	West Ham United	2-1	17,404	5/10	C Webster	Shearer	Carey	Staunton	Sherwood	Davenport	Shaw	Hughes	Doyle
<b>September</b>													
Sat Sep 11	Leeds United	0-3	26,725	11/10	P Robinson	Shearer	Carey	Staunton 2	Sherwood	Leacock	Shaw	Hughes	Doyle
Wed Sep 15	Gillingham	2-2	11,966	10/11	M Pike	Steele	Whing	Staunton	Sherwood	Leacock	Shaw	Hughes 2	Doyle
Sat Sep 18	Rotherham United	0-0	13,834	11/12	P Crossley	Steele	Carey	Staunton	Sherwood	Mills	Shaw	Hughes 1	Doyle
Wed Sep 22	Sheffield Wednesday CC2	1-0	8,362	-	P Armstrong	Steele	Carey	Giddings 3	Wood	Mills	Shaw	Gudjonsson	Doyle
Sat Sep 25	Sheffield United	1-1	16,337	10/13	G Laws	Steele	Carey	Staunton 1	Sherwood	Mills	Shaw	Jorgensen 2	Doyle
Tue Sep 28	Queens Park Rangers	1-4	14,680	17/13	A Kaye	Steele	Carey	Staunton	Sherwood	Mills 2	Shaw	Jorgensen 1	Doyle
<b>October</b>													
Sun Oct 3	Ipswich Town 1pm	1-2	12,599	18/13	C Penton	Steele	Whing	Staunton	Sherwood 2	Mills	Shaw	Hughes	Doyle
Sat Oct 16	Leicester City	1-1og	18,054	19/14	C Foy	Steele	Whing	Staunton	Hughes	Leacock	Shaw	Morrell	Doyle
Tues Oct 19	Burnley	2-2	10,919	18/15	S Mathieson	Steele	Whing	Staunton	Hughes	Leacock	Shaw	Morrell 1	Doyle
Sat Oct 23	Wigan Athletic	1-4	9,632	19/15	P Crossley	Steele	Carey	Staunton	Hughes	Leacock	Shaw	Morrell 3	Doyle
Wed Oct 27	Middlesbrough 8pm CC3	0-3	11,833	-	U Rennie	Steele	Carey	Giddings	Hughes	Leacock	Shaw 3	Morrell	Doyle
Sat Oct 30	Reading	3-2	13,651	18/18	G Salisbury	Steele	Carey	Giddings	Hughes	Leacock	Laville	Morrell	Doyle
<b>November</b>													
Wed Nov 3	Preston North End	1-1	12,157	16/19	K Wright	Steele	Leacock	Giddings	Hughes	Williams	Laville 2	Morrell	Doyle
Mon Nov 8	Leicester City 7.45pm	0-3	22,479	20/19	M Clattenburg	Steele	Leacock	Giddings	Hughes	Williams	Laville 1	Morrell	Doyle
Wed Nov 10	CC4												
Sat Nov 13	Plymouth Argyle F.A. Cup 1	2-1	15,302	17/22	M Jones	Steele	Carey	Giddings	Hughes	Williams	Shaw	Morrell	Doyle
Sat Nov 20	Wolves 12.30pm	1-0	26,291	16/25	M Atkinson	Steele	Carey	Giddings	Hughes	Williams	Shaw	Morrell	Doyle
Sat Nov 27	Crewe Alexandra	0-1	12,823	18/25	P Taylor	Steele	Carey	Staunton	Hughes	Williams	Shaw	Morrell 1	Doyle
<b>December</b>													
Wed Dec 1	CC5												
Sat Dec 4	Derby County F.A. Cup 2	2-2	22,648	18/26	P Joslin	Steele	Carey	Staunton	Hughes	Williams	Shaw	Morrell	Doyle
Sat Dec 11	Stoke City	0-1	15,744	19/26	C Penton	Steele	Carey	Staunton	Hughes	Williams 1	Shaw	Morrell	Doyle
Sat Dec 18	Watford	1-0	14,493	18/29	C Webster	Steele	Carey	Giddings	Hughes	Laville	Shaw	Morrell	Osbourne
Sun Dec 26	Sheffield United	1-2	21,146	19/29	M Dean	Steele	Carey	Giddings	Hughes	Williams	Laville	Morrell 2	Doyle
Tue Dec 28	Gillingham	1-3	8,734	19/29	P Joslin	Steele	Carey	Staunton	Hughes	Williams	Shaw	Barrett 1	Wood
<b>January</b>													
Sat Jan 1	Rotherham United	2-1	5,742	19/32	L Mason	Steele	Carey 1	Giddings 3	Hughes 2	Williams	Shaw	Johnson	Doyle
Mon Jan 3	Leeds United	1-2	19,082	20/32	N Miller	Steele	Carey	Giddings 3	Hughes	Williams	Shaw	Johnson 1	Doyle
Sat Jan 8	Crewe Alexandra F.A. Cup 3	3-0	7,628	-	I Williamson	Steele	Carey 1	Staunton	Hughes	Williams	Shaw	Morrell 2	Doyle
Wed Jan 12	Carling Cup Semi Final (1)												
Sat Jan 15	Ipswich Town	2-3	23,670	20/32	M Russell	Steele	Leacock 1	Staunton	Hughes	Williams	Shaw	Morrell 2	Doyle
Sat Jan 22	Queens Park Rangers	1-2	16,578	21/32	M Clattenburg	Steele	Carey	Staunton	Hughes	Williams	Leacock	Morrell	Doyle
Wed Jan 26	Carling Cup Semi Final (2)												
Sat Jan 29	Newcastle United F.A. Cup 4	1-3	44,044	-	N Barry	Steele	Duffy	Giddings	Negouai	Williams	Leacock	Morrell 1	Hughes
<b>February</b>													
Sat Feb 5	Preston North End	2-3	13,691	21/32	R Booth	Steele	Whing	Duffy	Shaw 1	Williams	Leacock	Jorgensen 2	Hughes
Sat Feb 12	Burnley	0-2	13,229	21/32	S Tanner	Steele	Duffy	Staunton 3	Hughes 1	Williams	Leacock	Barrett	Doyle
Sat Feb 19	Reading	2-1	15,904	20/35	G Salisbury	Bennett	Whing	Giddings	Osbourne 2	Williams	Shaw	Jorgensen 1	Doyle
Wed Feb 23	Wigan Athletic	1-2	12,148	21/35	R Beeby	Bennett	Duffy	Giddings 2	Osbourne 3	Williams	Shaw 1	McSheffrey	Doyle
Sat Feb 26	Stoke City	0-0	13,871	21/36	J Singh	Bennett	Whing	Duffy	Hughes	Williams	Staunton	Jorgensen	Doyle
Sun Feb 27	Carling Cup Final												
<b>March</b>													
Sat Mar 5	Watford	3-2	13,794	21/39	M Thorpe	Shearer	Duffy	Hall	Hughes	Williams	Staunton	Jorgensen	Doyle
Sat Mar 12	Cardiff City F.A. Cup 6	1-1	17,044	21/40	L Mason	Bennett	Duffy	Hall	Hughes	Williams	Staunton	Jorgensen 2	Doyle
Tue Mar 15	Millwall	1-1	8,835	21/41	C Penton	Bennett	Duffy	Hall	Hughes	Page	Shaw	Morrell 1	Osbourne
Sat Mar 19	Sunderland	0-1	29,484	22/41	A Wiley	Bennett	Duffy 3	Hall	Osbourne	Page	Staunton	Jorgensen	Doyle
<b>April</b>													
Sat Apr 2	Brighton & Hove Albion	2-1	18,605	19/44	M Cowburn	Steele	Duffy	Hall	Hughes	Page	Staunton	Jorgensen 2	Doyle
Wed Apr 6	Nottingham Forest	2-0	22,211	17/47	A D'Urso	Steele	Duffy	Hall	Hughes 3	Page	Staunton	McSheffrey	Doyle
Sat Apr 9	West Ham United	0-3	26,839	17/47	I Williamson	Steele	Duffy	Hall	Osbourne 1	Page	Shaw	McSheffrey	Doyle
Sat Apr 16	Wolverhampton Wanderers	2-2	19,412	18/48	G Hedgley	Steele	Duffy	Hall	Jorgensen	Page	Staunton	McSheffrey	Doyle
Sat Apr 23	Plymouth Argyle	1-1	18,443	19/49	L Probert	Steele	Whing	Duffy	Hughes	Page	Staunton	McSheffrey	Doyle
Sat Apr 30	Derby County												
<b>May</b>													
Sun May 8	Crewe Alexandra												
Sat May 21	F.A. Cup Final												

Key: Red Card • Yellow Card • Scored



# Today's Squads



## COVENTRY CITY

Manager **Micky Adams**

1	Scott <b>Shearer</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2	Andrew <b>Whing</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3	Steve <b>Staunton</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4	Lloyd <b>Dyer</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5	Ady <b>Williams</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6	Stephen <b>Hughes</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7	Craig <b>Pead</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8	Richard <b>Duffy</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9	Dele <b>Adebola</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10	Gary <b>McSheffrey</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>
11	Graham <b>Barrett</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>
12	Andy <b>Morrell</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>
13	Richard <b>Brush</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>
14	Tim <b>Sherwood</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>
15	Claus <b>Jorgensen</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>
16	Eddie <b>Johnson</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>
17	Michael <b>Doyle</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>
18	Neil <b>Wood</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>
19	Trevor <b>Benjamin</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>
20	Richard <b>Shaw</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>
21	Dean <b>Leacock</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>
22	Craig <b>Reid</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>
23	Kevin <b>Pressman</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>
24	Stern <b>John</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>
25	Isaac <b>Osbourne</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>
26	Stuart <b>Giddings</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>
27	Marcus <b>Hall</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>
28	Robert <b>Page</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>
29	Sean <b>Cooney</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>
30	Shaun <b>Goater</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>
33	Luke <b>Steele</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>
34	Jonathan <b>Tuffey</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>
106	Marc <b>Worthington</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>



## DERBY COUNTY

Manager **George Burley**

1	Kevin <b>Miller</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2	Mo <b>Konjic</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3	Jamie <b>Vincent</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4	Chris <b>Makin</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5	Jeff <b>Kenna</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6	Pablo <b>Mills</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7	Ian <b>Taylor</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8	Morten <b>Bisgaard</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9	<b>Junior</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10	Michael <b>Johnson</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>
11	Paul <b>Peschisolido</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>
12	Tommy <b>Smith</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>
13	Lee <b>Grant</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>
14	Richard <b>Jackson</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>
15	Adam <b>Bolder</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>
16	Tom <b>Huddleston</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>
17	Paul <b>Boertein</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>
18	Grzegorz <b>Rasiak</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>
19	Nathan <b>Doyle</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>
20	Lee <b>Holmes</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>
21	Chris <b>Turner</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>
22	Marcus <b>Reich</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>
23	Marcus <b>Tudgay</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>
24	Lee <b>Camp</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>
25	David <b>Cassidy</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>
26	Liam <b>Richardson</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>
27	Inigo <b>Idiakez</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>

## Today's Officials

Referee: **M. Fletcher**  
 Assistant Referees: **S. J. Hollick & S. M. Hutchinson**  
 Fourth Official: **A. Dewfield**



Today's Matchball Sponsor

## Today's Mascots



**Name:** Sam Green  
**Age:** 11  
**D.O.B:** 02/04/94  
**School:** Lutterworth Sherrier  
**Hobbies:** Football (Playing & watching)  
**Favourite Player:** Stephen Hughes & Andy Morrell



**Name:** Lauren Cliffords  
**Age:** 10  
**D.O.B:** 14/12/1994  
**School:** Moseley Primary School  
**Hobbies:** Football, Swimming  
**Favourite Player:** Luke Steele, Gary McSheffrey



**Name:** Ethan James Merrett  
**Age:** 6  
**D.O.B:** 20/12/1998  
**School:** Keresley Grange Primary School  
**Hobbies:** Playing & watching football, & PS2  
**Favourite Player:** Stephen Hughes



**Name:** James Penny  
**Age:** 12  
**D.O.B:** 23/4/1993  
**School:** Cardinal Newman  
**Hobbies:** Football & DJ  
**Favourite Player:** Andy Morrell



Highfield Road Then and Now - Above shows an aerial shot of Highfield Road in the 1960s from behind the West Stand and below, how the stadium looked at the start of the 21st century.





HIGHFIELD ROAD 1899 - 2005