

QUESTION & ANSWER

A new-style series of interviews with the personalities of Chelsea F.C. Today's questions put by Albert Sewell to

MARVIN HINTON

EVERYONE in the club is saying, and rightly, what a magnificent job you have been doing at right-back while Ken Shellito has been out. Had you ever played in this position before?

Just once, in October, 1957. It was my League debut. Because of an influenza epidemic, Charlton had only 13 players to pick from for a home game with West Ham. We lost 3-0, and it was the following season before I got another chance.

That was when you started your centre-half career?

No, wing-half was my next first-team position — the position in which I had played for Croydon and Surrey Schools and in which I joined Charlton's juniors just three days after leaving Ashburton Secondary Modern School at Addiscombe. It was three seasons after my debut that manager Jimmy Trotter tried me in a No. 5 shirt. Until then Derek Ufton and Gordon Jago were the recognised centre halves. I also played inside-forward with Charlton.

Do you keep a record of your games?

Yes, cuttings, photographs, programmes . . . anything like that. I played 130 League matches for Charlton, spread over seven seasons. The last was one of my worst — Southampton thumped us 6-1 on the opening day this season, and their centre-forward, George Kirby, got four of them. I was very unsettled off the field at the time (as well as on it), but two days later

Tommy Docherty signed me for Chelsea and I was a different fellow in a different world.

What made you unhappy at The Valley?

There were two main reasons. As a footballer with ambitions (I had played for England Under-23's against Scotland and Turkey in 1961-62 and Belgium last season), I wanted to be with a First Division club, and couldn't see that coming about with Charlton. They had been at the relegation end for three seasons. Then, when I had a benefit dispute, I knew I had to leave.

Didn't you find it embarrassing when, having been signed by Chelsea at a big fee, you were not in the first team?

It was Chelsea's decision what fee was paid, not mine. They wanted me, and I wanted to come here. When and where I play is for the manager to decide, and I certainly had no worries over being a big-fee player in the reserves. The important thing to me was that I was in the "pool" of first-team players.

What was your first big game for Chelsea?

The League Cup-tie at Swindon in September. My first Division One match was at Ipswich, at centre-half. Next, Terry Venables moved up to inside-forward and I was right-half for three games. Then Ken Shellito was injured,