

The Talk of Stamford Bridge

TO find the last instance of League football being played at Stamford Bridge on a Saturday morning, we had to turn back the records to Christmas 1948. On that occasion, it was a Christmas day fixture against Portsmouth, with a crowd of 43,422 to see Tommy Walker make his farewell appearance for Chelsea. The match also marked the inauguration of the sixpenny magazine-style programme which we pioneered so successfully.

It was because of possible transport difficulties later in the day that we decided on an 11.30 kick-off today. The keenest of football followers will doubtless welcome the variation, enabling them, as it does, to see two matches in one day—Chelsea this morning and then, sustained by their turkey sandwiches and hip-flask, a visit to Arsenal, Brentford, Crystal Palace or Leyton Orient this afternoon!

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Our players spent last night at their London hotel HQ, and fly to Manchester tomorrow for Monday night's return match at Blackpool. They do not return home until Thursday (New Year's Eve), the opportunity being taken for three days' special training at Blackpool for the Cup and League tasks ahead.

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Roger Wosahlo, 17-year-old apprentice forward, has signed as a full professional. A former England Schoolboy cap, he comes from Cambridge, and is leading scorer for our South-East Counties side.

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CUP TICKETS

Season-ticket holders are reminded that their tickets for the Third Round F.A. Cup-tie at home to Northampton Town will be posted to them next week. We have purposely held them back to avoid the Christmas postal rush. All seats for the match have now been sold.

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Wanted: Experienced driver/handyman with "clean" licence. Suit retired man. Write to: The Secretary, Chelsea F.C.

YOU might think that players kissing at the scoring of a goal, spectators being "dressed down" for misconduct, referees lambasted by disgruntled (and usually beaten) clubs . . . and the sale of pirate programmes, are comparatively modern innovations in big Soccer. And you'd be hopelessly wrong—it was all happening to Chelsea nearly 60 years ago.

Turn up the club programme, the "Chelsea F.C. Chronicle", for 1906-07 (the second season of our existence) and you find these examples:—

October 6: "What a lovely kiss Tommy McDermott gave Hilsdon when George scored that glorious goal on Saturday (the winner against Leicester Fosse) . . ."

FRONT COVER SHOT

IT'S one in a thousand! Barry Bridges scores his—and our—second goal against Wolves, the shot that enabled us to celebrate our 1,000th League game at Stamford Bridge with victory, put us back on top of the table and made us the first club in the First Division to reach 50 goals this season.

February 9: "Mr. Fred Kirkham ruled the game (the return against Leicester) with a rod of iron . . . and once stopped play to read the Riot Act to some of the Fosse supporters at the back of the Filbert Street goal."

March 7 (referring to the previous week's 1-2 defeat at Grimsby): "Defeat—when inflicted by the referee, and *not* the opposing team—is hard to bear. When Whiting put the ball into the net, he fully expected—as he afterwards admitted—to hear the whistle for offside. But Mr. Pearson pointed to the centre and was immediately surrounded by incredulous Chelsea players in excited protest. After a

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