

FOCUS

on our

VISITORS

THE shattering noise heard lately over the Five Towns has been not the sound of broken pottery, but of Stoke City smashing club records. The most important one was achieved at our expense, the League Cup triumph at Wembley bringing City the first major honour in their 109-year existence.

As a result, they are set for another "first" next season as contenders in European football for the first time. And at least one other Stoke record has been beaten this season in the number of matches played. Tonight's game is their 62nd competitive fixture of 1971-72 (League, League Cup, F.A. Cup and Texaco Cup), and with four more First Division matches to come they will total 66 games before the curtain comes down on the most rewarding season in their history.

THEIR PLAYERS

GORDON BANKS: World-class goalkeeper with 69 England caps, a record for his position, and the man who foiled us at Wembley last month. Began with Chesterfield, moved to Leicester City in 1959, and in April 1967 transferred to Stoke at a £55,000 fee. Worthy winner of this season's Footballer of the Year award, announced last week. Born Sheffield. 6 ft. 1 in., 13 st. 7 lb.

JOHN MARSH: Speedy full-back who established a regular place shortly after his debut in season 1967-68. Has since made over 100 League appearances. Wears contact lenses. Born Stoke. 5 ft. 9 in., 11 st.

STUART JUMP: Reliable young defender who played schools football for Manchester before joining Stoke as an apprentice. Made League debut against Coventry in February 1971. Born Prestwich. 5 ft. 9 in., 11 st. 2 lb.

MIKE BERNARD: Tenacious midfield grafter who made three England Under-23 appearances last season. Joined Stoke from Shrewsbury Schoolboys and made League debut in 1966. Born Shrewsbury. 5 ft. 8½ in., 11 st. 10 lb.

DENIS SMITH: 24-year-old centre-half who has overcome ten broken bones, including four leg

fractures, in his career with City. Joined them from local schools football, and made League debut at Highbury in 1969. Born Stoke. 6 ft., 12 st. 7 lb.

ALAN BLOOR: Another local schools product and one of the most experienced members of the side—debut in 1961. Forms an excellent defensive partnership with Denis Smith. Born Stoke. 6 ft., 13 st. 7 lb.

TERRY CONROY: Red-haired Eire international winger signed by Stoke from Glentoran for £12,000 in March 1967. Fast, direct and scorer of Stoke's first goal against us in the League Cup Final. Born Dublin. 5 ft. 10½ in., 10 st. 7 lb.

PETER DOBING: Stoke's captain missed last season's F.A. Cup semi-final because of a broken leg, but gained ample consolation at Wembley a few weeks ago, when he hoisted the League Cup. Previously with Blackburn and Man. City, he joined Stoke from City for £25,000 in August 1963. Born Manchester. 5 ft. 9½ in., 11 st. 9 lb.

JOHN RITCHIE: Is Stoke's top scorer for the third successive season with 20 goals before last Saturday. In his second spell with City, having left to join Sheffield Wednesday in November 1966 and returned in July 1969. Born Kettering. 6 ft. 1 in., 13 st.

GEORGE EASTHAM: At 35 his League Cup-winning goal against us at Wembley crowned a distinguished career which spans Irish League Ards, Newcastle and Arsenal, from whom he joined Stoke for £30,000 in August 1966. Spent last summer in S. Africa as manager of Capetown Hellenic. England International (19 caps). Born Blackpool. 5 ft. 7 in., 10 st. 6 lb.

JIMMY GREENHOFF: Striker who cost Stoke's record fee of £100,000 when signed from Birmingham in August 1969. Originally with Leeds, he is an England Under-23 International (4 caps). Born Barnsley. 5 ft. 9 in., 12 st. 6 lb.

JOHN MAHONEY: Welsh International (4 caps) signed from Crewe for £19,500 in March 1967. Although unable to establish a regular first-team place this season has frequently been substitute. Born Cardiff. 5 ft. 7½ in., 11 st. 1 lb.

Club address:

Victoria
Ground,
Stoke-on-
Trent.



OFFICIALS

Chairman: MR. ALBERT HENSHALL.
Secretary: MR. BILL WILLIAMS.
Manager: MR. TONY WADDINGTON.
Trainer-Coaches: MESSRS. FRANK MOUNT-FORD and ALAN A' COURT.
Captain: PETER DOBING.

HONOURS

Football League Cup Winners 1972.
Div. II Champions 1933, 1963.
Div. III (North) Champions 1927.