



Nuneaton's Footballing Heritage

Nuneaton Borough 1970-1979 – Part 1

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Nuneaton Borough 1970-1979

Introduction



Marjorie Wardrop, “Miss Nuneaton Borough”, meets the player who topped the poll in the “Player of the Year” award. Dave Goodall (centre) won the award with Fred Crump (left) and Alan Jones (right), runners-up.

Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune

Dave Goodall, one the forgotten man at Manor Park, stepped into the limelight last night to take the Borough Player of the Year award. And afterwards he revealed that he will be staying with the club next season. “I have straightened things out and will definitely be staying on,” he said.

Earlier this season the big-hearted defender was told he was free to leave. Two weeks ago he almost joined West Midland Leaguers Tamworth. Goodall, who joined Nuneaton from Burton last close season, polled almost a quarter of the votes cast by the fans to take the trophy. It came as a complete surprise: “I didn’t think I stood a chance, but I am really honoured,” said the player whose all out effort made him tops with the fans.

And then he paid tribute to his team-mates when he said: “Although things have not gone well, the spirit in the side is fantastic. And there is a lot of ability in the side.” Borough’s teak-hard back four defender earned a reputation for his fighting qualities when he was at Telford and Burton. And he transferred this never-say-die spirit to Nuneaton when he was signed by Dudley Kernick just before the start of the season. On one of the voting forms a fan wrote: “A one hundred percenter who gives everything to his game.”

Football Alliance In Near Future

A Football Alliance of non-league clubs may come into being in the near future, with promotion to the Football League. In his speech, the league president Len Shipman, said: “Regarding the possible formation of the Football League Alliance, your management committee have been having discussions with non-league representatives, and it is felt that there are possibilities in forming an alliance from amongst the non-league clubs, who could operate under the umbrella of that league, whilst being responsible for the administration of their own affairs.

“There would be an advantage to the league in this, in so far as clubs who cannot continue in the Fourth Division, will have somewhere to go and, provided that the alliance clubs’ facilities are up to standard, they could automatically be promoted to the Fourth Division.

Johnny Watts Rejoins Borough

Johnny Watts, centre-half and skipper of the most successful side in Nuneaton Borough’s history, has rejoined the club – as assistant to player-manager Malcolm Allen. The appointment was made at a board meeting at Manor Park last night. And it forged a partnership between two of the most respected players to appear for the club.

Malcolm Allen and Johnny Watts made nearly 200 appearances together in the Nuneaton side. They now face the task of re-shaping Borough’s future. Commenting on the appointment, club chairman Mr Reg Bull, said today: “I am delighted. We are sure he is the right chap. He will be just the man to help Malcolm.”

Borough Lose Cup Exemption

Nuneaton Borough have lost their FA Cup exemption and will have to fight their way through from the first qualifying round next season. This follows defeats in the fourth qualifying round for the last two season and turns the clock back to 1966. But they have been exempted to the first round proper of the Non-League Cup – last year they entered the competition in the third qualifying round.

Borough open their Southern League Premier Division season on Saturday, August 10, with a home game against Wimbledon, among the championship chasers for most of last season. This is followed by a trip to Kettering on Wednesday, August 19, and an away game at Hereford the following Saturday.



Paul Cutler Rejoins Borough

Paul Cutler, who left Manor Park last summer in a controversial straight swap deal with Romford, rejoined Nuneaton Borough today. He met player-manager Malcolm Allen at the ground this afternoon before re-signing for the club which gave him his first chance of Southern League soccer.

Cutler's name has been linked with Nuneaton since the end of last season – and many fans believed he should not have left in the first place. He was swapped for Romford forward Ray Aggio last July when the board decided to cut down on the travelling expenses for the Manor Park squad. Cutler first joined Borough four years ago as a 20-year-old from Crystal Palace. In his three seasons at Manor Park he netted nearly 100 goals.

Borough To Take Top Amateur Players?

Borough player-manager Malcolm Allen is planning to invite Nuneaton's top Amateur League players to try and make the grade on the Southern League scene. He wants to explode the myth that the Manor Park club is not interested in local talent but he stresses: "I only want the best half-dozen. That must be the limit."

Allen, one of the few local-born players to manage the club, explains: "They must be keen, dedicated, prepared to work hard – and be patient." And he adds: "If these players do train with us and shape up well, I am prepared to try them out in the pre-season trials."

Alan Morton Unlikely To Be In Borough Squad

It now looks highly unlikely that striker Alan Morton will be a Nuneaton Borough player next season. Team manager Malcolm Allen had pencilled in Morton as a member of his squad for the 1970-71 campaign. But the player has failed to contact Allen since the end of last term.

"I have telephoned Alan's home twice but have heard nothing from him," said Allen. He added: "I would have liked him to be in the squad but even if he is available now, I would have to think twice. The speedy Morton was a regular in the side when he joined Borough and he produced some of his best performances late in the season."

Dudley Kernick And George Greenfield Leave

Two key figures in the Nuneaton Borough set-up have left the club – six weeks before the start of the new soccer season. Commercial manager Dudley Kernick's contract has been cancelled by mutual consent, and director Mr George Greenfield has resigned. Dudley Kernick stepped out of the team manager's job last Easter to take over the club's money raising pool.

Dudley Kernick's reign will be long remembered by the Nuneaton soccer loving public. He was in charge for the club's most successful season – the year they finished runners-up in the Southern League Premier Division and embarked on

a record breaking cup run. He was also in charge last season when the club went perilously close to losing its Premier Division status. Only a fantastic chain of events saved Borough from the drop. It was the disappointment of last season that led to him handing over the team to Malcolm Allen.

John Mason Signs

John Mason, one time golden boy of Midlands amateur soccer, has joined Nuneaton Borough. The ex-Alvechurch and Peterborough goalscorer agreed terms with player-manager Malcolm Allen last night and follows in his father's footsteps at Manor Park. His father, ex-Coventry City defender George Mason, moved to Nuneaton when he left Highfield Road.

Mason, who is 26, has spent the last 14 months playing for Durban Spurs, one of the leading clubs in South Africa. He went there after breaking a leg while playing for Peterborough, an injury which threatened to crush his career.

Mason made his name at Alvechurch, who reached the semi-finals of the Amateur Cup. His displays for Alvechurch earned him two England caps before he was signed by Peterborough as a full-time pro.

Dudley Kernick Joins Stoke City

Dudley Kernick, who left Nuneaton Borough last week after five years at Manor Park, has been appointed commercial manager of Stoke City. His first task will be to launch a massive pools operation, similar to the ones run by Nuneaton and many other clubs.

Roy Chapman Released

Roy Chapman, signed by Nuneaton Borough last October from Chester for £1,500, has had his contract cancelled by mutual consent. Chapman, whose signing rounded off a £10,000 spending spree by the then manager Dudley Kernick, was given his release at a board meeting last night. He is set to take over as player-manager of Northern Premier League side Stafford Rangers.

Kernick Sums Up His Time At Nuneaton

Before I came to Nuneaton I had the feeling that people in the Southern League regarded the Midland clubs as a necessary evil. I think we got them over that. Nuneaton's voice began to matter. Because of our success and crowds, we were talked about – and looked up to.

For a couple of seasons, not because of our playing success but because we were Nuneaton, we attracted more people away from home than anyone. We were the Arsenal of the Southern League. Everything was going for us. Fred Badham had contributed a lot on the commercial side and Eddie Aspinnall, in his own way, made a contribution.

The chance was there for us to go full-time. The board discussed this, but it was scotched – that is where they



slipped up. It would have been a risk. But, in football, there are times when you have to say 'This is it' and take the chance. I think the time was right then.

Don't forget, at that time, Cambridge United, although they had a full-time squad, had not enjoyed a lot of playing success, but they persevered and it paid off. It would not have cost a great deal more to go full-time and I felt Nuneaton had a real chance of the Football League. The next season (1968-69) was a wonderful one, whatever they say. By the time I had progressed to an attitude whereby success in winning matches was not the sole object.

I thought the football club's job was to entertain. We did this by exciting football. I know we lost tragically to Kidderminster in the FA Cup and Cheltenham beat us in the semi-finals of the Southern League Cup. But you can't dismiss a whole season on two games. If we had won these two, people would have said we were successful.

Although we didn't win anything tangible, we did win supporters. But managers tread on dodgy ground. They can produce exciting football, lose at one vital stage, and be deemed failures.

After this, the club's policy changed. It became cautious. Having spent once, they expected instant success. But football is an adventurous game and you have to gamble. There's no doubt about it, we made money. We made £1,500 from the practice matches alone. Tony Jacques' fee was almost paid before the season started. I was supposed to have spent £10,000. The team took that in gate money. The gate for the Tamworth match in the Floodlit Cup was more than £1,000...

...I have regrets. At the end of the Cup run in 1967 I had several offers from Football League clubs, but I believed that, at Nuneaton, we were going forward. I really believed we could get into the Football League.

I regret that we didn't go full-time. It wanted that one courageous step. The club should have said: "This is it, let's take our hearts in our hands and move forward." During my time at Nuneaton I said a lot of things. People said I was controversial. I was even once described as the "Jimmy Hill of the Southern League" – I took this as a compliment.

I don't set out to be controversial. What I say, I mean – and I say it publicly. I believed in Nuneaton Borough and would not have gone out on a limb and said what I did if I hadn't believed in the club. But, over the past 12 months, my utterances became less frequent because I had lost faith. The club should have been more adventurous – you have to be in football. When we were second in the table, Cambridge United were half-way down. They could have said: "Let's scrap our full-time squad." They didn't.

And, had we have taken that step and gone full-time, we would have been vying with them for Football League status. But I can say this. Nobody will take Nuneaton further in the FA Cup or higher up the league and get bigger gates than I did.

Another Director Resigns

Mr George Coe has resigned as a director of Nuneaton Borough FC. It is the second departure from the Borough board in ten days, leaving the club with only four directors to run the club. They are chairman, Mr Reg Bull and directors, Mr Alf Scattergood, Mr Ces Dawson and Mr Ernie Davenport.

Brian Billington Signs

Nuneaton Borough player-manager Malcolm Allen settled the shape of his Manor Park squad when he signed 19-year-old Brian Billington from Notts County. Billington, a midfielder, made ten Fourth Division appearances for the Meadow Lane club last season. He joined County as a full-time professional after a short spell as an amateur with Leicester City, his home town club.

1970-71

Enderby Town v Nuneaton Borough 04-08-1970

Borough made the journey to George Street to take on Enderby Town in a pre-season friendly.

Borough player-manager Malcolm Allen should be well satisfied with the workout his squad had in this game. The Leicestershire amateur side were keen to get a good result and made Borough work hard for their victory.

Impressive for Borough was left-back Jack Burckitt. The former Coventry and Walsall defender, making his first appearance, turned in a first-class display.

Another player who caught the eye was local amateur Derek Brown. The fair-haired youngster came on in the second half and Malcolm Allen must have been highly delighted with the progress that his lad has made. The whole side played with a zest that seemed to be missing for most of last season and the defence in particular looks to have tightened up considerably.

Borough won the game through a goal from new signing John Mason late in the second half. Mason led the attack well and had another "goal" disallowed for an infringement off the ball. Paul Cutler, who replaced Tony Jacques in the second half, was also impressive and his sharpness in the box could be a vital asset to Borough in the coming season.

Nuneaton Borough v Coventry City Res 10-08-1970

Borough: Crump, Jones, Aston, Wilkinson (Goodall), Kavanagh (Burckitt), Allen, Boot, Punter, Cutler, Mason (Jacques), Brown, Smith.
Coventry: McManus, Crossley, Cattlin (Howard), McGuire, Parker, Goodwin, Stevenson (Gould), Randall, Joicey, Mortimer, Alderson.

Borough welcomed Coventry City Reserves to Manor Park for a pre-season friendly game.

Player-manager Malcolm Allen paraded all but one of his close season signings, but they had to take a back seat to the

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slick Sky Blues. In the first 45 minutes Borough were totally overshadowed as the impressive young Coventry City side hit two goals inside 23 minutes and piled on the pressure throughout the half.



Manor Park's first goal of the 1970-71 campaign. Fred Crump is left groping as a shot from Coventry winger Alderson tucks itself into the net to put the young Sky Blues 1-0 up. Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune

Coventry's smooth team-work, their "togetherness" and speed, made Borough look second raters. Nuneaton were too ambitious by far while Coventry's short passing game looked impressive and Borough's defence was given a real testing.

In the second half it was a different story and the game developed into first-class entertainment for the near 3,000 crowd. Striker Tony Jacques was denied a goal by a magnificent save by Coventry goalkeeper Eric McManus just after half-time. It followed the best Borough move of the game in the 58th minute. Left-winger Roger Smith took the ball down the left touchline and pulled it back across the middle.

Jacques climbed high above the City defence and his header looked a goal all the way. But McManus reached it and pushed it around the post. Seven minutes later Jacques had another chance. He took the ball off Smith as he weaved his way across the park and hit a left foot shot which clipped the outside of the woodwork.

Coventry's goals came between the eighth and 23rd minutes of the first-half – and both left doubts about Nuneaton's defensive tightness. In the eighth minute, Alderson, who gave Alan Jones a gruelling time before the break, body swerved himself some shooting space and scored with a shot that went across Fred Crump and into the net.

The second goal followed a moment of complete chaos. Wilkinson and Aston jumped with Joicey and failed to get the ball. Joicey tried a shot which was blocked by Jones and then the Borough full-back tried a suicidal back-pass. Mortimer nipped in and pushed it across to Stevenson who rammed it into a wide open net.

Paul Cutler, the Manor Park comeback man, looked the best of the summer signings.

Nuneaton Borough v Wimbledon 15-08-1970

Borough: Crump, Jones, Aston, Wilkinson, Burckitt, Boot, Allen, Punter, Cutler, Jacques, Smith. Sub: Mason.

Wimbledon: Guy, Law, Martin, Sanderson, McCready, Shreeves, Burton, Cook, O'Rourke, Collins, Hodges. Sub: O'Hara.

Borough welcomed Wimbledon to Manor Park for a Southern League Premier Division game.

Borough conceded two goals in a four minute period of the second half and tossed away the chance of a bright start to their Southern League campaign. The goals came in the 53rd and 57th minutes and both were tragic errors, with goalkeeper Crump having to shoulder a lot of the blame.

He half-punched a cross from Peter Shreeves for the first one and Wimbledon's new winger Eric Burton banged it into the net off the underside of the bar. And he was hopelessly stranded and unable to do anything about a slip by Ernie Wilkinson that let in Ian Cooke for the second.

They were the sort of goals to tear the confidence out of any side. And after they had gone in, Borough were unable to get back into the game.

Before Wimbledon scored, the Manor Park side had more than held their own in the tense atmosphere of the opening game of the season. Afterwards, they were filled with self-doubt and suspicion, shattered by the sudden change in their fortunes, and the Dons won easily.

A creditable 0-0 draw against consistent Wimbledon – never out of the Premier Division top five – had looked on the cards before the two goal breakthrough. But the Dons are too accomplished a side to hand back a game that has been presented to them in a neatly wrapped gift parcel.

Wimbledon were solid all round and in Jimmy Collins, who wore the No. 10 shirt, but operated as a "sweeper" in the back four, they had the man of the match. Tough front runner Gerry O'Rourke, always a threat to any defence, kept the Borough back four brigade on their toes.

For Borough, left-back John Burckitt had a fine debut, and Paul Cutler impressed in the first-half but dropped away after the break. In midfield, Allen himself and Mickey Boot were not so impressive. They both went forward far too often, leaving the middle of the park exposed.

Kettering Town v Nuneaton Borough 19-08-1970

Kettering: Clamp, Newball, Gammon, Reed, Ashby, Addy, Goodall, Walden, Peck, Gully, Allen. Sub: Lawman.

Borough: Crump, Jones, Aston, Wilkinson, Burckitt, Boot, Smith, Punter, Jacques, Cutler, Brown. Sub: Billington.

Borough made the journey to Rockingham Road to take on Kettering Town in a Southern League Premier Division game.

Borough took the game to Kettering in the first-half, scored a goal and then shrugged off a Poppies' second half equaliser



with some stout defensive play. Goalkeeper Fred Crump, at fault on Saturday, turned in a near faultless performance – and his improvement summed up the rest of the team. They moved more like a unit in a game that made a mockery of the wind and driving rain.

Brian Punter notched the goal that shook Kettering in the 17th minute after Borough had attacked from the start. They had the Poppies' defence under heavy pressure when Reed kicked off the line from Tony Jacques. The ball went out to Punter, who steered it back into the net through a ruck of players.

Kettering were restricted to a handful of long range efforts as Nuneaton looked the better side before the break. After half-time, the picture changed, Borough were forced back and Joe Allen rose high above the defence to head home an equaliser in the 53rd minute.

For the next ten minutes, Nuneaton had to survive intense pressure. The Manor Park side were stretched on the flanks. Crump clawed down a shot from impressive Ken Gully and then saved an attempted clearance from his own full-back John Burckitt.

But the Borough defence with Stan Aston and Ernie Wilkinson a powerful pair in the middle, threw back the raids and Brown was caught on the wrong foot to a Jacques' cross as Nuneaton hit back. A brave block tackle from Alan Jones on Mick Addy saved a serious situation for Nuneaton in the closing minutes, but they held on for a richly won point.

Hereford United v Nuneaton Borough 22-08-1970

Hereford: Davies, Bird, Timms, Jones, McLaughlin, Charles, Rodgeron, Carson, Meadows, Shepherd, Walker. **Sub:** Lewis

Borough: Crump, Jones, Burckitt, Boot, Aston, Wilkinson, Punter, Cutler, Jacques, Smith, Brown. **Sub:** Billingham.

Borough made the journey to Edgar Street, to take on Hereford United in a Southern League Premier Division game.

A fleeting glimpse of the greatness of John Charles tore the heart out of battling Borough at Hereford. Charles, once the colossus of European soccer, headed an ice cool hammer blow, which wiped out a tremendous performance from Borough. Their grimly determined defensive work and hard running in midfield and up front, carried them to the brink of what would have been a magnificent point.

Borough could claim to be hard done by as Billy Meadows' 75th minute overhead kick could have gone anywhere, but it didn't. It evaded three Borough defenders and homed in on the head of Welsh genius John Charles, who still has no equal in the air. The whole of Nuneaton's hopes were frozen into one nod of his head and the ball travelled slowly, but with uncanny accuracy, just inside the far post with no-one able to do a thing about it.

Five minutes later Billy Meadows moved in on the blind side of the Borough defence and rocketed home a bullet-like header which set the seal on Borough's defeat.

But Hereford, who have made a great start to the season, will not have a harder game than this. They were made to fight every inch of the way by a Nuneaton side that played better than it did against Kettering. Borough's problem was that, despite their attacks and the pressure they managed to mount, they were not sharp enough up front to stick in a goal.

Defensively, Borough were superb. Stan Aston and Ernie Wilkinson were twin powerhouses in the middle of the back four and full-backs Alan Jones and Jack Burckitt gave little away. Mickey Boot and Roger Smith did everything that was asked in midfield and Derek Brown and Brian Punter were hard workers on the flanks. Tony Jacques and Paul Cutler, however, were not sharp enough on the chances that fell their way – although, again, there was no lack of effort.

Brown, playing only his second Southern League game, sent over a series of dangerous crosses, including one which landed on the cross bar and bounced over.

Canterbury City v Nuneaton Borough 25-08-1970

Canterbury: Gambrill, Gallagher, Simpson, Hare, Honeywood, Shilling, Morgan, Moore, Ellam, Ballantyne, McGinn. **Sub:** Walden.

Borough: Crump, Jones, Wilkinson, Goodall, Burckitt, Cutler, Boot, Billington, Punter, Jacques, Mason. **Sub:** Allen.

Borough made the journey to the Kingsmead Stadium to play Canterbury City in a Southern League Cup first round tie.

Brian Punter rescued a ragged game from goalless oblivion with a first-half injury time penalty. City, struggling in the first division of the Southern League, were a determined side but had little skill to offer in front of barely 250 spectators.

Borough were unable to stamp any authority on the game, which reached no great heights. Only in flashes did the Manor Park side display the difference in status between the two sides. But they did enough to win, despite a spirited attempt at a second half rally from the Kent side. The tie did not raise itself above practice match standard in the almost deserted stadium where the players made more noise than the fans.

Much of the threat to Borough's defence came from right-winger Moore, but he was well handled by John Burckitt. Nuneaton, playing three men in midfield and three front runners for the first time this season, appeared content to hold their slender lead in the second half. Mason landed an effort on the crossbar and Jacques twice went close, but for most of the second half, Borough were lethargic.

The goal that won the match came after City full-back Roy Hare had handled a chip from Mickey Boot intended for John Mason. Punter's spot kick – into the roof of the net – was greeted in silence.

Nuneaton livened up towards the end, but their shooting offered as much of a threat as City's pedestrian efforts at the other end. With only minutes to go Ballantyne missed a glorious chance of an equaliser from close range. And almost on time Jacques put an effort across the face of the goal.

Nuneaton Borough v Margate

29-08-1970

Borough: Crump, Jones, Goodall, Aston, Burckitt, Boot, Smith, Punter, Cutler, Jacques, Billington. **Sub:** Mason.

Margate: Dalrymple, Yorath, Lloyd, Clayton, Swain, Houston, Wiggins, Cochrane, Baker, Ray, Smith. **Sub:** Summers.

Borough welcomed Margate to Manor Park to play a Southern League Premier Division game.

The explosive shooting of Mickey Boot highlighted Borough's best performance of the season so far. Boot turned in a two goal spectacular in a match full of open, fast moving football which kept the shirt sleeved crowd on the ground until the final whistle. He stretched Borough's lead to 3-1 in the 37th minute with a left foot power drive from all of 25 yards after a neat, square passing movement with Brian Punter.



Tony Jacques hits the ball past Margate keeper Dalrymple for his first goal of the season on Saturday.

Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune

And he settled the points five minutes from the end – this time with his right foot and again from distance. In between times, Margate, with one of the most enterprising attacks in the Southern League, had tried hard to get back into the game. But they met a Nuneaton side that snapped up every chance after a tremendous two goal start in the first seven minutes.

Paul Cutler opened the scoring with a goal after just 15 seconds – the quickest ever recorded at Manor Park. He robbed Margate defender Clayton, cut inside and beat goalkeeper Malcolm Dalrymple at the foot of the far post to beat the previous quickest goal, scored after 20 seconds against Hinckley, way back in 1946.

Tony Jacques showed a glimpse of the sharpness that put him in the £3,000 class when he slashed the ball home after seven minutes following a deflection by a Margate defender. Margate winger Jack Smith pulled one back almost on the half-hour before Boot smashed the Kent side's hopes with his two-footed answer to their revival hopes.

Nuneaton Borough v Canterbury City

31-08-1970

Borough welcomed Canterbury City to Manor Park for a Southern League Cup first round second leg tie.

Tony Jacques, top scorer for Nuneaton in the past two seasons, helped himself to two goals and could easily have

doubled his tally as Borough cruised into the second round of the Southern League Cup.

Canterbury had little to offer and, for most of the match, only one man stood between Nuneaton and a glut of goals – City keeper Brian Gambrell. He showed the Manor Park fans why he is rated the best goalkeeper in the first division with a superb display of timing, handling and anticipation.

The keeper twice denied Jacques a hat-trick and pulled off a string of fine saves from Punter, Boot, Smith and Cutler as Borough moved forward almost at will. And he capped a great display with a wonderful double save in the 63rd minute that summed up his anticipation and reflexes.



Goalkeeper Gambrell is well-beaten by Tony Jacques' (out of picture) in the 54th minute.

Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune

But even Dalrymple could not make up for the deficiencies in the Canterbury make-up. They had determination, but little else as Borough stamped their superior class on the game.

In the end, Jacques' two goals bridged the gulf in ability and skill between the two teams and put the Nuneaton centre-forward back on top of the scoring list. Jacques, who often carries his £2,500 tag like a dead weight, is not short of critics on the Manor Park terraces. But he does his job where it matters – in the 18 yard box. His 70-odd goals in the past two seasons testify to that.

Jacques is the bludgeon who rounds off the silky smooth stuff – the man whose job it is to sign his name to the pretty patterns Borough weave on their way to goal. And, despite his misses, he demonstrated this with a goal in each half of the game kept alive by the constant promise of more.

Roger Smith caught the Canterbury defence on the hop with a superb 33rd minute pass and Jacques swept the ball past Gambrell. In the 54th minute he netted a fine goal from a classic move when he and Cutler caught the City defence square with a quick return of headers.

The match was so one-sided that Nuneaton spent most of it peppering shots at Gambrell – the man of the match.

Nuneaton Borough v B'ham City Police

02-09-1970

Borough welcomed Birmingham City Police to Manor Park for a Birmingham Senior Cup first round tie.

A fluke goal in the 27th minute clinched Borough a place in the second round, as the fans yawned their way through a boring,

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scrappy match, typical of the competition. Any supporters who had looked forward to a glut of goals after Borough's aggressive displays against Margate and Canterbury were in for a shock. Malcolm Allen's men turned in a shabby performance, they struggled to overcome poor opposition.

Borough never had full control of the game, but they were never in any real danger of losing. Perhaps an equaliser from the Police would have jarred them into life. All the goals came in the first-half. In the 17th minute Roger Smith took a free-kick after being fouled on the left flank. His floated cross caught goalkeeper Pete Stevens in two minds and John Mason jumped unchallenged to head his first goal for the club.

Ten minutes later came the freak goal which made the rest of the match a formality. Mason hit a low cross into the middle from the left. There was no danger at all as big defender Dave Butterworth swung his foot at the ball. He completely sliced his kick, the ball flew over Stevens and dropped into the net.

The Police reduced the deficit in the 38th minute with a gift goal. Full-back Alan Jones calmly chested the ball down following a right-wing centre and stood back expecting goalkeeper Fred Crump to come out to collect. Both players made the fatal mistake of hesitating and John Hart moved in gratefully to prod the ball into the net. It was an unhappy night all round for Jones. He could not put a foot right. During the second half he almost presented the Police with a second goal after he had been dispossessed by Hart.

Bobby Allen, Nuneaton's former schoolboy international, made little impression on his debut. Boot tried hard in midfield to get Borough moving, while Smith and Brian Billington covered a lot of ground without much result.

Defenders Dave Goodall, Stan Aston and Gerry Kavanagh were the only ones to enhance their reputations. Jacques had a couple of chances to increase the scoreline and Mason saw a header cleared off the line. But in the end the 1,150 fans drifted away asking the same old question – "Is the Senior Cup really worthwhile?"

Wimbledon v Nuneaton Borough 05-09-1970

Wimbledon: Guy, Law, Martin, Sanderson, McCready, Shreeves, Burton, Cooke, O'Rourke, Collins, Hodges. **Sub:** O'Mara.

Borough: Crump, Jones, Aston, Goodall, Burckitt, Smith, Boot, Billington, Cutler, Jacques, Punter. **Sub:** Wilkinson.

Borough travelled to Plough Lane for a Southern League Premier Division game against Wimbledon.

The confidence Borough build in four games without defeat disappeared in just over half-an-hour. By that time, unhappy goalkeeper Fred Crump had been beaten three times and the Dons had sewn up an early season double. The points were wrapped up in a gift parcel by a slack defence and a shaky goalkeeper. Crump had a bad day against Wimbledon on the first day of the season, but he shook it off with superb displays against Hereford and Kettering, but faltered badly

again in this match. And his shakiness spread through an off-colour Borough side like the plague.

Borough lost their zest for the game after being two goals down inside 23 minutes. In defence, only Dave Goodall's tremendous determination shone through the shakiness that had crept in. He would take on a Sherman tank if it threatened the goal he was defending. But Goodall and Stan Aston had their hands full with Gerry O'Rourke and Wimbledon's human beanpole John O'Mara.

And while they were occupied, Ian Cooke sneaked through midfield and banged in the two goals that really made all the difference. Both full backs struggled against Wimbledon's wingers, Hodges and Burton, and in midfield, Smith, Boot and Billington failed to stamp authority. Roger Smith was the best of the midfield trio, but ruined most of his best work with erratic finishing or a poor final pass. Up front, Borough's goal threat was non-existent.

Wimbledon opened the scoring after seven minutes through winger Burton. His shot looked as if it was going over the top and then bent under the bar at the last minute, with Crump stuck on his line. Sixteen minutes later, Cooke chipped the ball goalwards from the edge of the 18 yard box. It caught Crump at least six yards off his line and went over his head.

The third goal, after 36 minutes, was even more remarkable. Winger Hodges dropped a corner just past the near post and centre-half McCready glanced it home. And the final goal came six minutes from time. McCready swung the ball into the middle and Cooke, unchallenged and close in, headed home a free header.

Wimbledon could have had another couple of goals on an afternoon that Borough – and Crump – will want to forget.

Nuneaton Borough v Kettering Town 07-09-1970

Borough: Crump, Jones, Goodall, Aston, Burckitt, Smith, Boot, Billington, Punter, Cutler, Jacques. **Sub:** R. Allen.

Kettering: Clamp, Logan, Addy, Reed, Ashby, Goodall, Bradbury, Peck, Walden, Gully, Lawman. **Sub:** Webster.

Borough welcomed Kettering Town to Manor Park for a Southern League Premier Division match.

Borough shook off more than an hour of scrappy, mistake riddled play to clinch two precious points. They won with a 65th minute goal after they had been stretched and forced back by an impressive Kettering side – and also missed a penalty. Three players, Borough's John Burckitt, Dave Goodall and Kettering winger John Lawman were booked by referee Mr J. Rees in a game littered with stoppages.

Kettering were strong at the back, tenacious in midfield and had the Nuneaton defence at full pitch with their nippy raids. In the first 35 minutes Fred Crump pushed a scorcher from Mick Goodall around the post and then a heap of players fought an untidy battle almost on the Nuneaton line as Malcolm Allen's side was pushed to the brink of failure.

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The only thing they had to show for their first half efforts was a shot from Roger Smith which was brilliantly saved by Poppies' goalkeeper Martin Clamp, who flung himself full-length and clutched the ball in mid-air after Smith had been given the shooting chance on the edge of the box by a Paul Cutler pass.

It was a far more determined Borough side that took the field for the second half, although their midfield play and distribution still left a great deal to be desired. And youngster Bobby Allen, who lives only a goal kick from Manor Park, impressed when he was brought on for Brian Billington with half-an-hour to go. Allen showed determination, skill on the ball and nearly grabbed a Southern League debut goal when he had Clamp groping with a snap shot from outside the box.



The tension of the game is written on the faces of this section of the crowd at the Cock and Bear end of Manor Park. But they went home happy in the end after a Tony Jacques goal gave Borough a welcome win.

Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune

All the drama was packed into the closing stages which did a lot to wipe away some of the poor football that had gone before. It was sparked off by an incredible penalty incident in the 60th minute after Allen had been brought down by Addy as he moved clear. Brian Punter stepped up to take the spot kick. And Clamp moved to his right and parried the ball. It rebounded to Tony Jacques who lashed it back first time. Again Clamp got his body behind it. Back it went to Jacques who had another go and this time Clamp pushed it around the post for a corner.

The flag kick was cleared and Borough appeared to have lost their chance before Jacques netted the goal that made all of the difference. He nodded home a Cutler cross in the 65th minute, beating both Mick Addy and goalkeeper Clamp with his header from close in. The relief spread like a wave through the crowd after the scrappiness that had gone before.

But Kettering were far from finished. In the dying minutes Peck hit the Borough crossbar and Gully netted only to be pulled up for offside. Earlier, Gully had thudded a shot against the underside of the crossbar after a free-kick had spread panic in the Nuneaton defence.

Nuneaton Borough v Weymouth

12-09-1970

Borough: Crump, Jones, Aston, Goodall, Burckitt, Wilkinson, Smith, Boot, Punter, R. Allen, Jacques. Sub: Cutler.

Weymouth: Clarke, Rounsewelle, Hobson, Etheridge, Glover, Barry, Bumstead, McArthur, Kearns, T. Allen, Bennett. Sub: Ames.

Borough welcomed Weymouth to Manor Park for a Southern League Premier Division game.

Borough pulled off an incredible last gasp win to move towards the top half of the table. With only 13 minutes to go Weymouth led 1-0. The points appeared to be on their way to Dorset. Eight minutes later Borough had pulled back, netted three goals and won the match.

Fans already on their way out of the ground, were made to stay as Borough burst into life and turned the game upside down. Jacques equalised and Allen shot Borough ahead with his first goal for the club in the Southern League and then Jacques made sure – all between the 77th and 85th minutes.

Weymouth had done so much good work before, dominated midfield and looked the better side. It was astonishing that they should have gone unrewarded. Despite Weymouth's dominance, Borough had the most clear cut chances and could have been two up at half-time as Jacques missed two sitters which earned him some cruel barracking from the crowd.

And, in the second half, Allen fluffed a glorious chance with only the goalkeeper to beat a few minutes after Dave Bennett had headed Weymouth into the lead. The turning point in the match was a controversial penalty incident which left Weymouth claiming they had been robbed of a spot kick after Goodall dived full length to palm out a shot from Trevor Allen.

But the linesman was already flagging for an offside decision against the Weymouth player. A goal at that stage may have killed off Borough, but Jacques lashed home the first goal with a hard, low, angled drive after a Punter corner had deflected off a defender's head and landed on the edge of the six yard box. Four minutes later Bobby Allen shot Borough in front with an ice-cool, superbly taken goal after Glover had failed to cut out the ball.



Bobby Allen, with full-back Benny Glover and goalkeeper Frank Clarke both beaten, watches as his ice-cool effort flies into the net to give Borough the lead in the 81st minute.

Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune

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And, in the 85th minute Jacques netted the third with a goal that summed up his tremendous courage in the 18-yard box. He bent low to meet a Cutler centre, ignored onrushing Weymouth keeper Frank Clark and nodded the ball into the net.

Telford United v Nuneaton Borough 14-09-1970

Telford: Irvine, Harris, Coton, Ray, Croft, Flowers, Hart, Fudge, Owen, Bentley, Jagger. **Sub:** Roberts.

Borough: Crump, Jones, Goodall, Aston, Burckitt, Boot, Smith, Wilkinson, Cutler, Jacques, Allen. **Sub:** Brown.

Borough made the journey to The Buck's Head to play Telford United in a Southern League Premier Division match.

Borough extended their abysmal away record when they slumped to defeat against Telford. The Manor Park side, whose last away win in the league was way back in April 1969 at Yeovil, offered only token resistance. Two players, Dave Goodall and Stan Aston were booked as Nuneaton fought a hectic battle in a bid to stem a constant stream of Telford attacks.

Borough were forced to take a back seat and United could have added to their goal haul. Few players emerged with any credit, and the performance was hardly a confidence booster for the FA Cup trip to Hednesford on Saturday, where the home side have lost only twice in two years.

Borough conceded the initiative from the start. Telford took command inside the first 15 minutes – and stayed on as masters throughout the clash. Telford went at Borough from the kick-off and only for a short period midway through the second half did Nuneaton raise any hopes of breaking the home side's grip. At half-time, Ron Flowers' outfit led 1-0 and Nuneaton were still in with a chance of a second half revival.

But Telford put matters beyond the visitors as they rattled home three more goals. Borough had no punch up front where Tony Jacques fought a lone battle with little support and the home side plugged all of the midfield space. Nuneaton were reduced to a ragged line across their own 18 yard box with Bobby Allen and Jacques waiting patiently, but in vain, up front.

Telford took the lead in the 28th minute. Mickey Fudge was pulled back by Burckitt in the 18 yard box and the ex-Albion player slotted home the spot kick. Two minutes after half-time, a glancing header by Fudge from a Brian Hart pass put the home side two up and twelve minutes later they increased their lead to three.

Full-back Harris moved down the right wing and sent over a cross which big Jack Bentley steered superbly into the net with Fred Crump stranded. Seven minutes from the end, Bentley struck with another header – from another right wing cross by Harris.

The sum total of Borough's goal threat was contained in a few hopeful pot shots in the first half and two chances in the dying seconds. Cutler had a header stopped on the line and Bobby Allen was thwarted by goalkeeper Irvine from close in – but the rest of the night belonged to Telford.

Nuneaton Borough v Bedworth United 21-09-1970

Borough: Crump, Jones, Goodall, Aston, Wilkinson, Boot, Smith, Owen, Jacques, Halford, Mason. **Sub:** Allen.

Bedworth: Crosby, Knox, Heal, Anderson, Busby, Liggins, Starkey, Storer, Eades, Hambridge, Warrington. **Sub:** Sheppard.

Borough welcomed Bedworth United to Manor Park for a Midland Floodlit Cup match.

Ace opportunist Tony Jacques snapped up two goal chances to inflict defeat on Bedworth on their Floodlit Cup debut. Jacques twice punished United keeper John Crosby for second half errors which put paid to any hopes Bedworth had of a morale boosting result. John Mason added a third and Dave Eades hit a late goal for the West Midland Leaguers with only four minutes to go.

But it was Jacques who did the damage – and took his goal tally to ten goals from 13 games this season. He gave Bedworth, who were a far better footballing side than Hednesford, Borough's West Midland League victims in the cup, a lesson in how to snap up chances. Bedworth played open football, particularly in the period just before half-time, but could not convert their attacks into goals.

Ken Anderson and then Eades put the Borough defence under pressure and Bedworth had their best spell of the game just before the break. But the second half belonged to Borough and Jacques notched his first goal in the 55th minute when Crosby did not move to a near post centre from Ray Halford and Jacques side-footed the ball home. Halford, playing his first game for Nuneaton along with Owen, did a dance of delight, while Jacques calmly knelt down to tie up his boots.

Borough's second goal came in the 77th minute when Crosby palmed down a Roger Smith corner and Jacques swept the ball into the back of the net. Crosby missed another cross six minutes later and this time John Mason was on the spot to bang the ball home. Four minutes from the end, Warrington slipped a free-kick to Eades, whose shot went through the Borough defensive wall and tucked itself into the corner of the net.

Nuneaton Borough v Ashford Town 26-09-1970

Borough: Crump, Jones, Aston, Wilkinson, Burckitt, Boot, Smith, R. Allen, Jacques, Cutler, M. Allen. **Sub:** Mason.

Ashford: Dennison, Weston, Hunt, Dodge, Harrop, Sillett, McNally, Gillingwater, Crush, Street, Day. **Sub:** Horton.

Borough welcomed Ashford Town to Manor Park for a Southern League Premier Division game.

Paul Cutler earned Borough a pauper's point with a 23rd minute goal against Ashford on Saturday. Cutler, one of the leading goalscorers in the club's history, has struggled to find his form since he rejoined Nuneaton from Romford. He forced home a chance from a Tony Jacques header – and the goal should have been the signal for Borough to take the Kent side

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apart. It wasn't. Malcolm Allen's men allowed Ashford back into the game and they conceded an 80th minute equaliser to a newly promoted Kent side that still wears its Southern League first division label.



Richard Dennison, the Coventry City assistant secretary, who swapped his comfortable Highfield Road office for the Ashford goalkeeper's jersey, makes one of a series of brave saves. He goes down at Paul Cutler's feet with Tony Jacques waiting for the loose ball.

Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune

Ashford centre-forward Dave Crush reached a right wing cross from substitute Terry Horton and nodded it goalwards. It bounced once before it entered the net as Fred Crump stood and watched, thinking it was going wide. The goal gave Ashford, a mediocre side, a precious away point after a frantic Friday night search for a goalkeeper. Coventry City assistant secretary Richard Dennison, who has played for the Public Schools XI, answered their SOS – and played a major part in their battle for a point.

Against Hednesford in the FA Cup, the players fought every inch of the way to beat the tough West Midland Leaguers. But, against Ashford, they were ragged and limp – unable to stamp any authority on the play. They should have gripped the match by the scruff of the neck. Both points were there for the taking.

But Nuneaton were too complacent, too casual. And, in the dying minutes, they could so easily have lost when Ashford should never have been in with a chance. Borough had enough chances to have sewn up the points in the first half. But they never came to grips with a game that so nearly slipped away.

Nuneaton Borough v Bedford Town 28-09-1970

Borough: Crump, Jones, Aston, Wilkinson, Burckitt, Boot, Smith, M. Allen (Brown), Owen, Jacques, R. Allen.

Borough welcomed Bedford Town to Manor Park for a Southern League Premier Division game.

Borough extended their Southern League stop-go saga when they shrugged off a first-half full of problems to beat Bedford. The game was a mirror of inconsistency – they struggled and sparkled in the space of 90 minutes in one of the most entertaining matches seen at the ground this season.

At half-time Borough were a goal down to an impressive Bedford outfit who had threatened to monopolise the play. The Eagles' sharp, well supported running had put Borough in the shade and they were facing another disappointing setback. But, inside 20 minutes of the second half, they had lifted themselves back into the game, netted two goals and could have had more. It was an inconsistent performance with a happy ending. The whole side improved by a mile after the break – and Tony Jacques netted two goals.

Mancetter Sports winger Terry Owen – on his Southern League debut, turned in one of the best outside right displays since the days of Norman Ashe. His skill, determination and positive approach labelled him as a player to watch. And he proved once more that the Nuneaton area, for so long ignored by the club, is rich in soccer talent. This was underlined in the last half-hour when Bermuda's Derek Brown substituted for injured player-manager Malcolm Allen.

Bedford took the lead in the 29th minute with a goal that stunned Borough with its swiftness and simplicity. Nuneaton piled on a spell of frantic pressure, which started when keeper George Heyes parried a piledriver from Owen. Borough threw players forward as they scented a goal. Suddenly, winger Alan Davies burst out with the ball, ran 40 yards and slipped it to Roger Figg who beat Crump as he came out.

That rocked Nuneaton back on their heels and the Eagles took over. But it was a different story in the second half as Borough hit back with a goal from Tony Jacques in the 48th minute. Hodgkinson, challenged by Malcolm Allen, tried to push the ball back to his goalkeeper.

The pass beat Heyes and Jacques forced the ball in from a few yards out. Nineteen minutes later, Owen performed a scissor kick which Heyes should have held, but he was dispossessed by Jacques who slipped the ball home to make a goal out of nothing.

Jacques could have had two more – he twice went close to a hat-trick – as the game suddenly turned in Borough's favour. But Bedford fought every inch of the way and still managed to give Nuneaton some anxious moments before the final whistle. And the Nuneaton fans were left to wonder – how can a team play so badly against a mediocre side like Ashford and then, 48 hours later, beat a side of Bedford's ability.



I'll Be Back Vows Allen

Malcolm Allen has had his march towards a record breaking 450 appearances cruelly halted by a broken ankle, but has no intention of hanging up his boots. The Borough player-manager said: "I'll be back, don't worry about that. I have no intention of retiring."

Allen, in his early 30s, faces two months in plaster and then a fitness battle before he can think of a comeback. He is unlikely to be able to play again until the New Year.

Nuneaton Borough v Lower Gornal Ath. 01-10-1970

Borough: Crump, Jones, Goodall, Wilkinson, Burckitt, Boot, Smith, Allen, Mason (Aston), Jacques, Billington.

Lower Gornal: Hackett, Rickerby, Fisher, Corbett, Evans, Burns, Vanis, McCready, Taylor, Timmins, Howett. **Sub:** Williams.

Borough welcomed Lower Gornal Athletic to Manor Park for a Birmingham Senior Cup second round tie.

Stan Aston netted his 11th goal in 265 appearances and made sure of Borough's place in the quarter finals of the Birmingham Senior Cup. Centre-half Aston was named as substitute, but went on as a front runner in place of the injured John Mason in the second half. His appearance provided a livener for a drab game that almost died on its feet in front of a meagre 800-plus crowd.

This competition seldom whips up any enthusiasm for the fans and last night was no exception. After Fred Crump had saved what looked a certain goal from Gornal centre-forward Taylor, Tony Jacques shot Borough ahead in the 12th minute. Allen beat two defenders and hit the ball across the penalty area to Jacques, who clipped it home just inside the post.

John Mason was injured half way through the first-half and was replaced by Stan Aston – who was almost immediately involved in a clash with McCready. Both players were lucky not to get booked. Aston's persistence and strength worried the West Midland Leaguers defence and he earned his reward in the 74th minute.

Allen played the ball forward to Jacques who pulled the ball back from the line. Aston banged it home with his right foot to end any hopes Gornal had of a fight-back.

Ashford Town v Nuneaton Borough 03-10-1970

Ashford: Hills, Weston, Bielkus, Dodge, Sillett, Hunt, McNally, Gillingwater, Crush, Street, Horton. **Sub:** Newlyn.

Borough: Crump, Jones, Burckitt, Smith, Aston, Wilkinson, Owen, Boot, Jacques, R. Allen, Brown. **Sub:** Goodall.

Borough made the trip to the Essella Park home of Ashford Town to play a Southern League Premier Division fixture.

Borough survived a last half hour of frantic pressure at Ashford on Saturday to bridge an 18 months gap. They clung

grimly, at times miraculously, on to a 20th minute Stan Aston goal to chalk up their first Southern League away win since March 30, 1969.

Ashford hit the post, the crossbar, had shots scrambled away and saved by Fred Crump, but Borough held out. It was a smash and grab win, but one that should do wonders for the morale of the team. For one-and-a-half years they have been in a rut away from home. Each time the side has trotted out on an opponent's pitch they have had that "here we go again" feeling. The spell has now been broken.

It was a ragged game with only odd flashes of good football and Borough's win lacked flair and imagination. It was more pedestrian than skilful – but the two points more than made up for that. The victory hauled them up to ninth place in the table, their highest spot since the 1968-69 season.

Borough won the match in the first 20 minutes. They forced the Kent side back with some fine attacking soccer and Aston's goal came at the right time. But then they conceded the initiative to Ashford by defending in numbers against Ashford's raids. Only a fighting rearguard action and some incredible misses saved the day as Ashford became more and more desperate in their search for an equaliser.

The visitors were fortunate that the home side's front line punch was poor, almost pathetic. And their build-ups were inferior to Borough's approach work in the first 20 minutes. The standard of play was poor – after the first 20 minutes when Nuneaton looked a class above Peter Sillett's outfit.

After Borough notched their goal the game went downhill. Borough sat back on their lead and then surrendered the initiative to scrape home by the skin of their teeth. Terry Owen and Derek Brown spent more time chasing back to help out than moving forward and Tony Jacques fought a lone battle with little support.

The goal that won the game was a powerful header from Aston from a John Burckitt free-kick – Aston's second vital goal in three days. After that, Bobby Allen had a chance to sew up the game, but fluffed it.

Bedworth United v Nuneaton Borough 05-10-1970

Borough: Crump, Jones, Aston, Goodall, Kavanagh, Boot, Bunce (Smith), Owen, Mason, R. Allen, Punter.

Borough made the journey to The Oval to play Bedworth United in a Midland Floodlit Cup game.

A 56th minute goal from winger Terry Owen steered Borough home and wrote an unhappy ending to Bedworth's night of nostalgia. A 2,000-plus crowd turned up to see Bedworth emerge from the shadows and compete with Borough on equal terms for the first time in twelve years. It was to have been the "shop window" match for their first season of floodlit soccer at the Oval - but it fell flat.

Owen's goal, a 20 yarder with his left foot, was one of the few high spots of a disappointing game which hardly lifted itself

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off the floor. The edge was taken off it in the 13th minute when United full back Bobby Busby made a tragic boob which gave Nuneaton the lead. Busby played to a call from goalkeeper John Crosby – and planted the ball firmly into an empty net with the nearest Borough player at least ten yards away.

After Busby's mistake, Borough were too strong for United and the game became ragged and disjointed. Bedworth matched Nuneaton's approach work, but had nothing up front. The first half was met with an eerie silence by the crowd. Borough were slightly more dangerous than United.

Bedworth's defence recovered from an awful attack of the shakes – spread by the own goal, but could not force their way back into the game. After the break the match followed the same dreary pattern. United had a glimpse of an equaliser when Kavanagh headed off the line from Robinson and then Boot tried two pot shots which whistled wide.

This was followed by Owen's goal. Bobby Allen sent Roger Smith away and Smith pulled the ball back from the line for Owen to bang home. The major threat to the Nuneaton defence came from Bedworth right-winger Stephen Storer, by far the most dangerous player on the field. Storer had the beating of both of the Borough full-backs, but he had no-one up front to help him out. And when he hobbled off, after an Alan Jones tackle in the 75th minute, Bedworth's hopes of a late revival really disappeared.

John Mason Free To Leave

John Mason, who joined Borough in the close season, has been told that he is free to move. Mason, who has played four times and been substitute three times, was on a three months' contract.

Mason said: "I want to stay in the Southern League because I think I am good enough. I am a bit choked about leaving Nuneaton and unhappy about not getting a regular game. I don't feel I have been given much of a chance – but that's how it goes."

Atherstone Town v Nuneaton Borough 12-10-1970

Atherstone: Roberts, Oxford, Golder, Lewis, Preston, Smith, Bent (Schofield), Franklin, Hubbard, Horne, Karacinski.

Borough: Crump, Kavanagh, Wilkinson, Goodall, Burckitt, Boot, Cutler, Owen, Billington, Mason, Punter. **Sub:** Jones.

Borough made the journey to Sheepy Road to play Atherstone in a Camkin Cup first round tie.

A magnificent goal by Brian Punter just before half-time was all that separated the two teams in this game. The referee was looking at his watch when Mickey Boot picked up a loose ball in midfield. The Borough skipper released an inch-perfect pass through the inside left position and Punter turned on it to hit a left foot volley into the corner of the net from the edge of the box.

It was a goal worthy of winning any cup tie, but if the Borough players went to Sheepy Road with any idea that they were in for an easy ride, they were in for a shock. For they were made to fight all the way by an Adders side that shook off the effects of their FA Cup defeat to turn in a fine performance.

Atherstone lost the services of Graham Bent at half-time with a broken ankle and then lost Trevor Hubbard ten minutes later, when he had to go to hospital with blood streaming from his forehead following a clash of heads with Dave Goodall. But despite being reduced to ten men for the last 35 minutes, Atherstone fought like tigers and were always ready to carry the battle to their opponents.

The opening stages were very scrappy with both sides appearing to be over-anxious and not prepared to give anything away at the back. As both sides settled down Atherstone had the Borough defence under pressure and Fred Crump had to make a couple of smart saves from Barry Franklin.

Borough gradually settled down and local boy Terry Owen started to cause the Atherstone defence a lot of trouble. Harry Roberts had to come off his line quickly to save from Billington after a neat move between Boot and Paul Cutler had made the opening.

The Adders opened the second half in determined style looking for the equaliser and Crump made a fine save to keep out a cracking 25 yarder from Hubbard. The game itself was a typical local derby, with neither side expecting or giving an inch. It was a night when defences were on top and when the final whistle came Adders, despite some considerable pressure late in the game, were still trying to find an equaliser.

Bath City v Nuneaton Borough

17-10-1970

Bath: Ferris, Burt, T. Taylor, Petts, Swift, Laycock, J. Allen, Parker, D. Taylor, Robbins, Peters. **Sub:** Faulks.

Borough: Crump, Jones, Aston, Wilkinson, Burckitt, Boot, Smith, Owen, R. Allen, Cutler, Brown. **Sub:** Goodall.

Borough made the journey to Twerton Park to take on Bath City in a Southern League Premier Division game.

With half-an-hour to go and Nuneaton 1-0 down to a penalty, Borough netted an equaliser that demonstrated the impact made on the squad by local talent. Terry Owen, from Atherstone, slung the ball high over the Bath goalmouth; Derek Brown, from Stockingford, returned in into the middle and Bobby Allen, from Camp Hill, nodded it home.

The goal wiped out the sickening blow of the harsh spot kick decision ten minutes earlier and enabled Borough to travel back over the Cotswolds with a point. But it was the defence that provided the backbone of the display with another tremendous rock-hard performance.

The back four threw a barrier of rugged determination across the Borough 18 yard box. And, on the evidence of the past four weeks, Borough's defensive line has tightened into one of the best in the top flight. One goal conceded in the last

six games testifies to that – and that goal was Bath’s hotly contested penalty in the 50th minute. It was awarded against Alan Jones for a challenge on City forward Robbins inches inside the 18 yard box.

After the equaliser both Paul Cutler and Bobby Allen had chances to win the game. Cutler’s was the easiest. He moved on to a pass from Brown only to push the ball too far as City keeper Ferris came off his line to put in a challenge.

Bath had three real chances to win the game. John Allen mis-kicked as he burst on to a pass from player-manager Johnny Petts and there were two scrambles in the Nuneaton six yard box. But Borough were able to shrug these off and at no time were Bath in a position to pressurise the defence into a clear cut created chance.

Nuneaton Borough v Telford United	19-10-1970
<p>Borough: Crump, Jones, Aston, Goodall, Kavanagh, Smith, Boot, Owen, Cutler, Halford (Punter), Billington.</p> <p>Telford: Weir, Grice, Coton, Croft, Calvin, Jagger, Roberts, Harris, Fudge, Bentley, Murray (Owen).</p>	

Borough welcomed Telford United to Manor Park for a Midland Floodlit Cup game.

Borough shrugged off torrential rain to beat Telford and step up their challenge for the Midland Floodlit Cup top spot in a night of near misses. Boosted by a tragic sixth minute boob from Telford stand-in keeper Phil Weir, they collected another 12 points. Despite the conditions, both teams served up some enterprising football and Weir made up for his error with a series of fine saves.

The game had hardly started when the weather played its first cruel trick. Telford defender Paul Coton, challenged by John Halford, lobbed the ball back to his goalkeeper Weir, who caught the greasy ball, but it slipped through his hands and rolled into the net. Telford almost equalised with a similar goal when Dave Goodall, blinded by the rain, tried a back pass which Fred Crump had to push out for a corner.

Telford left-back Peter Calvin went close with a 30 yard drive which dipped under the bar. Crump saw it late and stretched full length to turn it over the top to draw applause from the fans huddled under the stands. The goalmouth incidents continued after the break. A tremendous 35 yarder from Roger Smith led to an equally fine save from Weir and then Cutler thudded a shot against the woodwork.

Despite the near misses, the near 1,500 crowd had to wait until eight minutes from the end for another goal – netted by Cutler. Terry Owen, who had a fine first-half, pushed a precision pass on the blind side of Calvin and Cutler ran in to shoot in off the far post. That goal made sure of Nuneaton’s 11th win in a row – a win that demonstrated the strength in depth of Malcolm Allen’s squad. Gerry Kavanagh, Dave Goodall, Brian Billington and amateur John Halford – all came into the side without any adverse effect.

350 Up For Alan

Borough full-back Alan Jones – scorer of one of the most important goals in the club’s history – is set to make his 350th appearance in the FA Cup game against Stourbridge. The goal that put Jones into the Manor Park record books was the equaliser at Macclesfield during their great cup run of 1966-67. It was his first goal for the club.

Jones is the only player in the present squad who is a product of the club’s now defunct reserve team and youth side. The Birmingham-born defender joined Borough – his only professional club – in August, 1962, and has been virtually an ever-present for the past four seasons.

Nuneaton Borough v Romford 31-10-1970

Borough: Crump, Jones, Aston, Wilkinson, Burckitt, Smith, Boot, Owen, R. Allen, Cutler, Billington. **Sub:** Goodall.

Romford: Smith, Bickles, King, Andrew, Tapping, Obeney, Sorrell, Freeman, Tough, Williams, Sanders. **Sub:** Howe.

Borough welcomed Romford to Manor Park for a Southern League Premier Division encounter.

Mickey Boot, the Borough skipper, who has led his side through their unbeaten run, made sure of game number 14 without defeat when he rapped out an immediate reply to a Romford goal with an immediate equaliser. Both goals were scored between the 74th and 75th minutes and were the highlights of a game which turned out to be a tactical battle which failed to warm the Manor Park terraces. Romford, with four successive away wins behind them, made it obvious that their number one aim was a point.



A rare glimpse of a goal chance in Saturday’s tightly-fought game. Paul Cutler lunges at the ball as Romford centre-half Bob King puts in a challenge. Cutler was off target and his shot flew over the top.

Photo Nuneaton Evening Tribune

They packed the midfield with up to four players – and stifled any hopes Borough had of controlling the game or forcing the pace. At their most adventurous they operated with only three front runners – for much of the time they had a Ramsey type 4-4-2 set-up. Borough were unable to counter this.

Two players who sat and watched had just as much influence

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on the game as the 22 on the park – Borough goal ace Tony Jacques and Romford's top scorer Robin Chandler. Both players failed pre-match fitness tests and the teams missed their aggression and goal touch.

Paul Cutler was ineffective, and is going through a lean spell and Bobby Allen, although showing tremendous skill, lacks the bite to be the club's number one striker. Terry Owen was kept on a tight rein and Brian Billington, despite his hard work, was not as effective as against Hednesford.

Consequently, much of the work had to be carried out by the midfield men and the back four – which did not look as tight as it has been in recent games. It was the type of game that has become commonplace in the fiercely competitive Southern League Premier Division – regimentation has replaced individual flair as points become more precious.

Tamworth v Nuneaton Borough 02-11-1970

Tamworth: Richards, Whitehouse, Ball, Seedhouse, Newton, Jessop, Hall, Morrow, Holmes, K. Smith, Millard.

Borough: Evans, Jones, Goodall, Wilkinson, Kavanagh, Boot, Smith, Punter (Burckitt), Allen, Aston, Billington.

Borough made the journey to Tamworth to play a Midland Floodlit Cup match.

Borough buried their unbeaten record last night – on a ground that has been a graveyard for many of their hopes in the past. Tamworth planted a full stop on their 14 match run without defeat in a fast moving, hard fought preview for Saturday's FA Cup clash between the two teams. The hard running West Midland League leaders were helped by two first half mistakes from Borough's young goalkeeper Keith Evans and a glaring second half miss by Brian Punter.

But Tamworth fully deserved their win in an entertaining battle between the two hottest rivals on the local scene. Both teams went in hard – but fair. And John Burckitt was unfortunate to be booked for tripping Tommy Morrow, only a few minutes after he had substituted for Punter.

Goalkeeper Evans, who plays in the Midland Combination, had a nightmare start. After two minutes he failed to stop a shot from Graham Jessop which was no harder than a back pass, and the ball rolled into the net. Stan Aston, up front in the number nine shirt, levelled the scores when he powered a shot just inside the post after Mickey Boot and Bobby Allen had engineered the opening.

But five minutes before half-time, Tommy Morrow, one of the smallest men on the field, beat Evans in the air to an Ian Hall free kick to restore Tamworth's lead. Evans, a powerful six-foot plus goalkeeper, looked dejected after his mistakes, but he went on to make a number of confident saves – enough to deserve at least another chance.

The West Midland Leaguers increased their lead in the 71st minute when Ray Holmes notched the best goal of the night – a perfectly hit shot on the turn which gave Evans no chance.

Morrow pushed the ball down the line to Millard. He drove the ball hard across the middle, Roger Smith failed to cut it out, and Holmes was there to pounce.

The penalty that rounded off the action came when Alan Jones got in the way of a scorcher of a free kick from Ray Holmes – and was adjudged to have handled. Keith Smith stepped up and coolly stroked the ball past Evans to add another point to Tamworth's tally and put them in an impressive position in the Floodlit Cup.

Nuneaton Borough v Barnet

14-11-1970

Borough: Crump, Jones, Aston, Wilkinson, Kavanagh, Boot, Smith, Cutler, R. Allen, Jacques, Billington. **Sub:** Goodall.

Barnet: McClelland, Lye, Jenkins, Ward, Embery, King, Powell, Ferry, George, Cray, Adams. **Sub:** Foster.

Borough welcomed Barnet to Manor Park for a Southern League Premier Division game.

Borough shook off nearly an hour of torment on Saturday to give their supporters 30 minutes of hope. Not until the closing stages – after Paul Cutler had equalised an early Lou Adams goal – did they discover team-work and determination in their play. Borough were dismal as Barnet dominated two thirds of the game – for long periods they were made to look strugglers by the sharp, impressive Londoners.

During the first half they were out-fought by a slick, hard running Barnet side and in danger of being over-run. It was one of their worst first-half struggles of the season. But their after the break improvement just about merited a point. There was nothing new in their struggles. The same old problems were there in midfield and in the forward line.

For weeks now the side has cried out for an experienced player who can win the ball in the middle of the park and prevent their opponents from dominating this vital department. And Tony Jacques needs a great deal more help in his often lonely battle up front. Borough's midfield also needs some more depth. Mickey Boot and Roger Smith are both skilful players on the ball, but the ball has to be won before it can be used. And Nuneaton are just not winning it.

Barnet decided to make sure of their point 20 minutes from time, when manager Tommy Coleman sent on experienced utility player, Tony Foster, in place of youngster Terry Carr. Red haired Carr, still in his teens, had been a menace to Borough's defence down Barnet's right flank. He gave Gerry Kavanagh, a full-back who improved along with the rest of his team mates in the last 20 minutes, a testing time.

Until the last half hour, when Nuneaton at last tried to shake off Barnet and move forward, the defenders had been the busiest players in the Royal Blue line-up. Borough have had to thank their rugged back four, and goalkeeper Fred Crump, many times already this season. They are the work horses of the side when the work-rate, effort and determination should be shared out more evenly. But they meet the challenge well.

And that's one reason why Borough have a chance against Tamworth tonight – they struggle a lot, but they rarely give anything away.

Len Harris Joins Borough



Lenny Harris has signed for Nuneaton Borough – four years after he left the club to join First Division Nottingham Forest. He will make his debut against Poole. Harris, who made two First Division appearances for Forest at full-back, has switched to a midfield role – the position he is expected to occupy at Manor Park.

Harris, who lives in Stockingford, made his name as a tough-tackling full-back. But he has been a regular in the Forest Central League side as a link-man.

range after successive headers from Tony Jacques and Stan Aston following a Roger Smith corner. New signing Lennie Harris made an impressive return to the club he played for four years ago before his move to Nottingham Forest. His presence in midfield allowed Roger Smith to take over the number seven shirt and added much-needed effort and skill to the front line department.

Players always need time to settle into a new team, but Harris showed a lot of his aggression and skill in his important middle of the park role. He is similar in style to Mickey Boot and these two could strike up a strong midfield partnership. Smith, meanwhile, freed from the heavier burden of midfield play, was able to play in the position where he made most of his Football League appearances for Walsall and Port Vale. He is the kind of player who likes freedom to roam – unhampered by the discipline of a specialist position. And he helped to balance up the front line.

Paul Cutler, on the other flank, also added more bite to his play after a string of feeble performances, although he did not maintain the improvement throughout the 90 minutes. Soldier John Halford, making his Southern League debut alongside Tony Jacques up front, still lacks the speed and sharpness that regular Premier Division soccer demands. But he has the tenacity and courage to take some of the physical burden off the shoulders of Jacques when he has had more match practice at this level. He was only inches away from a winning goal when he hit the foot of the post in the closing stages of the match. Despite a late rally from Poole, when the Nuneaton defence twice had narrow escapes, Borough's second half improvement gave them a point they deserved.

Poole Town v Nuneaton Borough 21-11-1970

Poole Town: Buck, Brewster, Ryden, White, Thornhill, Ferns, Taylor, Hodgson, Down, J. Brown, Keeley. **Sub:** Pring.

Borough: Crump, Jones, Goodall, Aston, Kavanagh, Harris, Boot, Smith, Halford, Jacques, Cutler. **Sub:** D. Brown.

Lockheed v Nuneaton Borough 24-11-1970

Lockheed: Lightfoot, Davies, Vale, Shrimpton, Pyle, Taylor, Whitehead, Nail, Matthews, Fawell, Brady. **Sub:** Flannagan.

Borough: Edwards, Jones, Goodall, Aston, Kavanagh, Harris, Boot, Punter, Cutler, Jacques, Dearden. **Sub:** Brown.

Borough made the journey to Dorset to play Poole Town in a Southern League Premier Division game.

Borough, issued with pre-match "Forget Tamworth" order from the player-manager, staged a point saving second-half performance. Before half-time they played like a team haunted by the memory of their shattering FA Cup defeat. They could easily have been three goals down at the interval after a limp display on the wide open spaces of a near deserted stadium.

Instead they changed ends only one goal in arrears - a 40th minute effort from Poole striker Ken Hodgson who cashed in on untidy defensive work. And in the second half they made their 275 mile round trip worthwhile. They developed their play, stepped up their effort and forced an equaliser.

Dave Goodall scored the goal. He made sure from close

Borough made the journey to the Windmill Ground to play Lockheed in a Midland Floodlit Cup match.

Borough needed a win or a draw to stay in close contact with the pacesetters, but a John Brady goal in the 58th minute settled the match. In the dying minutes, Tony Jacques missed a glorious chance of an equaliser. Mickey Boot hit the crossbar with a left foot drive four minutes from the end and the ball rebounded to Jacques, who blasted the ball over the top from point-blank range. Much of the play centred around the midfield area and goal chances were few and far between for both teams.

Lockheed created four real openings and Nuneaton had only two real goal glimpses during the game – the one Jacques missed and a shot from amateur winger Phil Deardon which was saved by Brakes' keeper Chris Lightfoot. Deardon had a good second half and goalkeeper Reg Edwards, also making his first appearance, turned in a useful performance.



The play swung freely between the two 18 yard boxes, but foundered against two tight-tackling and solid defences, which allowed the front runners little scope. And in the end Brady's goal split the two teams and sent Nuneaton toppling in only their third defeat in 20 games. Brady notched the winner with a near-post header from a corner. Edwards managed to get a hand to the ball as it flew into the roof of the net.

After Brady's goal, Borough evened up the play, but could not press home their advantage. Deardon's shot was pushed around the post by Lightfoot and Cutler should have made better use with a header from a Punter corner. But Nuneaton's lack of aggression and punch up front proved their downfall. And Jacques' last gasp miss underlined their problems.

Jacques again had a lot to do on his own and while Nuneaton have a strong defence and fewer problems in midfield, they need more balance and bite up front.

Sam Down Joins The Borough Board

Mr Sam Downs, a former vice-chairman of Nuneaton Borough Football Club, has rejoined the Manor Park board. And the signs are that further additions to the board could be announced in the near future.

Mr Downs, managing director of S. J. Sharp Ltd., Nuneaton, resigned from the Borough board in 1965. Since then he has been closely connected with Derby County and is their scout in the Midlands – and he will help Borough player-manager Malcolm Allen on scouting missions.

Rugby Town v Nuneaton Borough 26-11-1970

Rugby: Jones, Cassidy, Knox, Griffiths, Thomas, Svenson, Hopkin, Vest, Keeley, Kelcher, Armstrong. **Sub:** Ward.

Borough: Crump, Jones, Aston, Goodall, Kavanagh, Boot, Harris, Allen, Cutler, Jacques, Punter. **Sub:** Owen.

Borough travelled to Oakfield to play Rugby Town in the third round of the Birmingham Senior Cup.

Peter Svenson, one-time Banbury team-mate of Borough top scorer Tony Jacques, ended Nuneaton's Birmingham Senior Cup hopes last night. He pulled a cloak of gloom over their bid for a semi-final place with a 32nd minute goal at fog shrouded Oakfield. And he stole the goal limelight from a player who once added the finishing touches to his shrewd midfield play when they were together at Banbury.

For while Svenson became Rugby's hero, Jacques struggled. The Borough striker missed three excellent chances – openings he has gobbled up in the past. And when Jacques starts tossing away chances, then Borough are in trouble – for the number nine has borne the brunt of the goal burden on his own so far. But Borough's all-round lack of bite up front let them down. They desperately need more power in the front line. Few chances are being created and the front runners

are too easily snuffed out. Throughout last night's game they were never positive enough to trouble Rugby.

Rugby's 4-3-3 system gave them a spare man in midfield against Mickey Boot and Len Harris. Consequently, these two were unable to take a grip on the game and hold it. Before the interval the Oakfield side were well on top, although their goal was hotly disputed by Nuneaton it was justified on the run of the play.

The referee ignored a linesman's flag for offside as Svenson scored. He was given the chance when an attempted Stan Aston clearance hit Boot and went to him. Barry Kelcher had sparked off the danger with a header across the goalmouth from a right-wing cross. Stan Aston, in his last game before a suspension, was a commanding figure at the back for Nuneaton and Mickey Boot worked hard in a bid to raise his side from midfield. Boot had four powerful efforts at goal – half of Borough's goalward efforts in the whole of the game.

But for the greater part of the match, Rugby's defence dealt comfortably with the Nuneaton attack. Griffiths and Knox were sound in the back four and Clive Hopkin covered a lot of ground as the spare man. On chances, Borough could have won – even from the few that fell their way – but they have too many problems up front for comfort.

Romford v Nuneaton Borough 05-12-1970

Romford: Smith, Obeney, Tapping, Smorrell, King, Andrews, Sanders, Freeman, Chandler, Tough, Williams. **Sub:** Lowe.

Borough: Crump, Harris, Goodall, Jones, Kavanagh, Smith, Boot, Punter, Halford, Jacques, Cutler. **Sub:** Owen.

Borough travelled to Brooklands to play Romford in a Southern League Premier Division match.

Makeshift Borough surrendered their seven-match unbeaten Southern League tag in a few muddled seconds. With slightly more than 20 minutes to go one "goal" was prevented and another given away as Romford clinched the points. And one of the men who played a big part in the Essex side's winner was Tony Jacques – scorer of nearly 70 per cent of Nuneaton's goals this season.

The game was heading for a goalless draw when a long clearance and a lucky rebound let in Peter Tough, the player Romford signed from King's Lynn. He raced clear and was brought down by a desperate "professional" foul from behind by Alan Jones with only Fred Crump between him and the net. Then the free-kick – from 25 yards – was touched square by Harry Obeney to Terry Tapping who drove it goalwards. As he shot Tony Jacques moved in the Borough wall. He made a space and the ball just clipped his heel and flew just inside a post past the helpless Fred Crump.

It was a complicated goal which settled a generally untidy game – but if anyone deserved the glory it was Tapping. The Romford left-back did most things worth mentioning. He had yards of space down the line and cashed in with a man of



the match display. Tapping had nearly all of the worthwhile shots while the two sets of forwards struggled in the sticky conditions. Romford's forwards struggled because they were held by a grimly determined Borough back four. Borough were poor up front because that's where their problems were and have been for much of this season.

Malcolm Allen was forced into fielding a side without key defenders Stan Aston and Ernie Wilkinson. And he had to gamble on Alan Jones in the vital centre-half shirt. But Jones, one of the Manor Park club's most loyal servants, rose to the challenge. He gave an extremely capable display in a tight back four and came through his ordeal with flying colours. Len Harris also took part in the reshuffle. He was moved from midfield to right back – but there was little risk in that move. Nottingham Forest played him at number two in the First Division and he showed why with a sparkling display, despite the fact that he was booked for a tackle on winger Charlie Williams.

Borough need more power through the middle – and more flair on the flanks. It's like building a house with solid foundations and forgetting to put on a roof. And they need it quickly. Their record is not so bad, despite the fact that they are in the wrong half of the Premier Division table.

Nuneaton Borough v Weymouth 07-12-1970

Borough: Crump, Harris, Jones, Goodall, Kavanagh, Boot, Smith, Punter, Halford, Jacques, Billington. **Sub:** Allen.

Weymouth: Clarke, Rounseville, Miller, Hobson, Glover, Kearns, Bumstead, Barry, Bennett, Townsend, Allen. **Sub:** Adams.

Borough welcomed Weymouth to Manor Park for a Southern League Cup third round tie.

Tony Jacques became one of the top goalscorers in Nuneaton Borough's history when he took his tally to 90 with a glancing header from a Len Harris free-kick. Weymouth snatched a deserved equaliser when Gary Townsend forced the ball home in a goalmouth tangle following a right wing free-kick. And Borough now face a near 350 mile round trip replay against a Weymouth side that has only been beaten once at home this season.

But Borough should have wrapped up the tie in the first half when they had three chances and missed them all. Two fell to soldier John Halford – and one of them earned him the miss of the season tag when he shot wide when it was easier to score. That was in the 22nd minute. Brian Punter sent over a cross and Jacques headed it on to the bar. It rebounded to Halford in the six yard box, but somehow he screwed it wide.

Weymouth, who have emerged from their worst start for a long time, deserved a draw. They were technically superior to Nuneaton – more compact and solid and better balanced. Borough showed glimpses of promise but, once again, they demonstrated their lack of firepower up front. And this wiped out all of their good work at the back.

Defensively, despite their reshuffled back four, they are as

tight as any team in the premier division. Weymouth crept into the game after the first half hour – following Borough's misses and a superb save by Fred Crump. He stopped a point blank range header from hard-working Dave Bennett, after Nuneaton had failed to cut out a free-kick.

Halford was replaced at half-time by substitute Bobby Allen, but this move failed to have the desired effect. Weymouth always had enough men on hand to smother Nuneaton in the 18 yard box and outnumber them in the middle of the park. Borough's build-ups were too cumbersome. They allowed the Dorset team time to cover and it was only in the dying stages that the Manor Park side really tried to force the game.

Len Harris turned in another sparkling display at right-back and Alan Jones was solid in the heart of the defence. But Weymouth, with newcomers Ralph Miller and Tony Hobson, always in command of their back four equalled everything Nuneaton could do. And Borough now face a tremendous task in the replay at the Rec – and will need to show a tremendous improvement.

Letter To The Editor: Put The Side First

Last week a gentleman wrote about why we should support the Borough. As one of those supporters who chooses his matches, I would like to reply on behalf of many of the missing thousands of "misguided" supporters.

The Floodlit Cup is a waste of time. It is used by the vast majority of clubs as a trying ground for new prospects and at 4s. a time I have no intention of paying to watch a glorified training session, and it is clear neither are the vast majority. Are we all wrong?

Again we are humbled by "inferior opposition" or should I say supposed inferior opposition. Tamworth, Rugby, Lockheed, take your pick, this season, last season, and so on. We as a town are capable of providing the largest "gate" outside of league football, given a team worthy of the support. But, as in seasons past, the present team is sadly lacking, and unless new blood is quickly found, will NOT finish over the halfway mark in the league.

Is it not ludicrous we field so many amateurs, with due respect they may be good prospects, surely a reserve team is what is required as the present system has left players weeks without a game, then they are expected to come in and play well. Look at Mason now he has regular football!

Better players have been allowed to leave than have been retained and obtained, and oh for a half back of the calibre of Hall (Tamworth), but of course he is with an inferior team. I remember seeing the great era – Swansea and Rotherham – from under the canal side stand, it rained and snowed – water dripping along lengths of the stand because of broken guttering, four years later it's still the same.

I'm afraid many of us have no confidence in Mr Bull and the directors. If the directors are incapable of providing a reasonable team and sound management they should get

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out and make room for people who really care about the club and supporters.

It's all very well having your photograph and statements in the newspapers when things are going well, but how different when times change. Today with good leadership we should be in the position of Hereford or even Cambridge United. As it is we are still on the scrap heap.

Give Malcolm Allen the chance he deserves and speculate, get the supporters back, they will then purchase your weekly tickets but put the side first. It's this the public want to see first and foremost. One final question to chairman and directors, "Would you run your own businesses in the way you are running Nuneaton Borough FC?" All talk about the Borough's undefeated run but Monday night against Weymouth was the 12th game without a win.

K. A. Jukes, 211 Church Road, Nuneaton

Cambridge City v Nuneaton Borough 12-12-1970

Cambridge: Peacock, W. Way, Keenan, Elliott, Baker, Smith, Griffin, P. Way, Hunter, Marshall, Hyde. **Sub:** Stevens.

Borough: Edwards, Harris, Kavanagh, R. Smith, Jones, Goodall, Owen, Punter, Jacques, Boot, Billington. **Sub:** Cutler.

Borough travelled to Milton Road to take on Cambridge City in a Southern League Premier Division game.

Nuneaton turned in their best display for some weeks at Cambridge on Saturday, but they still had to be content with one point. They were undoubtedly the better side, especially in the second half, and should have been the first team to win at Milton Road this season. The reason they didn't was a mixture of bad luck, missed chances, and a diabolical referee's decision.

Borough should have been in front at the interval, but Jacques and Punter both failed to take advantage of clear-cut openings and Cambridge made them pay dearly for their misses. The second half was only four minutes old and they were in deep trouble – two goals down.

Cambridge opened the scoring just two minutes after the break from a hotly-disputed penalty award against Dave Goodall. Hyde appeared to run into Goodall – and the referee's decision for the winger's outrageous dive brought a string of protests from the Manor Park side. The referee refused to consult the linesman who was perfectly positioned to see the incident and Marshall made no mistake from the spot.

Borough went two goals down only two minutes later when Phillip Way scored after Marshall had headed a high cross down to him. This was brought about by slack marking in the Borough defence – the only time that the Cambridge forwards really opened them up.

Two goals down away from home presented a tremendous task, but with Mickey Boot having a fine game in midfield, Borough took command and gave the home defence all sorts

of problems. They put Cambridge under severe pressure, but although they went close on several occasions the home defence remained calm. Then, just when it was beginning to look as though they would never get the ball into the net, they levelled matters inside two minutes.

With 65 minutes gone Smith and Jacques combined well to set up a chance for Boot to reduce the arrears and then Goodall headed a great goal from a Punter corner. The last 20 minutes were all Borough and they were desperately unlucky not to snatch the winner they so richly deserved.

Reg Edwards had a fine game on his Southern League debut and looks to be a good find. He produced a couple of first-class saves and his handling was excellent. Malcolm Allen must be pondering on the missed chances, but he must have been impressed by the general performance.

Weymouth v Nuneaton Borough

16-12-1970

Borough: Edwards, Harris, Kavanagh, Goodall, Wilkinson, Jones, Owen, Punter, Jacques, Boot, Smith. **Sub:** Billington.

Borough made the journey to Weymouth to play a Southern League Cup third round replay.

Borough crashed out of the Southern League Cup and added another game to the blackest run in their history. They have now gone 14 matches without a win, their worst spell since 1948 when they failed to pull off a victory in a ten game period. Eight of their last 14 games have ended in draws, but their hopes of a place in the quarter-finals exploded as Weymouth roared into a three goal lead inside 25 minutes.

The rampant Terras, looking sharp and confident, were in a goal-hungry mood and tore luckless Borough to pieces. The visitors floundered helplessly as the Dorset side sealed the victory in the first half-hour and made the remainder of the match a formality. Weymouth's star was again centre-forward Trevor Allen, who destroyed the confidence of the Borough defence and gave Ernie Wilkinson a nightmare return to the side after his 28 days ban.

And poor Reg Edwards, again in goal for Nuneaton, had everyone's sympathy as he toiled gallantly – but vainly – to keep Weymouth out. Edwards had no chance in the 10th minute when Allen soared above the Nuneaton defence, outjumping the keeper and Wilkinson to nod home a centre from Townend. The next goal was a gift from Nuneaton full-back Len Harris. He handled a high centre in the box and Allen netted from the spot kick.

Mickey Boot hit the Weymouth crossbar from just outside the 18 yard box to give Borough a glimpse of a goal. But Weymouth could not be stopped. In the 25th minute, Ray Bumstead shook off a challenge and set up a chance for Bennett who snapped up Weymouth's third goal.

Edwards made a number of fine clearances as Weymouth kept up the pressure, but he was hopelessly beaten just after half-time with a sizzling long range drive from Bumstead,

who thundered a shot into the roof of the net from all of 30 yards. Near the end, Allen almost brought the house down with another of his own particular brand of goals. McCarthy sent over a corner and Allen ran about three yards and leapt above the Borough defence to score with another header.

Wilkinson must have been glad when the whistle went for the end. He had been given the run around by the irrepressible Allen. Meanwhile Borough had been virtually deprived of the services of centre-forward Jacques, who was marked right out of the game by Weymouth skipper Tony Hobson.

Nuneaton Borough v Telford United 19-12-1970

Borough: Edwards, Jones, Kavanagh, Harris, Wilkinson, Goodall, T. Owen, Smith, Jacques, Cutler, Billington. **Sub:** Punter.

Telford: Weir, Harris, Croft, Ray, Coton, Carr, Fudge, J. Owen, Bentley, Hart, Jagger. **Flowers.**

Borough welcomed Telford United to Manor Park for a Southern League Premier Division encounter.

Ugly scenes greeted the end of another 90 minutes of bitter disappointment for Borough. The crowd's frustration overflowed into anger and hatred and Leicestershire referee Mr J. H. Smith was knocked to the ground as he forced his way to the dressing rooms. And the club could find itself in deep trouble when Mr Smith's report reaches the FA. Borough could be fined, ordered to post warning notices – or both. And in the past grounds have been closed for a time after similar flare ups.

The incidents followed the worst display of the season – and some shocking decisions by Mr Smith, who refereed the Nuneaton-Tamworth FA Cup ties. He turned a blind eye to three penalty appeals from Nuneaton, two of them blatant offences, and he came up with a string of amazing decisions. In the first half Brian Billington was flattened by Alan Harris in the box. Mr Smith gave an indirect free-kick. Midway through the second half Tony Jacques sprawled to the turf as he tried to force his way between Harris and Paul Coton. Mr Smith waved play on.

And, with a few minutes to go, a Telford defender threw up an arm and clearly handled a free-kick from Jacques. Again Mr Smith took no notice. He booked Telford defender Johnny Ray for punching Billington and lectured Roger Smith and Mickey Fudge after a clash on the canal side touchline.

But he never had a grip on an untidy, needle-filled clash which was riddled with stoppages and contained nothing in the way of entertainment value. If the standard of refereeing was bad, so was the soccer – almost rock bottom at times. It was so bad that neither side deserved to win.

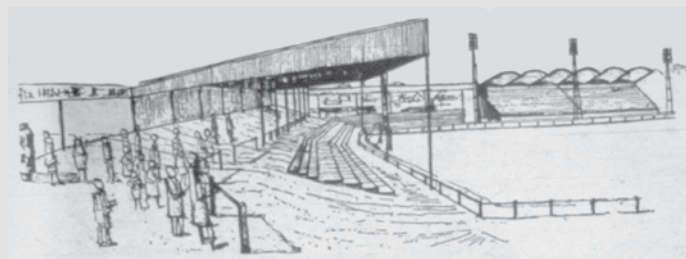
Borough played like a team that has transformed one of the longest runs without defeat in the club's history into a 15 game spell without a win. And Telford were no better – it was one big yawn from start to finish. Borough had players like Roger Smith and Gerry Kavanagh, but the game as a whole lacked sparkle. Both teams were so weak up front that

they managed only a handful of worthwhile efforts at goal between them during the whole of the 90 minutes.

Telford clinched the points when Fudge steered the ball home after goalkeeper Reg Edwards had pushed out a left foot shot from Jack Bentley. And Johnny Ray confirmed Borough's unhappiness when he rounded off a four man move that had knifed through the Nuneaton defence as if it did not exist.

Manor Park Dream That Didn't Come True

A cloak of gloom has descended over Nuneaton Borough Football Club - for the second Christmas running. Gates are falling, the team is struggling – the fans are fed up. They have clung too long to promises. Promises like the £150,000 redevelopment plans for Manor Park which would have made the ground the finest outside the Football League. These plans were announced on Thursday, January 18, 1968. Nothing has happened.



An artist's impression of a dream which did not come true. This was part of the £150,000 redevelopment plan for Manor Park which was announced in January, 1968, and has since been gathering dust.

Promises of a better team, better facilities and a place for Nuneaton in the top flight of non league soccer have not been fulfilled. The only promise left is of another struggle for Premier Division status and a tremendous fight to win back the fans. Borough cannot go on living on the memory of Rotherham and Swansea. That was four seasons ago and the Southern League runners-up flag that flies over the ground has weathered with age.

Last Saturday's defeat at home to Telford in front of only 1,300 fans was yet another landmark in the ebb of Nuneaton's fortunes. Afterwards, the once busy vice-presidents' bar under the main stand was almost deserted. And the atmosphere of failure was punctuated only by the intermittent roars of laughter from the boardroom.

But it's not funny any more – it never was. And now is the time for action, before it is too late. The club must lift itself off the floor, out of the doldrums, and move forward. Since 1967 things have got worse. Non-League soccer is ready to move forward into the next decade with a Football Alliance, a Midland Premier League and a regionalised Southern League – with or without Nuneaton Borough. They are a club that has stood still and the grass is beginning to grow under their feet.

People are sick and tired of hearing about the club's potential and what it could do. They don't want ifs and buts, they want

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positive action, something tangible on which to pin their hopes. No-one expects the club to win everything. Success doesn't grow on trees, it has to be worked hard for.

Nuneaton CAN command the top gates outside the Football League, CAN be pace-setters in the non-league scene and SHOULD be doing a lot better than they are. And the action must come from the top – from the chairman of the board. Mention the name of a successful club and I'll give you the name of a dynamic chairman, backed up by a hard-working board. But the Borough club lacks drive, direction and positive action. In 1967 the call went out: "We are aiming for the Football League."

Then everyone sat down and waited for it to happen – it didn't. Malcolm Allen cannot be blamed. He has been in charge of the club for just a few short months and he inherited a set-up steeped in strife. All managers, big and small, are as good as the backing they get from the board, the help, co-operation and guidance they need in what can be the cruellest of sports.

Borough have had hard-working directors in the past. Men like Mr George Greenfield and Mr George Coe who left last season. They still have people who can help to steer the club out of trouble – like vice-chairman Mr Alf Scattergood, Mr Sam Downs and newcomer Mr Joe Lloyd. How long will it be before these, too, become disillusioned and decide to call it a day. But a soccer club is bigger than people. It embraces a whole town – and Nuneaton has been soccer mad for years.

In this town football is a religion, few places can match it when they have something there to support. And it can be done. Just a short bus ride from Manor Park, Bedworth United have worked a little soccer miracle. Once a joke among local fans, Bedworth have come back and are now one of the most respected clubs in the Midlands.

That club now has soul, character and a successful foundation built by people who care – and if Bedworth can do it, surely Nuneaton can.

King's Lynn v Nuneaton Borough 26-12-1970

King's Lynn: Steel, Ricketts, Radcliffe, Brooks, Brown, Porter, Jones, Oliver, Rudd, Wright, Clarke. Sub: Davies.

Borough: Crump, Jones, Kavanagh, Harris, Wilkinson, Goodall, Allen, Cutler, Jacques, Boot, Smith. Sub: Billington.

Borough travelled to The Walks to play King's Lynn in a Boxing Day Southern League Premier Division fixture.

Tony Jacques earned his Christmas bonus with two fine goals at King's Lynn, which gave Nuneaton their first win in 16 matches. He was watched closely by Lynn's new player-manager Laurie Brown, but once in each half kept his feet while Lynn slipped in the snow to score the winning goals which move Borough three places up the league table.

There were doubts whether the game would be played, with an inch of snow on top of icy patches, but once the teams

settled down, both sides played some good football. Not surprisingly there were many goalmouth scrambles as both defences struggled to find secure footholds.

Relegation threatened Lynn, who had most of the play, were kept out by Nuneaton's second hero – Fred Crump. He pulled off a series of quick reaction saves from close range shots, while his handling of the ball in the air was remarkably sure. The main threat to Nuneaton's defence was from ex-Spurs and Welsh international winger Cliff Jones, who showed exceptional control in the difficult conditions. But he lacked someone like Jacques to finish off his good work.

Borough were under heavy pressure early on, but quick thinking by Smith nearly gave them the lead in the 16th minute. Lynn keeper Gary Steel slipped as he took a goal kick and the ball went straight to Smith 25 yards out. His speculative first-time shot went narrowly wide. From another Lynn goal kick in the 39th minute, Nuneaton took the lead. Steel's kick had more power this time, but the ball was sent straight back into his area where Jacques evaded Brown's tackle and carefully placed his shot under the goalkeeper.

Just after the interval Len Harris had a 20 yard shot turned around the post by Steel and then the keeper flung himself across goal to keep out Cutler's shot. Crump was equally agile at the other end as Lynn pushed up in a bid for an equaliser. This left defensive gaps for Nuneaton to probe and a quick raid on the wing led to the decisive goal in the 82nd minute.

Jacques ran on to Smith's pass and skilfully beat Brown and Steel before shooting into an empty net. Crump had a slice of luck in the closing hectic minutes when Keith Rudd shot against the post and Jones had a header tipped on to the bar by the Borough goalkeeper.

Nuneaton Borough v King's Lynn 28-12-1970

Borough: Crump, Jones, Wilkinson, Goodall, Kavanagh, Harris, Boot, Smith, R. Allen, Jacques, Billington. Sub: Cutler.

King's Lynn: Steel, Ricketts, Porter, Robinson, Radcliffe, Brooks, Oliver, Wright, Jones, Rudd, Clarke. Sub: Bloxham.

Borough welcomed King's Lynn to Manor Park for a Southern League Premier Division game.

Manor Park, once a throbbing nerve centre of non-league soccer, became a "ghost" ground last night as Borough slumped again. Barely 1,000 fans turned up to see them chase a Christmas double over struggling King's Lynn – and only a handful of fans stayed until the end.

Manor Park almost deserted at the end of a Southern League match is one of the saddest sights in non-league soccer. But it is a legacy that Borough must carry into the New Year after one of the worst twelve months in their history – a year of almost continual struggle. Their performance against a King's Lynn side that has been at the bottom of the table since this season started, reached another low. They were outshone by a side that has been a chopping block for most Southern

Nuneaton Borough 1970-1979 – Part 1



League sides this season. They had won only four times and were without a win away from home – until last night.

The Linnets, beaten 2-0 by Borough in Norfolk on Saturday, packed more skill, fight and determination into their play to brush aside Nuneaton's inept challenge. It could have been all over at half-time after Lynn had dominated the game. Poor finishing and desperate rearguard action from Nuneaton prevented them from taking at least a two goal half-time lead.

Borough improved slightly in the early stages of the second half, but when Lynn netted in the 64th minute it was all over. Their performance made a mockery of Saturday's 2-0 win and left grave doubts about Nuneaton's ability to shake off the prospects of another relegation struggle.

Lynn went ahead 17 minutes into the second half when Dave Clarke netted with a close range header after full-back Radcliffe had floated a free-kick towards the far post. The goal was the Linnets' first in three Southern League games.

Hope of a fightback faded as Borough continued with their pathetic fumblying up front and in the middle of the park. And Lynn settled the game in the 88th minute when ex-Welsh international star Cliff Jones drove a shot home after Dave Brookes had thundered an effort against the crossbar.

Almost on time, Tony Jacques netted a consolation goal when he slid home a Cutler pass as keeper Steel came out to challenge. Barely a sound greeted the goal at the end of another night of bitter disappointment for the diehards.



Centre-forward Tony Jacques, who earned himself a hat-trick against King's Lynn with three goals in the two games, puts in a challenge on Lynn keeper Steel during the first half. Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune

Nuneaton Borough v Dartford

02-01-1971

Borough: Crump, Jones, Wilkinson, Goodall, Kavanagh, Burckitt, Boot, Smith, Aston, Jacques, Cutler. **Sub:** Allen.

Dartford: Hawke, Read, Richardson, Judge, Burns, Morgan, Ripley, Payne, Mitchell, Stevens, Cheesewright. **Sub:** Stepney.

Borough welcomed Dartford to Manor Park for a Southern League Premier Division game.

A stanchion, supporting the net at the Cock and Bear end, became the centre piece of a "phantom goal" sensation on Saturday. And Dartford claimed that it cost them an away win

against still struggling Borough. In the 30th minute, with the scoreline still blank, a tremendous volley from Dartford's Alan Payne was on its way into the top corner of the net. The ball suddenly rebounded across the goalmouth – straight into the arms of an astonished Fred Crump.

"It was a goal," said Payne. "The ball hit the top and bottom of the stanchion and came out. Some of the Nuneaton players said it was in. It was definitely a goal."

Referee Mr A. Appleby waved aside Payne's protests. He had to make a split second decision and decided that the ball had struck the woodwork. But Dartford manager Ernie Morgan was adamant that his team had been robbed of a vital breakthrough.

While the Dartford players fumed about the goal that got away, Borough contemplated yet another unhappy afternoon. Tony Jacques raised their hopes with his 42nd minute goal, made by Dave Goodall after a slip by Darts' keeper Terry Hawke. But Payne's equaliser, a brave goal only four minutes into the second half, put Nuneaton back at square one.

Just before this goal Alan Jones and Darts' winger John Cheesewright were booked – Cheesewright for fouling Roger Smith and Jones for interfering. The hard playing surface, with just enough give to make the players slips and slide, contributed to a stoppage riddled match.

Stan Aston, back after suspension, played up front for Borough in a bid to take some of the load off Jacques. He did well and for once the centre-forward did not have to go it alone. But Borough's major problem was in midfield – again. Dartford strung three across the middle of the park. Nuneaton had two – Mickey Boot and John Burckitt, back after a long lay-off with a groin injury.



Borough goalkeeper Fred Crump goes down full length to save a fierce drive from Dartford forward John Ripley in the first half of Saturday's game at Manor Park. Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune

Throughout the match Nuneaton were outnumbered in midfield and often outplayed by the Dartford trio which included man of the match Peter Morgan, who was well supported by John Stevens and Alan Payne. And, up front, Dartford had a brave and intelligent striker in John Mitchell.

Borough had to rely on the old guard. The fighting spirit of Dave Goodall and the determination of Alan Jones, Ernie Wilkinson and Gerry Kavanagh.



The freezing cold weather didn't deter these Borough fans from turning up at Manor Park on Saturday to cheer on their team. Despite their enthusiasm the Borough could only draw with visiting team, Dartford.

Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune

Nuneaton Borough v Bromsgrove Rovers 04-01-1971

Borough: Edwards, Jones, Wilkinson, Goodall, Kavanagh, Smith, Burckitt, Owen, Jacques, Aston, Punter. **Sub:** R. Allen.

Bromsgrove: Hooper, Reynolds, Stafford, Wood, Gwynne, Chambers, Boardbent, Merrick, Craddock, Michelle, Taylor. **Sub:** Adams.

Borough welcomed Bromsgrove Rovers to Manor Park for a Midland Floodlit Cup game.

Borough's top scorer Tony Jacques carved himself a slice of club history out of frostbound Manor Park. His two Floodlit Cup goals made him the second highest scorer since Borough record books were kept. Jacques took his tally to 96, to overhaul Eddie Freimanis by one goal. He now chases the all time record total of 126, notched by Ken Plant. And his goals highlighted the best Borough performance in weeks, watched by a crowd of 500-plus in the bitter cold.

Both goals were worthy of a better setting, but the game was a credit to the two sides who served up some entertaining football under the difficult conditions. Two players who made a difference were Stan Aston and John Burckitt, both in unaccustomed roles. Aston, up front alongside Jacques, added solidarity and balance to the front line. He gave the centre-forward the support he badly needed.

And with Smith and Rovers' ex-Wolves star Peter Broadbent adding more skill the game helped to warm the band of ultra loyal fans who huddled together in the biting cold. More balls were played through to the Borough front runners than in the past half a dozen matches put together.

Nuneaton took the game to Bromsgrove and were on top when Jacques shot them ahead in the 26th minute with a goal that summed up his finishing potential. Bromsgrove midfielder, Chambers, played a crossfield pass straight to the feet of Terry Owen who made a break before playing a pass through the middle. Jacques took it in his stride and lashed it into the net with his deadly right foot to leave Rovers' keeper Chris

Hooper helpless. Jacques grabbed his second four minutes before half-time – and started the move that led to the goal. He fed Aston who swept the ball out to Owen. The winger's cross was headed high into the goalmouth by defenders Brian Reynolds as Hooper slipped. As the ball came down Jacques timed his jump perfectly to beat both Reynolds and Stafford in the air and nod the ball home.

Bromsgrove staged a second half rally and had Nuneaton under heavy pressure, but young Reg Edwards was in fine form in the Borough goal and was backed up by a solid defence. Borough shook off Rovers' raids and Jacques twice had glorious chances of a hat-trick. Once he mis-kicked with the goal at his mercy and he was then beaten by Hooper in a race for the ball. Bromsgrove's goal came nine minutes from time after Edwards had twice tried to punch the ball clear before Neil Merrick netted.

Speedway At Manor Park?

Nuneaton Borough Football Club has applied to Nuneaton Borough Council for permission to stage motor-cycle speedway at Manor Park. Last night the matter was discussed by the Estates Committee and deferred until the next meeting on February 14. Today, Mr Alf Scattergood, vice-chairman of the club, said speedway could be the saviour of professional soccer in Nuneaton.

"We have realised for some time that to maintain professional football it was necessary to think of new money-raising schemes. Tote schemes with which we have been associated have not brought in sufficient cash, and it now appears we must look at other means of income to keep going."

Mr Scattergood explained how the idea came about. "When we played Romford, one of their directors told me they were £90,000 in the red until they introduced speedway – and he is the biggest promoter in the country and controls Cradley Heath..."

Dartford v Nuneaton Borough

09-01-1971

Dartford: Hawke, Read, Richardson, Morgan, Burns, Judges, Ripley, Payne, Mitchell, Stevens, Halliday. **Sub:** Cheesewright.

Borough: Edwards, Jones, Kavanagh, Smith, Wilkinson, Goodall, Owen, Aston, Jacques, Burckitt, Punter. **Sub:** Harris.

Borough travelled to Watling Street, home of Dartford, to play a Southern League Premier Division fixture.

Reg Edwards, one-time student at the Bert Williams' School for Goalkeepers, graduated with honours on Saturday. Teenager Edwards, not yet 18, pulled off a string of fine saves behind a magnificent Borough defence which took a terrific second half pounding. And one of his saves, 20 minutes from time, was in the Bert Williams bracket. He pushed a 25 yard plus power drive from Dartford full-back John Read over the top – when he didn't see the shot until it was on top of him.

Edwards was a star in a Nuneaton defence that threw back



wave after wave of Dartford attacks in a second half that was more like a rehearsal for Custer's last stand than a soccer match. Dartford tried to cash in on their sloping pitch as they hammered away for almost the whole of the last 40 minutes.

Borough's defenders had to work at full stretch on a mudheap of a pitch that clung to their boots and tore at their stamina. As soon as the ball was booted away it was back in the Nuneaton goalmouth with hardly any respite for the rearguard. Lesser players would have cracked under the bombardment, but Ernie Wilkinson and Dave Goodall in the heart of the back four, and Alan Jones and Gerry Kavanagh on the flanks, refused to be dragged down into the mud.

For long periods Tony Jacques was the only Borough player near the halfway line as the Manor Park side were pushed back by Dartford's incessant raids. But Wilkinson and Co. formed a solid backbone for Nuneaton's resistance and Edwards dealt with anything that got through. There were goalmouth scrambles, wild clearances – and an appeal for a penalty when Alan Jones appeared to handle the ball, but Nuneaton held out.

Borough's strength lies at the back. They are tailor made for the kind of all-out defensive battle they faced at Dartford. At home, when the onus is on them to attack, they have fallen down badly. They have struggled in midfield and up front, but Saturday's display confirmed without any doubt that they are as good as any side in the league in defence.

Council Turn Down Speedway Request

Nuneaton Borough Football Club's hopes of staging speedway at Manor Park were virtually dashed last night when the Borough Council planning committee decided to tell them that a formal application would be unlikely to receive favourable consideration.

It was revealed that 135 householders in Beaumont Road, Beaumont Place, Olton Place and Countess Road had signed a petition signifying they were totally opposed to speedway.

Punter And Billington Released

Player-manager Malcolm Allen has released Brian Punter and Brian Billington – two of his close season signings.

Winger Punter, one of the most experienced members of the Manor Park squad, and midfielder Billington have both been given free transfers.

Punter, was signed from Hereford United where he scored nearly 100 goals in five seasons. Billington, was signed from Fourth Division Notts County, where he made nine first team appearances, has played 18 games for Borough, nine of them in the Southern League.

The transfers reduce the Manor Park squad to 17 professionals, including Malcolm Allen, who is now back in training after his broken ankle.

Shinton Expected To Sign

Alan Shinton, who starred for Hednesford against Nuneaton Borough in the FA Cup, is expected to sign for the Manor Park club. And if the deal goes through, Shinton could step into the side for his Southern League debut against Yeovil at the Huish. Shinton, who is in his early twenties, turned in a superb display in midfield for Hednesford when Borough beat them 2-1 at the Cross Keys in the first qualifying round of the FA Cup. He joined Hednesford from Lower Gornal during the summer.

Yeovil v Nuneaton Borough

20-01-1971

Yeovil: Clark, Harritty, Smith, McCluskey, Harris, Myers, Housley, Moffat, Grey, Thompson, Clancy. **Sub:** Weller.

Borough: Edwards, Jones, Burckitt (Cutler), Harris, Wilkinson, Goodall, Owen, Shinton, Aston, Smith, Kavanagh.

Borough made the long journey to Yeovil to play a Southern League Premier Division game.

The match was played throughout in torrential rain. After giving away an early goal, Borough never looked like winning and the only real question seemed to be whether the referee would end their misery by abandoning the game. In the conditions, it was a credit to both sides that the football reached a reasonably high standard. Edwards covered himself with mud and glory in the Nuneaton goal and Wilkinson was always in the thick of things.

Yeovil went ahead in the third minute when Moffat, on loan from Dallas Tornados, met Housley's cross and gave Edwards no chance with a close-range header. This signalled all-out Yeovil attacking and Wilkinson and his colleagues had to work overtime to keep the Somerset men at bay. They succeeded until the 38th minute when Goodall had the misfortune to concede an own goal. Housley raced to the goal-line and his hard, low cross was deflected off the legs of the centre-half as he raced back to cover. Goodall had no chance of getting out of the way.

Both sides hit the woodwork in the first six minutes of the second half – Kavanagh producing a fine shot for Nuneaton which rattled the crossbar. But it was Yeovil who scored again after 70 minutes. Edwards could not hold a low shot from Housley and the ball slithered from his grasp to Moffat, who tapped it over the line. Before the final goal, Stan Aston, who played at centre-forward was taken off with a knee injury.

Borough Fans Call On Directors To Resign

Nuneaton Borough fans angered by the club's lack of success, are demanding action from the board – and the resignation of Mr Reg Bull and Mr Alf Scattergood. And they have threatened to put pickets outside the Manor Park ground to stop supporters from going in to the games.



Nuneaton Borough v Hereford United 28-01-1971

Borough welcomed Hereford United to Manor Park for a Southern League Premier Division game.

Borough pulled off a win last night with a performance that rocked table topping Hereford with its opportunism, bravery and determination. Opportunism when Tony Jacques snapped up one of the very few chances on offer after United keeper Fred Potter had failed to hold a hard driven cross from Alan Shinton. Bravery when Shinton challenged Potter to a Jacques cross in the 65th minute and allowed Smith – who had started the move – to score. And determination throughout – despite a second half during which they were in grave danger of being outplayed by John Charles' outfit.

Hereford were in trouble before the start when Dudley Tyler, Brian Owen and Roger Smee failed to arrive at the ground. Charles had to play himself and re-arrange his side. They were in deeper trouble after the kick-off as Nuneaton showed the grit, guts and fire that has been missing in recent matches. The first half was highlighted by Borough's fighting spirit, the Tony Jacques goal – and a superb save from Reg Edwards that gave the team a second life.

Hereford surged back into the game in the second half. They pushed Nuneaton back and piled on pressure. But Smith's goal blunted their hopes. It came out of the blue and proved to be the winner. With 20 minutes to go Charles headed in an overhead kick from Billy Meadows for a goal full of class.

And from then on Borough were in trouble. But the back four dominated by Stan Aston cut the visitors' chances down to a trickle. It was one-way traffic for much of the time – but the foundations Nuneaton had laid in the first half stayed firm.

At the end Borough were saluted by their fans after a display that had turned the form books upside down.

Barnet v Nuneaton Borough 30-01-1971

Barnet: McClelland, Lye, Jenkins, Ward, Embery, King, Powell, Ferry, Adams, Eason, George. **Sub:** Gray.

Borough: Edwards, Jones, Harris, Burckitt, Aston, Wilkinson, Owen, Smith, Jacques, Shinton, Kavanagh. **Sub:** Goodall.

Borough travelled to Underhill to play Barnet in a Southern League Premier Division game.

Borough found out at Barnet on Saturday that bravery and determination are no substitutes for skill. They had the message driven home to them when they held out for an hour and were hit by three hammer blows – three goals inside seven minutes. The defence can only carry the side for so long without adequate support in midfield and up front. That was where Borough failed again. They fought hard, but good losers are ten a penny in football.

All of the excitement at Underhill centred on whether Barnet could break through a stubborn, and at times magnificent Borough defensive barrier. It was a repeat of the Dartford

“That’s how badly we feel about it,” said one of a bunch of a dozen fans who are leading the fight. “What happened at Aston Villa can happen here. There must be a clear out.”

The fans have already asked for a meeting with the directors and this request may be discussed at a board meeting tonight. Some of the fans have handed in their season tickets. “We are tired of the same old talk,” said their spokesman. “All we get is promises and we want some positive action.”

He gave his name and the names of some of the others, but asked for them to be left out until the meeting with the board is arranged. “We asked Mr Scattergood and Mr Vic Openshaw if they could arrange the meeting and they said they would do something about it,” he said.

“We are thinking of the good of the club. Look at the position we were in four years ago and the position we are in now. Look at the gates Hereford are getting. If we were them, think of the crowds we would get. It doesn’t make sense.”

Most of the supporters involved in the call for action follow the team home and away. “Five of us went to King’s Lynn on Boxing Day,” their spokesman said: “But not one director was there to show their support. When we asked about this we were told that because the weather was bad they didn’t think it was worth it.”

Club chairman Mr Reg Bull said today: “I don’t know anything about this, but there is a board meeting tonight and it could be brought up then. If they have got any constructive suggestions to offer we are willing to listen to them.

He added: “They can take over – if they are prepared to take over the liabilities as well.”

Mickey Boot Joins Kidderminster

Borough skipper Mickey Boot, once hailed as the best signing in the club’s history, has joined West Midlands League Kidderminster Harriers. Talks between the club were resumed and the signing was settled yesterday.

Boot joins two former Nuneaton captains at Aggborough – Harriers manager Harold Cox and winger Alec Jackson. After the signing Harold Cox said: “I have signed Mick as a long term investment. I consider him to be a very fine midfield player who is very versatile. In my opinion he is a very good player.”

Borough have released forward Bobby Allen on a free transfer – the third player to be released this month.

Allen, who was with Coventry City last season, has already attracted attention from top West Midlands League sides Kidderminster and Tamworth. He has made 20 appearances for Nuneaton this season and scored three goals – but has been unable to command a regular place in recent weeks.

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game three weeks ago – until the defence finally cracked under the strain. A point would have been a tremendous achievement against a side that no Nuneaton team has beaten – at home or away.

The goal that broke Nuneaton's resistance was a 25-yard shot from Barnet full-back Peter Jenkins which struck Ernie Wilkinson on its way in. Two minutes later a free-kick – taken short and square by Ward to George – put the home side two up. George steered it in off the far post as Edwards groped. The third was a cool lob by Powell after a Les Eason cross which finally sunk an already demoralised Nuneaton side.

Edwards pulled off a series of saves in the closing minutes and Barnet were denied what looked a perfectly good goal in the 86th minute. A hard driven shot from Ward rebounded off the goalkeeper and Adams tapped it home. But the referee decided there had been an infringement against Edwards.

Borough's only chance throughout the game came when Tony Jacques was thwarted by a brave save at his feet by goalkeeper Jack McClelland. But despite the treacherous conditions, made worse by a morning of rain, Barnet showed a degree of skill far greater than Nuneaton's. The high hopes they built against Hereford two days earlier were brought down to earth – by that seven minute second half spell which painted a true picture on the run of the play.

Nuneaton Borough v Tamworth 01-02-1971

Borough: Edwards, Jones, Aston, Wilkinson, Harris, Burckitt, Smith, Cutler, Jacques, Shinton, Kavanagh. **Sub:** Goodall.

Tamworth: Richards, Whitehouse, Ball, Seedhouse, Newton, Hall, Jessop, Millard, Holmes, K. Smith, Morrow. **Sub:** D. Smith.

Borough welcomed Tamworth to Manor Park to play a Camkin Cup quarter final tie.

Tamworth, whose name hangs over Manor Park like a spectre of doom, wrote another black page into Borough's record books last night. They added the Camkin Cup to Nuneaton's season of shame and planted a full stop on the last cup chance for Malcolm Allen's men. Once again Tamworth came back from behind to sink Nuneaton.

When Borough were in front they looked good, but as soon as Tamworth equalised the spirit went out of their play. That was the difference between the two sides in a game that did not live up to the November FA Cup clashes.

Borough had a chance to win back some of their lost pride. And that looked on the cards when Alan Shinton shot them ahead in the sixth minute with his first goal for the club. Tamworth's defence waited for the offside flag as John Burckitt clipped a pass out to Paul Cutler. He cut into the six yard box and squared the ball across goal for Shinton to slide the ball past Mick Richards.

For much of the first half Nuneaton held the upper hand, although Tamworth gave a glimpse of things to come when a quick break by Morrow ended in an off target effort from

Jessop. The whole face of the game changed in the first three minutes of the second half. Tamworth had two chances, were denied a penalty and then equalised from the spot.



Alan Shinton notches his first goal for Borough to put them one up against Tamworth.

Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune

An appeal against Aston for hands was ignored before the centre-half sent Ray Holmes crashing in the box. Ian Hall stepped up to equalise with a classic spot kick – and then started to torment Borough with a repeat of his Cup form. Hall set up the winner in the 55th minute from a free-kick that carved a huge hole in the Borough defence. Seedhouse and Smith ran over the ball before Hall chipped it forward to Ray Holmes who was completely unmarked. His header went in off the far post – and Nuneaton were out of the Camkin Cup.



Tony Jacques heads goalwards from a second-half corner. But two minutes earlier Ray Holmes had put Tamworth ahead.

Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune

That goal knocked a lot of spirit out of Borough – and they ran out of steam well before the end. Borough looked a tired team towards the end and Jones cleared off the line after Tommy Morrow had got in a header from a corner. But the game was already in the bag for Tamworth.

Nuneaton Borough v Gloucester City 06-02-1971

Borough: Edwards, Jones, Harris, Burckitt, Aston, Wilkinson, Storer, Smith, Jacques, Shinton, Deardon. **Sub:** M. Allen.

Gloucester: Jones, Vale, Hughes, Anderson, Biggart, Hudd, Mumford, Rice, Round, Shepherd, Ferns. **Sub:** Watson.

Borough welcomed Gloucester City to Manor Park to play a Southern League Premier Division fixture.

Two men who carry a heavy burden for Borough between now and the end of the season crossed paths at Manor Park

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on Saturday – with mixed feelings. After only 17 minutes against Gloucester, Tony Jacques, Borough's top scorer, only three short of the 100 goal mark for the club, limped off with a pulled thigh muscle. And Malcolm Allen, out since the end of last September when he broke an ankle, made his comeback as substitute.

Few team bosses will face a more difficult challenge than Allen did at that moment. His side was a goal down to a team at the bottom of the table. His top scorer was off injured – and he faced his first game after a four month lay-off. But his performance swept away the doubts. It was one of the high spots of an otherwise uncomfortable afternoon for the Royal Blues. Only a scrambled last gasp goal from Alan Shinton in injury time clinched both points against a team already doomed to relegation.

And earlier it had taken a John Burckitt penalty to put Nuneaton level and cancel out a shock fifth minute goal by Gloucester's Willie Ferns. There were times when Gloucester were made to look far better than they were. At one stage it looked as if they would leave Manor Park with their first away win for nearly a year.

Allen's return brought stability to the midfield department where Borough have struggled all season. The middle of the park problems and Nuneaton's weaknesses up front are a long way from being corrected – but the return of the player-manager was a step in the right direction. He could have completed a dream return when, late in the game, he played a quick one-two with Roger Smith on the edge of the Gloucester 18 yards box. The move carved open the City goal and Allen had a clear shot at goal, but he was off target and the ball went wide.

In the end, it was left to Shinton, who had a month's trial at Gloucester last season, to clinch Nuneaton's win. He hooked the ball over the goalkeeper and it went inside the far post, despite a scrambled attempt by City full-back Selwyn Vale.

Youngsters Stephen Storer and Phil Deardon, on opposite flanks, had satisfactory Southern League debuts for Nuneaton. Deardon was twice thwarted by City keeper Ray Jones with reflex saves and Storer sent over a stream of crosses.

Nuneaton Borough v Burton Albion 08-02-1971

Borough: Crump, Jones, Wilkinson, Goodall, Kavanagh, Harris, Allen, Storer, Cutler, Aston, Brown. **Sub:** Owen.

Burton: Allsopp, Finney, Annable, Goodwin, Hunt, Royall, Masefield, Gough, White, Waller, Cowlshaw. **Sub:** Norman.

Borough welcomed Burton Albion to Manor Park to play a Midland Floodlit Cup game.

Ex-Alvechurch amateur Stewart Masefield rounded off another depressing night for Borough with a late goal that wrecked their hopes of a Midland Floodlit Cup win. Masefield – Burton's top scorer – took a short pass from Waller inside the box and cracked in Albion's equaliser with four minutes

left to play. It was a goal the visitors deserved in a game that was good only in rare patches. Much of it was lifeless.

Burton had the only two clear cut goal chances of the first half hour before Paul Cutler shot Nuneaton ahead ten minutes before the break. He had a header kicked off the line, but forced the ball into the roof of the net after Stan Aston had returned it into the middle.

Two minutes before the break Malcolm Allen juggled himself some shooting space – only to have his shot tipped onto the crossbar and over. The second half was an improvement, as Borough's young wingers Stephen Storer and Derek Brown, with the crowd behind them, got through some useful work. Brown almost carved a goal out of nothing in the 70th minute when he chased a lost cause and crossed for Cutler, whose header brought a fine save from Allsopp.

Player-manager Malcolm Allen maintained his progress after the broken ankle injury that put him out of the game for four months. Already he has shown how much Nuneaton missed his generalship on the field. The two Borough players who could be most pleased with their displays were Storer and Brown, the amateur wingers who gave the crowd something to cheer about in a game that could easily have died.

Lewis Joins Borough

Dave Lewis signed for Nuneaton Borough last night and is expected to be in the side for Monday night's Midland Floodlit Cup game against Tamworth. The deal was clinched by Borough player-manager Malcolm Allen after more than a fortnight of negotiations with the Atherstone Town caretaker committee.

Lewis, skipper of Atherstone and one of the youngest captains in the West Midlands League, lives only a goal kick away from Manor Park in Beaumont Road. He was with the Borough as a youngster before joining Derby County where he made a number of Central League appearances. Three seasons ago he moved to Sheepy Road and quickly established himself as one of the top midfield players in the West Midlands League.

Nuneaton Borough v Tamworth 15-02-1971

Borough: Edwards, Jones, Wilkinson, Goodall, Kavanagh, Smith, Allen, Storer, Shinton, Aston, Deardon. **Sub:** Brown.

Tamworth: Richards, Whitehouse, Newton, Campbell, D. Smith, Jessop, Hall, Millard, K. Smith, Holmes, Morrow. **Sub:** Knox.

Borough welcomed Tamworth to Manor Park for a Midland Floodlit Cup game.

Borough keeper Reg Edwards, the hottest property the club has had in years, turned in a magnificent performance last night. He stood between Tamworth and a Floodlit Cup rout as Nuneaton slumped again to the Kettlebrook side. But for Edwards Tamworth could easily have run up five



goals as Borough were in danger of being torn to pieces. His performance was the only bright spot for Malcolm Allen's side who creaked in defence, struggled in midfield and had as much power up front as a wet sponge.

In the end only a Ray Holmes goal separated the teams, but the sooreline does not tell half of the story. It fails to indicate the wide gulf that separated the teams on the park as Tamworth again underlined their undoubted superiority. Tamworth could have been three goals up inside the first half-hour. Jessop misses a clear cut chance, Smith failed to cash in on the goal-line and Edwards made an impressive save from Morrow.

That set the pattern for the match and the fans had to wait until the 27th minute before Nuneaton had their first shot at goal. Roger Smith hit a low drive, but Mick Richards went down well and pushed the ball out for a corner. Towards half-time Nuneaton showed signs of creeping back into the game – but their deficiencies up front were too great.

And Holmes, whose goals have already tormented the Manor Park side this season, shot Tamworth in front three minutes into the second half. He ran on to a chipped free kick from Ian Hall and cracked in a shot which cannoned in off Edwards who had no chance.

After Holmes had netted, Edwards really came into his own as the Kettlebrook side took complete command. Their superiority bordered on arrogance as Borough slipped into the background and went from bad to worse. Edwards saved a shot from Morrow, pushed out another from Keith Smith and brilliantly clawed a goalbound effort from Millard round the post. He thwarted Graham Jessop with a save at his feet and then stopped a certain goal from Holmes who had raced on to a raking through pass from Hall.

During this spell, Borough's only attempt at goal was a header bludgeoned wide by makeshift centre-forward Stan Aston from a Roger Smith cross.

Nuneaton Borough v Hillingdon Borough 20-02-1971

Borough: Edwards, Jones, Smith, Allen, Aston, Wilkinson, Storer, Lewis, Jacques, Shinton, Deardon. **Sub:** Brown.

Hillingdon: Lowe, Batt, Langley, Higginson, Newcombe, Moore, Fairchild, Bishop, Reeves, Carter, Knox. **Sub:** Vafiadis.

Borough welcomed Hillingdon Borough to Manor Park for a Southern League Premier Division game.

Eight mistake ridden second half minutes turned struggling Borough into no hopers against Hillingdon. And they gave the Londoners an astonishingly easy win against a Nuneaton side that had pathetically little to offer. Borough were a goal down at half-time and struggling desperately. But it was a succession of errors between the 57th and 65th minutes that sealed their doom.

Roger Smith failed to cut out a cross and Mick Fairchild ran in on the blind side to stretch Hillingdon's lead to 2-0.

Then mistakes by Ernie Wilkinson and Reg Edwards handed Hillingdon striker Johnny Bishop two goals on a plate. At that point Borough tottered on the brink of their heaviest home defeat in years. Their performance had reached a new low.

It was by far their worst Southern League display of the season as individual errors led to collective chaos and another humbling. Despite some much-needed aggression from new signing Dave Lewis the Londoners were allowed to dominate the middle of the park. The ex-Atherstone skipper will need to summon up every ounce of his fighting qualities to help to solve the midfield problems that have become monotonous.

Borough managed only a handful of efforts at goal during the entire 90 minutes – the best of these was a shot from centre-half Stan Aston that hit an upright. It was grim from the start to finish as Borough went from bad to worse. Long before the end people began streaming away from the ground.

Aston and Co. have taken some batterings this term, but the strain is beginning to tell. Even keeper Reg Edwards was below par. The writing was on the wall from the start as Hillingdon pushed forward and took command. They soon emerged as the better team and Eddie Reeve shot them ahead in the 32nd minute after some sloppy defensive play. And they hammered the point home as Nuneaton fell apart at the seams in the first 20 minutes after the interval.

In the end the whole of the Nuneaton team paid a high price in a game that added another sad chapter to the season. Borough still have a chance of a place in the top half of the Southern League, but it will take an improvement as dramatic as their slump to pull them through.

Scouts Watching Edwards

Arsenal and Leicester City are showing an interest in goalkeeper Reg Edwards, Borough's hottest property in years. Both clubs had representatives at the match against Burton, and came back for a second look on Monday. But they may have to start talking in four figures to coax Nuneaton to part with the teenager, who is carrying on a great goalkeeping tradition at Manor Park.

Desperation Day

Monday, February 15, 1971, will stick in people's minds for years to come as the day Britain went decimal – for me D-Day will be known as "Desperation Day."

It was on that day I stood for some 80 minutes on the banks of Nuneaton Borough football ground and watched someone pull the plug out and Nuneaton Borough team go down the drain. I would strongly suggest the Borough directors take a long, close look at a document called "The Trades Description Act," because on Monday night's showing they could be in serious trouble.

The most annoying thing about it is the fact that these people get paid for the show they put on on Monday night.



They are supposed to be skilled, professional players. I'm sure if these people were placed in any industry in the country and turned out performances equal to Monday night's showing, they wouldn't even hold down a job of cleaning out the toilets.

Unfortunately I had no 100 per cent solution to this problem except the old scapegoat of sacking the directors and players and starting afresh. It might help if before the start of a match each player takes a look at his team-mates playing shirt, make a mental note of the colour of it and tries to remember it for the rest of the match.

I began to wonder if some of the players had changed shirts at half-time with the opposition – judging by the pin-point passes Whites were playing to Reds. The end is near Borough, the writing is on the wall, the crossroads has been reached, the decision is yours “To die or not to die, that is the question!”

S. Holmes, 10 Cotswold Crescent, Wiclif Way, Nuneaton

Reg Bull Resigns

Borough £7,000 In The Red

Mr Reg Bull, chairman of Nuneaton Borough Football Club for the past 12 years, resigned today – and became the first president of the Manor Park set-up. Mr Bull announced his resignation at the club's annual meeting and Mr Alf Scattergood became chairman.

At the meeting the club announced that it was £7,008 in the red at the end of May last year, compared with a deficit of £2,319 for the previous 12 months. The bank overdraft went up from £1,051 to £4,616. And the club's financial position has been worsened by poor playing performances and falling gates this season.

After he had taken over as chairman, Mr Scattergood, who has been on the board for six years, paid tribute to the work done by Mr Bull. Said the new chairman: “He has had more problems than any other chairman but he put the club and the town on the map.”

Mr Scattergood has taken over a club with a £7,000-plus debt, but with the greatest potential in non-league soccer. His job will be to tap that potential and steer the Manor Park set-up back to its former glories as a force to be reckoned with on the Southern League scene. And he intends to do just that. Backed up with the brand of ruthless determination that makes him a man to be listened to.

He says: “There will be changes. A lot of comings and goings. We need a complete turnabout. We must get a character as a leader. A man in the same mould as Dave Mackay. But we must be ruthless, fair and just. But the fans must be patient. I can promise action – and it will be taken – but we need their support. We want the whole town to be involved.

We want league football and it will be – but the directors cannot do it all themselves...

Alan Laws Joins Manor Park Board

Company director Alan Laws has joined the board of Nuneaton Borough FC – two days after the club's top-level reshuffle. New chairman Alf Scattergood announced the appointment after a board meeting, his first in charge.

He said: “I am very pleased Mr Laws has joined us. He is the type of man we want. And he is prepared to put in the same amount of work into the club as he has put into his own businesses and help us to put it back where it belongs – at the top.”

Nuneaton Borough v Stafford Rangers 22-02-1971

Borough: Crump, Jones, Burckitt, Lewis, Aston, Goodall, M. Allen, Smith, Cutler, R. Allen, Brown. **Sub:** Harris.

Stafford: Arnold, Chadwick, Clayton, Ritchie, Windsor, Machin, Mottershead, Cullerton, Chapman, Bailey, Jones. **Sub:** Morgan.

Borough welcomed Stafford Rangers to Manor Park for a Midland Floodlit Cup game.

Borough recalled Fred Crump, John Burckitt and forwards Bobby Allen and Paul Cutler. But their hopes of success were crushed when Floodlit Cup champions Stafford won the match with a penalty on the stroke of half-time. The spot kick, was scored by Cullerton after Dave Goodall had brought down Bailey. Borough were then forced to take a back seat.

But before the incident they had packed more style and aggression into 45 minutes than they have in the last three games. Their first half display did not solve any major problems, but at least there was some spirit there and they played as if they wanted to win. Second half problems wiped out much of their good work as Stafford emerged as the better side. Borough, in short, were better, but not good enough.

New signing Lewis worked tremendously hard in midfield. Crump pulled off a series of good saves and Brown fought every inch of the way in the number eleven shirt.

Borough struggled with Rangers' offside trap and did not pack enough punch in attack to upset the visitors' defence. But some of the players who sat on the sidelines during the recent slump at least earned themselves a second chance.

Bedford Town v Nuneaton Borough 27-02-1971

Bedford: Barron, Skinn, Payne, Drury, Roach, Cooley, Cleary, Davies, Figg, Hawksby, Jones.

Borough: Edwards, Jones, Burckitt, Harris, Aston, Goodall, Shinton, Brown, Cutler, R. Allen, Smith. **Sub:** M. Allen.

Borough made the journey to The Eyrie to take on Bedford Town in a Southern League Premier Division match.

Borough's new chairman Mr Alf Scattergood put the players in the picture on Saturday – and made it clear what is



expected from them. In a pre-match talk on the way to Bedford he told them: “We need one hundred and one per cent from all of you. Things cannot go on as they are.” And for 15 minutes the team responded. They took the game to the Eagles and could have been two or three goals up.

But they flattered to deceive and after the home side took the lead Nuneaton painted the now all-too-familiar picture of a team deeply entrenched in a rut. The promise they showed faded. They let their heads drop – and average Bedford cruised home without too much stress. Borough’s initial problems again lay up front. Without top scorer Tony Jacques they are in deep trouble and Bobby Allen and Paul Cutler threw away gilt edged chances.

They were clear cut chances, ones that could have made all the difference. Then, as so often happens, Bedford went in front. Nuneaton’s problems then spread to the defence – the once solid foundation of a team that went 15 games without defeat. And the message that has filtered through in the past couple of months became crystal clear – this Borough team is simply not good enough.

Without the precious points they picked up during the unbeaten run they would certainly have been in desperate trouble. Even at this stage they will have to show a vast improvement all round or the relegation threat will be just around the corner.

Their struggles have stripped them naked psychologically and taken their toll. And it’s no good pointing to ill-luck, bad breaks or the run-of-the-ball. They have now conceded 45 goals – and only one team, Gloucester City, has scored less goals. Too much pressure and the frustration of having to work overtime for nothing has taken its toll of the back four.

The forward line is a one-man band. And the midfield area has been a problem spot since the start of the season. It was four games ago when they last scored a goal while their opponents have rattled in ten. And there is no sign of an improvement. The goals that stretched this dismal run on Saturday came from Cleary and Cooley in the first half and hard-working Bedford midfield player Alan Davies grabbed two after the break – one a penalty.

But the match really ended for Nuneaton when they failed to cash in on their early chances and the slump set in.

Borough Ordered In For Extra Training

Nuneaton Borough chairman Alf Scattergood has ordered the entire Manor Park squad in for extra training after Saturday’s dismal display at Bedford. And he has called in Nuneaton Harriers’ president and coach Jack Davies to prepare a training programme and supervise the sessions.

Mr Scattergood said: “After Saturday’s lethargic display I had a meeting with Malcolm Allen and told him that the players are to be here every night except Friday. We lost 4-0 and 4-0 the week before. It is obvious that the players are not sharp enough.”

Nuneaton Borough v Poole Town

06-03-1971

Borough: Edwards, Kavanagh, Burckitt, Harris, Jones, Goodall, Shinton, Brown, Cutler, R. Allen, Smith. Sub: Aston.

Poole Town: Buck, Eydon, Arrowsmith, Taylor, Pegram, Thornhill, Down, Ferns, Brown, Keeley, Pring. Sub: Brewster.

Borough welcomed Poole Town to Manor Park to play a Southern League Premier Division match.

Borough shook off an hour of suspicion and self-doubt to beat Poole and end their run of four games without a win. For two-thirds of the match they muddled through on the strength of an own goal – until Len Harris carved out a chance for Paul Cutler, desperately close to the end.

The victory had a hollow ring to it in the emptiness of Manor Park. Only 650 fans – one of the lowest weekend crowds in memory turned up. But it kept open the six point escape route between them and the relegation zone and gave them a chance to believe in themselves again. Borough’s struggles and doubts about whether the game would be played slashed the attendance. And the fans who turned up saw a grim struggle on a slip and slide surface.

From the 18th minute until four minutes from the end the own goal separated the two teams. That was until hard-working Harris provided the one high spot in a grim struggle when he carved a goal out of nothing. He took on the Poole defence single-handed and gave Cutler a goal he could not miss in front of an empty net. It was Borough’s first authentically created full value goal in 446 minutes of play.

But the goal that really made the difference came just before the 20 minute mark when Poole full-back Pete Arrowsmith planted a Paul Cutler centre past his own goalkeeper. Instead of pressing home their advantage Borough allowed Poole to come back into the game. And, for 20 minutes in the second half, the Dorset outfit were on top.

Len Harris continued his good form in midfield and full-back Gerry Kavanagh also worked hard. Most of the Nuneaton attacks moved down the right flank where Kavanagh had to be in the thick of things. Dave Goodall showed his usual bite and aggression and Alan Jones performed well at centre half, but it was up front where Borough struggled.

Johnny Watts Relieved Of Duties

Nuneaton Borough assistant manager Johnny Watts has been relieved of his duties in another behind the scenes reshuffle. Watts, a former Borough skipper and a member of the successful 1966-67 squad, has been unable to devote as much time to the job as he would have liked because of work commitments. Explained club chairman, Mr Alf Scattergood: “It was mutually agreed between Johnny Watts, Malcolm Allen and myself that he should leave. He hasn’t been able to travel to away matches because of his work and we want to cut down on costs.”



Borough Experience Financial Problems

Nuneaton Borough Football Club, caught in soccer's vicious circle, is losing money at the rate of £150-plus a week. And there are no signs that the position will improve in the few weeks between now and the end of the season.

Borough were once one of the few non-league clubs that could take £1,000 in one afternoon. But poor playing performances have led to the biggest crowd slump in the club's history. The balance sheet painted a black enough picture. It showed that the club was £7,000 in the red at the end of last May. That was almost twelve months ago. Since then the position has worsened. Its debuts could now be in the five figure bracket.

It is obvious that the club, which once splashed out £10,000 on players inside eighteen months, will have to tighten its belt. These are the problems facing chairman Alf Scattergood and his board. They tackle them knowing that another depressing season could threaten the future of Southern League soccer at Manor Park.

Commercial Manager Resigns

John Clifton, who resigned last week as commercial manager, has left Manor Park – without serving his fortnight's notice.

And he said: "I shall not go into football again. I want a job where I can spend more time with my family."

His premature departure followed a meeting with the directors. "They told me I could leave immediately and I accepted," he said.

Nuneaton Borough v Hednesford Town 08-03-1971

Borough: Crump, Kavanagh, Jones, Goodall, Burckitt, Harris, Lewis, Smith, Allen, Cutler, Deardon. **Sub:** Wilkinson.

Borough welcomed Hednesford Town to Manor Park for a Midland Floodlit Cup game.

Borough turned in another dismal display last night – against an Hednesford side that played out the last half-hour with ten men. The Manor Park side reached rock bottom plus in the second half and lost another huge slice of their pride to a team in the bottom half of the West Midlands League.

Former Walsall forward Jimmy McMorran clinched the points for Hednesford when he pounced on a Dave Goodall slip in the 51st minute. Nine minutes later Hednesford midfielder Brian Pittaway kicked out at goalkeeper Fred Crump and was given his marching orders.

Pathetic forward power cost Nuneaton the game. They had enough chances to have won handsomely, but they had no one who could stick the ball into the back of the net. Their best spell came on the half hour mark. Cutler and Bobby Allen had shots cleared off the line, and an Allen header was

touched over by goalkeeper Cullen – and then Dave Lewis hit the crossbar. But those few seconds summed up Borough's goal power. And the sending off incident underlined their slump. For even against ten men they were unable to make any impression. They failed to press home their advantage and Hednesford were never under any desperate second-half pressure.

Dover v Nuneaton Borough

10-03-1971

Borough: Edwards, Jones, Harris, Billington, Wilkinson, Lewis, Smith, Brown, Cutler, R. Allen, M. Allen.

Borough made the journey to The Crabble to take on Dover in a Southern League Premier Division match.

Paul Cutler, Borough's Kent-based striker, snapped up a 65th minute chance at Dover last night to earn the Manor Park side a surprise win. But it was player-manager Malcolm Allen, back in midfield, who took the honours with a fine display. He earned the man of the match tag – and set up the winner with a shot which cracked against the underside of the bar and bounced down for Cutler to score.

Borough pulled everyone back in defence at times to withstand heavy pressure from the home side. Dover went close on several occasions in the first-half, but after the break Borough took control of midfield to win the game. After the goal Dover besieged the Nuneaton penalty area, but brave goalkeeping by Edwards and good work by the defence in which left-back Harris was outstanding, kept them out.

In the space of ten hectic minutes Dover forced four corners in quick succession, saw a shot from O'Connell pushed over the top by Edwards and a deflected shot from Hurley run across the unguarded Nuneaton goalmouth. But Dover, who lost left-half Les Hall in the 25th minute when he was taken to hospital with a serious ankle injury, could not find a way through. In the closing stages Borough earned the jeers of the crowd by using time wasting tactics.

Aston And Burckitt Contracts Cancelled

Stan Aston and John Burckitt, two key defenders, have had their contracts terminated by the club for failing to turn up for an away game. The shock move follows last Wednesday's trip to Dover where the club was stretched to field a full squad of 12 players – and won 1-0.

Club chairman Alf Scattergood announced the decision today, when he said: "The manager has sacked them both. They were told to turn up, but failed to do so.

"We are pleased that Malcolm Allen has taken such stern action and that he has the full backing of the board." The chairman added: "We intend going places and we need people who are going to give us one hundred per cent. We pay top wages and it's not fair to the fans."

Aston has made 280 appearances for the club.



Gloucester City v Nuneaton Borough 13-03-1971

Gloucester: Goodman, Vale, Hughes, Anderson, Biggard, Neale, Rice, Round, Andrews, Sheppard, Paine. **Sub:** Hurford.

Borough: Edwards, Jones, Lewis, Wilkinson, Harris, Billington, Smith, M. Allen, Cutler, Jacques, R. Allen. **Sub:** Storer.

Borough made the journey to Meadow Park to take on Gloucester City in a Southern League Premier Division match.

Berkshire referee John Christopher went into both dressing rooms before the match to tell players “I’ll take into account the state of the pitch.” Half-an-hour later he was showered with protests from the Nuneaton side when he awarded a penalty for handball against Alan Jones. The ball was crossed from the right, Dave Lewis and Ernie Wilkinson missed it in the air and it bounced awkwardly as Jones moved across to cover the danger.

The full-back screamed in anger at the decision but it did not affect John Shepherd as he stepped up to net his first goal for The Tigers. The state of the pitch certainly did not help Malcolm Allen and Co. It was hard to believe that City had spent nearly £1,000 on returfing earlier this term. But it was the same for both sides and Borough can have few grumbles about the final outcome.

Malcolm Allen had to make a change when Derek Brown was forced to pull out because of flu. This gave Tony Jacques the opportunity to return after his injury lay-off – but it turned out to be a game he will not want to remember. Playing against his old club he failed to show any of the sharpness which brought him so many goals earlier in the season. Borough were only 1-0 down when Jacques was played clear by a defence-splitting pass from lively Brian Billington.

The striker drew goalkeeper Chris Goodman off his line only to fire hopelessly wide. Malcolm Allen and Bobby Allen both wasted good openings and the side had to pay the price when veteran Stan Round – still a handful for the visitors’ defence – made it 2-0.

Paul Cutler reduced the deficit with a smart header from a Roger Smith corner in the 88th minute but by then it was too late for Borough to salvage a point.

FA To Decide Fate Of Aston And Burckitt

Stan Aston and John Burckitt are to appeal to the Football Association against the decision of Nuneaton Borough to terminate their contracts. Aston said today that he took ill on Tuesday evening and went to the doctor on Wednesday morning when he was given a sick note to be off work for the day. “The first I knew of any trouble was when Malcolm Allen rang to say that my contract was going to be cancelled for failing to turn up for the Dover game.

“I feel that I have been treated unjustly, and sick notes that were produced by other players for the same game have been accepted. I can’t see that there is any course open to me but

to appeal against the decision, and I have already written to the FA,” he added.

Burckitt, who lives in Lythalls Lane, Coventry, explained that he started a new job last week – on night shift. “On Tuesday I went to see Malcolm Allen at his place of work and explained that as I had only just started this job it was almost certain that I wouldn’t be able to take time off for the Dover game.

“Malcolm seemed to understand the position that I was in, and I was under the impression at the time that everything would be all right. When I was told that my contract was going to be cancelled for failing to turn up, I was both surprised and upset. After giving so much for the club I feel that the action that has been taken is most unjust. I am going to appeal against the decision to the FA and at the moment I am in the process of writing the letter,” he added.

Stafford Rangers v Nuneaton Borough 15-03-1971

Stafford: Arnold, Sargeant, Clayton, Chapman, Chadwick, Machin, Mottershead, Walker, Williams, Cullerton, Bailey. **Sub:** Quigley.

Borough: Crump, Jones, Kavanagh, Lewis, Wilkinson, Smith, Harris, Billington, Cutler, R. Allen, Storer. **Sub:** Jacques.

Borough travelled to Marston Road to play Stafford Rangers in a Midland Floodlit Cup game.

Stafford completed the double over Nuneaton with a single goal in the second half from right-half Stuart Chapman. Rangers, who are making a late bid to keep the cup were forced to field a greatly reshuffled team due to injuries. Regular goalkeeper Brian Quigley was made substitute with local league player, Jim Arnold, coming in for his third game. Bernie Walker made his first appearance for Rangers.

The first-half did not come to life until Quigley was forced to go on after 20 minutes when makeshift centre-half Chadwick pulled a hamstring. Five minutes later, Nuneaton also had to make a substitution, when centre-forward Paul Cutler was carried off with a leg injury.

Both sides were making heavy weather of the issue and scoring chances were few. The best chance of the first-half fell to substitute Quigley shortly before the interval but he sliced his shot wildly. Rangers winning goal came in the 65th minute. Centre-forward Ray Williams tried to force home a shot at the near post which Crump could only get a hand to and Chapman following up, headed home.

Nuneaton had a great chance to equalise in the 80th minute when left winger Storer raced clear but with only Arnold to beat his shot struck the keeper’s outstretched leg. It would have been more than they deserved.

Proposed Football League Re-organisation

The Football League has put forward drastic re-organisation proposals that will send a shiver of hope down the corridors of non-league soccer. For if the proposals are accepted the Third and Fourth division will be re-shaped – and there

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will be room for 12 new clubs. The plans, from the League management committee, have been put before the Third and Fourth Division clubs. If they are accepted they will be put on the agenda at the League annual meeting in June for a straight forward vote from the big guns of the First and Second Divisions.

They call for a Third Division of 20 clubs on a national basis and a Division Four north and south, each with 20 clubs. And there is also a suggestion that the first rounds of the Football League Cup should be played on a geographical basis.

Commenting on the proposed changes, Nuneaton Borough chairman Alf Scattergood made the most important statement since he took over the club 19 days ago. He said: "We could have league football at Nuneaton by 1972-73. This is our chance – it's now or never."

But he sent out a personal appeal to the Nuneaton fans: "To be one of the twelve," he said "we must show a good average gate and a solvent financial position."

Burton Albion v Nuneaton Borough 17-03-1971

Burton: Bradwell, Lockman, Goodwin, Royal, Anable, Nickton, White, Waller, Masefield, Ian Gough, Peter Gough. **Sub:** Smith.

Borough: Crump, Jones, Wilkinson, Goodall, Kavanagh, Smith, Lewis, Harris, Jacques, R. Allen, Brown. **Sub:** Billington.

Borough made the journey to Eton Park to take on Burton Albion in a Midland Floodlit Cup game.

Four players were booked as this Midland Floodlit Cup tie erupted into a fiery clash and finished with a three goal burst in nine minutes. A dull first-half produced nothing to stir the handful of spectators. But seconds before the interval Tony Jacques had his name taken for arguing with the referee after being penalised for a late tackle on Phil Anable.

This was the signal for 45 minutes of ill-temper, arguing and wild tackling. Lennie Harris and Brian Billington were both booked for dissent and Anable's name was added to the list for a wild challenge on Bobby Allen.

Borough were unlucky not to take the lead in the 46th minute when Harris slammed a shot against an upright following a Roger Smith corner. Burton took the lead after 59 minutes when hard-working Dave Goodall stopped a shot close to the line but could not scramble it clear. Masefield ran in to prod it past a helpless Fred Crump.

Allen wasted a good opening before Nuneaton had to make positional switches. Gerry Kavanagh, injured after only 11 minutes, was replaced by Billington and Harris dropped back into midfield. In the 77th minute Derek Brown moved on to a pin-point through ball and shrugged off a defensive challenge. He cut in and stroked a low cross into the path of Jacques who neatly turned it into the net.

Six minutes later Borough took the lead when Bobby Allen cracked in a fine goal after the non-stop Brown had lobbed the ball into the goalmouth. The second half was riddled with

fouls and stoppages – and it was from a free-kick that Burton earned a share of the spoils with about three minutes left. Alan Jones was the culprit on this occasion, upending Peter Gough. The ball was pumped into the Borough area and it knifed through to winger Stan White who crashed a terrific shot into the top corner.

Nuneaton Borough v Yeovil Town 20-03-1971

Borough: Edwards, Jones, Kavanagh, Lewis, Wilkinson, Goodall, Billington, Cutler, Jacques, Harris, Brown. **Sub:** R. Allen.

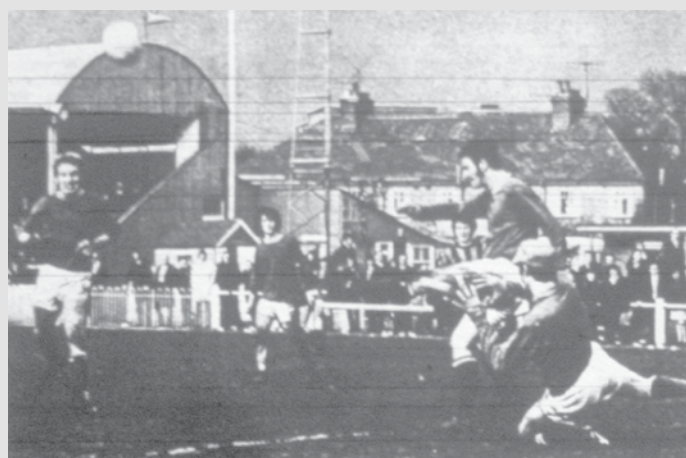
Yeovil: Clark, Herrity, Bayliss, Hughes, Harris, Smith, Housley, Myers, Grey, Thompson, Clancy. **Sub:** McCluskey.

Borough welcomed Yeovil Town to Manor Park for a Southern League Premier Division game.

Borough defender Dave Goodall held his head in despair when his 58th minute clearance struck Yeovil skipper Cliff Myers, ricocheted into the net, and signalled another defeat for the Manor Park men. Goodall was facing his own net when the ball rebounded from an upright. He hit the ball first time to clear the danger but it struck Myers in the stomach and was diverted past a helpless Reg Edwards.

The goal summed up the misfortunes that have dogged Nuneaton for so many weeks. And it was a personal tragedy for the lion-hearted Goodall. He had performed at the back with the sort of vigour and determination which Borough must have to halt the slide. With the tall Ernie Wilkinson he broke up a string of Yeovil raids and despite his own lack of inches was rarely beaten in the air.

Paul Cutler shrugged off a leg injury to play and gave an improved showing. He should have made better use of two chances which fell to him before half-time. The only threats to Edwards during the first 45 minutes were two long range efforts, one which he saved at full stretch and the other which flew just wide



Ernie Wilkinson's hefty boot breaks up a dangerous Yeovil raid – but he needn't have worried. Goalkeeper Reg Edwards had the ball covered.

Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune

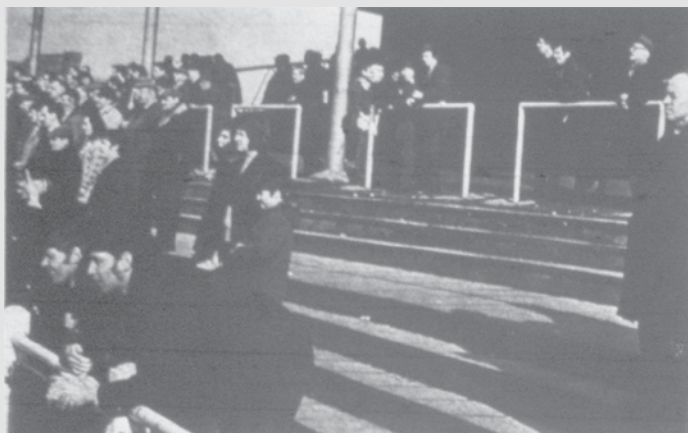
When Cutler grabbed a 55th minute goal after a clever head-on from Jacques the 1,057 fans must have thought that

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Borough were heading for two badly needed points. Yeovil, however, gave a sharp reply. A cross from a right wing attack was headed only as far as Brian Grey and he thumped wide of Edwards. Immediately after the re-start came the killer blow of Myer's goal. The Yeovil one-two knocked the wind out of Borough's sails and they failed to recover.

They could not put enough pressure on the visitors and the 4-3-3 formation often resulted in the front runners having to concede possession through lack of support.



Sign of the times. Huge gaps on the terraces show just how the gates have been hit by Borough's lean spell. Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune

Worcester City v Nuneaton Borough 22-03-1971

Borough: Edwards, Jones, Wilkinson, Goodall, Harris, Lewis, Smith, Billington, Brown, Jacques, Butler. Sub: R. Allen

Borough travelled to St George's Lane to face Worcester City in a Southern League Premier Division game.

Brian Lobban, given a second chance of Southern League soccer by Worcester after Borough had let him go, grabbed the decisive goal. The red haired amateur striker, who drifted away from Manor Park at the end of last season, put the game beyond Borough's reach when he forced the ball home in the 62nd minute. That stretched City's lead to 2-0 and was enough to sink Borough who had plenty of courage but no goal punch. And it was sparked off by Ray Aggio, another Nuneaton discard who has found his form since he left.

Both players also had a hand in the first goal – scored after 18 minutes by John Dyer who looked well off-side when he thumped the ball past Reg Edwards from close range. It was the same old story from Nuneaton – a tale of hard work in defence, effort in midfield and struggles up front.

During the first-half they matched Worcester at the back and in the middle of the park, but their efforts at goal during the whole of the 90 minutes hardly tested the City rearguard. Derek Brown had an overhead kick saved by keeper Bob Knight and some wild shots whistled high and wide. Otherwise Knight and his defenders held Borough's front runners in a tight grip. And as soon as the first City goal was scored the writing was on the wall for the Manor Park side.

Borough could not get enough men into the City 18-yard box to trouble the home defenders. Yet with just a shade more punch and skill up front they could have made things a lot more difficult for the championship chasers.

City's first half goal came when Aggio found John Inglis, who created a load of trouble in the air for the Borough defence. This time Inglis appeared to try a shot, but the ball went to Lobban and through for Dyer to score. Borough's protests that the goal was offside were waved aside.

After the interval City began to get on top and Reg Edwards denied them a goal with a tremendous 55th minute save. He flung himself across his goal to push out a 25-yard shot from Worcester midfielder Roger Barton, which looked a goal all the way. Then came Lobban's big moment, after a goalmouth scramble sparked off by a Ray Aggio centre. It was headed out by Len Harris to Roger Jones whose first time shot was blocked by the full-back. Jones had another goal attempt from the rebound before the ball went loose to Lobban, whose shot was stopped on the line by Wilkinson, but Lobban managed to force the ball home.

Aston Offered Help By Derek Dougan

Nuneaton Borough centre-half Stan Aston, sacked by the club, has had an offer of help – from Professional Footballers' Association chairman Derek Dougan.

The tough-tackling defender, who made nearly 300 appearances for Borough, said: "He rang me last night and we had a ten minute chat.

"He advised me to get in touch with PFA secretary Clive Lloyd and offered to help as much as he could." Aston was sacked along with full-back John Burckitt for failing to turn up for an away match. Both players have appealed against the decision.

Both players have sent details of the case to the Southern League. "We should hear in the next couple of days," said the centre-half.

Hillingdon Borough v Nuneaton Borough 27-03-1971

Hillingdon: Lowe, Batt, Stanley, Higginson, Newcombe, Moore, Fairchild, Bishop, Reeve, Carter, Knox. Sub: Maynard.

Borough: Edwards, Jones, Harris, Lewis, Wilkinson, Goodall, Smith, Cutler, Jacques, Shinton, Allen. Sub: Storer.

Borough made the journey to Hillingdon to play a Southern League Premier Division game.

Paul Cutler and Tony Jacques, two of the highest scoring forwards in Borough's history, missed chances at Hillingdon that would have made all the difference. They have netted only eight short of 200 goals between them – but the Royal Blues' struggles have taken their toll. The chances they once gobbled up are now being missed.

Nuneaton Borough 1970-1979 – Part 1



The defence worked magnificently to hold Hillingdon to one goal, scored after 23 minutes by midfield player Tommy Higginson, who skippered Brentford last season. But after the interval Nuneaton tightened up their play, developed their game and made the home side look rocky.

Determination in defence, led by Dave Goodall, and determination in midfield, inspired by Dave Lewis, helped them to lift themselves back into the game. The same sort of grit was there up front – but the goal touch was not. Cutler on 94 goals for Borough, flashed a header over the top from a corner and then was put clear by Malcolm Allen only to delay his shot and allow Langley to get back and clear off the line.

Jacques, who needs only two more goals to hit the 100 mark, stretched goalkeeper Vince Low into a fingertip save when in the past he would have had no chance. And in the closing stages he was inches away from a goal after he had run on to a Stephen Storer centre. Few teams get as many clear cut chances as that away from home – and misses are more critical and more exaggerated when a side is struggling near the bottom range of the league ladder.



Paul Cutler flashes a header over the top at Hillingdon – one of the chances that got away as Borough staged a determined, but goalless, second half rally. Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune

The defence appears to have won back its confidence. Goalkeeper Reg Edwards shook off a nervous start and the back four soaked up a lot of Hillingdon pressure without cracking. And Higginson's goal had an element of luck about it. Winger Tommy Knox drove a tremendous shot goalwards and it rebounded off Alan Jones as he tried to make a clearance. Higginson was on the spot to snap up the rebound and score with the Borough defence wrong-footed.

Nuneaton Borough v Bath City 29-03-1971

Borough: Edwards, Jones, Wilkinson, Goodall, Kavanagh, Harris, M. Allen, Smith, Cutler, Jacques, Shinton. Sub: Storer.

Nuneaton welcomed Bath City to Manor Park for a Southern League Premier Division fixture.

Tony Jacques last night assured himself of a place in Borough's hall of fame when he became only the second player in the club's history to reach the 100 goal mark. He

grabbed the two he needed as Borough suddenly found their scoring touch to snatch a dramatic win over Bath City.

For weeks Borough have struggled to score. Yet, in the space of four minutes last night, they rattled home three goals to sink Bath. In that short space of time everything that has been going wrong for them in the penalty area suddenly went right as first Goodall then Jacques and later Cutler found the net. There were no sudden dramatic improvements in their play, no few moments of magic that suddenly swept away the gloom.

Jacques deservedly stole the limelight with his goals – but the man who made the running was Roger Smith. He turned in a superbly skilful display in midfield, had a hand in three of the goals – and never stopped running. Paul Cutler also maintained his improved form up front. And if things had gone as well for Borough throughout the match as they did in the closing stages they could well have doubled their score.

Jacques had given them a 61st minute lead after a Roger Smith centre and a Dave Goodall challenge left him with time to pick his spot. Twenty-two minutes later Goodall made it 2-0 with a brave header in the six yard box after Shinton had nodded back another Smith cross. And then the fans, starved of success this season, rose to acclaim Jacques as he reached his ton. This time Shinton made the running for the 85th minute effort.

Two minutes later Cutler nodded in a Smith free-kick at the near post to complete the rout and grab his 95th goal for the club. And Borough had scored four goals at home in a league match for the first time since way back in the early part of the season when Margate were beaten 4-1. Sadly the night when the goals came back was witnessed by only 835 fans on the rainswept Manor Park terraces – the lowest crowd of the season for a league game.

Football Club Meets With Fans

Nuneaton Borough chairman Alf Scattergood last night met the Manor Park fans in one of the most frank confrontations in the club's history. He put the supporters in the picture at a packed Borough Social Club and talked about the cost of running the club and the directors' plans for the future. Mr Scattergood, who took over as chairman at the annual meeting told them:

- The club is £6,000 in the red and is costing £500 a week to run;
- Player manager Malcolm Allen is staying with the club, although he did not specify in what capacity;
- The club could have a reserve side next season;
- If more money is required to carry out the plans then the directors will make it available;
- And that Borough are among eight Southern League clubs earmarked for Football League status if the proposed reorganisation plans go through.

About the financial position the chairman said: "The situation is critical. We need an average Southern League gate of 5,000 to break even."

Nuneaton Borough 1970-1979 – Part 1



About Malcolm Allen he said: “We have come to an agreement that he will definitely be employed with the club next season – in what capacity I am not going to say yet.”

And about the possibility of a big name player taking over an important position with the club next season, the chairman said: “We have already interviewed various people, but they must not be named because they are still under contract to their present clubs.

“But as you know I promised we would look for a character – I referred to a man in the Dave Mackay mould. We are determined to get the right people along with Malcolm to make this a good club.”

Mr Scattergood, player-manager Malcolm Allen, and the directors, answered questions ranging from finance to team tactics during the two hour soccer talk-in. The forum was hailed by the majority of the fans as a big step forward for the club. And the chairman promised: “We intend to hold more, perhaps two or three a season, so that the fans know what’s going on. He said that the club has investigated many ways of improving the financial position.

“We have thought of increasing the share capital of the club by £1,000 to £2,000. If we thought we could get a sale for these shares on the market we would definitely float an extra 2,000.”



The crowd that packed the Nuneaton Borough Social Club at Manor Park last night for club chairman Mr Alf Scattergood’s meet-the-fans forum, which was hailed as a tremendous success.

Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune

On the question of having a full-time squad, something that has cropped up over the years, Mr Scattergood said: “Under the present financial position we could not do this next season.”

League Clubs Selfish Says Borough Chairman

Nuneaton Borough chairman Alf Scattergood today accused the Third and Fourth division clubs of having a “selfish attitude” towards reorganisation plans that would have let 12 new clubs into the Football League.

He said: “There would have been more clubs to share in the incidental perks that run into thousands of pounds a year.”

And he added: “In my opinion, it is as cheap, and perhaps cheaper, to run a club in the Fourth Division than in the Southern League.

“Travelling costs are no higher and they get those perks from the football pools, the FA Cup, League Cup, and so on.”

The league clubs rejected Football League management committee proposals to cut the size of the Third Division, regionise the Fourth – and let in 12 of the top non-leaguers.

Said the Borough chairman: “We are obviously disappointed, but it’s bound to crop up again and we must be ready.”

His number one aim is to put the Manor Park club back among the Southern League front runners: “What we must do now is to re-establish our gates, get a top position in the Southern League and do a Cambridge United,” he said.

“This gives us more breathing space so we should not be too disappointed from that point of view,” said the chairman. But the news hit the non-league world hard after the optimism of the past few weeks. They saw a chance of a change of heart among the lower Football League clubs – only to have the door again slammed shut in their faces.

Weymouth v Nuneaton Borough

03-04-1971

Weymouth: De-Rooy, Flay, Hill, Rounseville, Hobson, Bumstead, Bennett, Kearns, T. Allen, Adams, Ames. Sub: McCarthy.

Borough: Edwards, Jones, Kavanagh, M. Allen, Wilkinson, Goodall, Smith, Cutler, Harris, Shinton. Sub: Lewis.

Borough made the journey to The Rec to face Weymouth in a Southern League Premier Division game.

Borough’s 300 mile round trip to Dorset turned into a wasted journey when they were hustled out of their stride by a goal after just 27 seconds. And goalkeeper Reg Edwards, the 17-year-old starlet, must shoulder the blame for the goal. He had a chance to cut out a right wing cross and an opportunity to repair the damage before Weymouth front man Dave Bassett moved in to score. The incident led to a lot of nervous moments for the young goalkeeper in the early stages as Nuneaton fought to shake-off the setback.

He was troubled by a stream of high crosses that came out of the sun as Weymouth tried to cash in on their hammer blow. But Edwards recovered well to show character as well as potential. Borough managed to tighten up on the Terras’ eager front line – but they could not apply any real pressure.

But Borough had few chances and the Terras went close on a number of occasions after their goal. Winger Dave Ames fluffed a golden chance. Borough defended well and worked hard in midfield, where Roger Smith had another busy match alongside Len Harris and Malcolm Allen. But their build-ups were slow and they played into the hands of long serving Tony Hobson, and his uncompromising row of defenders.

The chances Nuneaton have created in their previous two matches were not there. Tony Jacques, Paul Cutler and Alan Shinton all struggled and Borough were never that much on



top to be able to throw extra men forward in support. Both sides had to be careful on a dustbowl of a pitch, unusual for the Rec, and in a swirling wind that played tricks with the ball. The conditions played a major part in a match that promised so much in the early seconds, but fell down flat.

A point would have been an achievement – but it was never on the cards. After Bennett scored there was only one way the game could have gone.

Bromsgrove Rovers v Nuneaton Boro' 05-04-1971

Bromsgrove: Hooper, Reynolds, Wood, Adams, Field, Broadbent, Chambers, M. Hellawell, Craddock, Merrick, Taylor. Sub: Deehan.

Borough: Crump, Jones, Wilkinson, Goodall, Kavanagh, Lewis, Harris, Billington, R. Allen, Jacques, Brown. Sub: M. Allen.

Borough made the journey to the Victoria Ground to face Bromsgrove Rovers in a Midland Floodlit Cup game.

In a fast moving game, full of goalmouth incidents, they outskilled the West Midlands Leaguers with a refreshing display of attacking soccer. Tony Jacques notched two goals, Brian Billington hit his first for the club – but the man behind the win was Bobby Allen, who can slump from brilliance to mediocrity and back again. He starred as man of the match in his front running role.

He once again showed a glimpse of the tremendous potential that made him a top bracket youngster. He had a dynamic effect on the team up front – and Dave Goodall and Ernie Wilkinson turned in storming displays at the back. Goodall kept Rovers' top scorer Alan Craddock in a stranglehold and Wilkinson shook off a shaky start to command in the air in the 18 yard box.

But things looked black after 26 minutes when Rovers' winger Mike Hellawell cracked in a tremendous shot with Fred Crump studded on his line. It was a short-lived lead. Less than a minute later Bobby Allen produced an electrifying burst down the right touch-line to set up an equaliser for Billington.

The match again exploded into life with two goals in four minutes just before half-time. John Chambers restored Rovers' lead with a shot from the edge of the box which was deflected by Goodall. Crump was stuck on the edge of his six yard line as the ball bobbled goalwards and tucked itself into the far corner. Again Nuneaton equalised – with a superbly taken goal from Tony Jacques. Harris chipped the ball forward, Jacques hit it on the volley and it ripped into the back of the net.

The winner came 20 minutes from the end and Jacques was against the scorer. Len Harris set up the chance. He closed in smartly as Bromsgrove keeper Chris Hooper dropped a ball he could have left. Harris steered it across the goalmouth and into the path of Jacques who ran in and bludgeoned it into the net. Borough were then at their confident best, but Rovers were far from finished and the Nuneaton defence had some close shaves.

Stan Aston Wins Appeal

Nuneaton Borough centre-half Stan Aston has won his appeal against his sacking by the Manor Park club – but is almost certain to be given a free transfer. He said today: "As far as I am concerned I am back to square one. I am a player with Nuneaton again and will turn up as normal. I am pleased with the result, there are no two ways about that, but I have no hard feelings against Malcolm – none whatsoever.

His appeal was upheld by a Southern League Management sub-committee, but one by full-back and skipper John Burckitt was dismissed.

Hotel Owner Joins Manor Park Board

Kenilworth hotel owner Mr Ken Peel has joined the Nuneaton Borough board – and will become director in charge of finance.

The appointment, announced today, increases the Manor Park board to eight as the club prepares to launch its plan for next season.

Mr Peel, a former Coventry bank manager, owns a hotel and country club at Chesford, near Kenilworth, and is an official of the West Midlands League Club, Coventry Amateurs.

Nuneaton Borough v Lockheed 08-04-1971

Borough: Crump, Jones, Wilkinson, Goodall, Kavanagh, Harris, Lewis, Smith, Brown, Jacques, R. Allen. Sub: M. Allen.

Lockheed: Lightfoot, Davis, Pattison, Shanahan, Taylor, Shrimpton, Montgomery, K. Jones, Brady, Whitehead, Flanagan. Sub: Matthews.

Borough welcomed Lockheed to Manor Park for a Midland Floodlit Cup match.

A Gerry Kavanagh penalty, eight minutes from time, rescued Borough from the brink of defeat against Lockheed. The Brakes had led from the 36th minute and looked like hanging on as the match moved into its closing stages. Then Bobby Allen was held by Lockheed goalkeeper Chris Lightfoot as he shaped up to score. Kavanagh, who missed his only other spot kick for the Borough, took a ten yard run-up, checked himself – and clipped the ball into the net.

After that Nuneaton launched a last ditch effort in a bid to prise a win from a disappointing game which was watched by only 490 fans. Lockheed, whose line-up was studded with players from in an around the Nuneaton area, should have scored before top scorer John Brady shot them ahead. Ex-Borough winger Jim Flanagan laid on the pass for Brady, who turned inside full back Alan Jones and hammered in an angled drive as Fred Crump tried to block the route to goal.

Borough brought back Roger Smith to replace Brian Billington in midfield and Lockheed included amateurs Ian Montgomery, Billy Shanahan and Keith Jones.

Much of Borough's play was stereotyped. They swung a stream of crosses into the middle – and played into the hands of the Lockheed defence. Brakes' centre-half Steve Pattison was too much in command of his 18 yard box to allow a lot to slip through. He held 102-goal Tony Jacques in a tight grip with an impressive display.

Aston Ordered To Report For Training Every Day

Nuneaton Borough centre-half Stan Aston was last night given a free transfer by the club – and ordered to report for training every day. Said Manor Park chairman Alf Scattergood: "He has been instructed to train every day to get himself fit in case he is required. He hasn't trained for three weeks."

Aston, one of the club's longest serving players – he rejoined Nuneaton in 1968 after starting his career with them as a youngster – is on contract until after the end of this season. The centre-half's name has already been linked with Stafford Rangers, managed by ex-Borough forward Roy Chapman.

Maurice Setters For Borough Manager?

Maurice Setters, one-time star of Manchester United and Coventry City and one of the most colourful characters in British soccer, could be the new player-manager of Nuneaton Borough. Setters, now with Charlton, met the Manor Park board last night and watched the first-half of the Floodlit Cup game with Lockheed.

Afterwards club chairman Mr Alf Scattergood disclosed: "We have had several interviews with him but this is the first time he had met us at the ground. He added: "What is holding up the procedure is that he has had a cartilage operation and his leg has not responded as it should have done.

"There is a doubt about him playing football again and we don't want to commit ourselves to a player-manager who couldn't play."

Nuneaton Borough v Cambridge City 10-04-1971

Borough: Edwards, Jones, Harris, Lewis, Wilkinson, Goodall, Smith, Cutler, Jacques, R. Allen, M. Allen. **Sub:** Kavanagh.

Cambridge: Peacock, Way, Keenan, Elliott, Baker, Stevens, Hyde, Bailey, Hunter, Marshall, Smith. **Sub:** Knight.

Borough welcomed Cambridge City to Manor Park for a Southern League Premier Division game.

Borough increased their end of the season problems when they tossed away the lead – and two more points. After Bobby Allen had shot them ahead ten minutes after the start, they lost their grip and Cambridge took over. Before half-time City had opened up a 3-1 lead which they held to move to the top of the table and push Nuneaton closer to the bottom.

Borough went to pieces in midfield and this led to pressure

and panic at the back as City were able to push forward. Player-manager Malcolm Allen and his midfield partners David Lewis and Roger Smith held the key to the dramatic turnabout. Allen struggled badly and could not get into the game. Lewis, who has been troubled by a nagging leg injury, was sluggish and Smith's undisciplined wanderings pulled Borough's system out of shape.

Consequently, the back four struggled under pressure and the three front runners found themselves isolated from the rest of the pack. Borough managed to stage a rally in the last half-hour as City rested on their lead, but they lacked confidence and sharpness – and the game slipped away from them.



Borough defender Dave Goodall, fights an airborne battle with two Cambridge City players during Saturday's game at Manor Park – which Borough lost 3-1 after taking the lead. Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune

City's goals, between the 25th and 44th minutes, came from Ian Hunter and Stan Marshall, who notched two.

Chelmsford City v Nuneaton Borough 12-04-1971

Borough made the journey to New Writtle Street to face Chelmsford City in a Southern League Premier Division game.

Colchester cast off Terry Price put the skids under Nuneaton and sent them crashing to their heaviest Southern League defeat of the season. The Chelmsford outside right had a hand in four of their six goals as Borough were laid on the rack and torn apart. He teased the Manor Park side's defence, tormented full back Len Harris – and left a question mark hanging over their Southern League Premier Division status.

Borough had no answer to the winger's speed and hard hit lethal crosses as their Easter Monday trip to Essex turned into a nightmare. They were reduced to shreds before half-time and City threatened double figures against a Nuneaton side which had the worst game for weeks. Player-manager Malcolm Allen started off in a sweeper role in and around the Borough back four in a bid to plug the gaps. But Price soon unbuttoned the defence.

For most of the match it was one-way traffic and Borough were sent scurrying back down the motorway with their spirits on the floor. Price showed the danger early on when he opened the Borough defence to lay on the first Chelmsford goal for Pat Ferry after ten minutes. Twenty-five minutes later, after a free-kick, he centred for Butcher to beat Edwards.



The keeper got a hand to the ball, but could not stop it from going in. And, just before half-time West made it 3-0 from the edge of the box when the ball ran loose as Malcolm Allen and Butcher both challenged at the same time. Borough hardly had any second-half breathing space before Ferry was presented with another chance on a plate by Price.

By this time Malcolm Allen had forsaken his sweeper role, moved into midfield and pushed Brian Billington forward. But it didn't make the slightest difference. Price carved out a couple more chances which were missed before the game ended with three goals in three minutes – two from City and one for Borough. Butcher made it 5-0 after Dilsworth had made the running in the 97th minute. And, straight from the kick-off, Price rounded off his tremendous display when he started the move that led to City's sixth, again from Butcher. Then seconds before the game ended, Cutler scored for Nuneaton.

Nuneaton Borough v Chelmsford City 13-04-1971

Borough: Edwards, Jones, Kavanagh, Harris, Wilkinson, Goodall, Smith, R. Allen, Shinton, Cutler, Billington. **Sub:** M. Allen.

Chelmsford: Taylor, Smith, Butterfield, Harrity, Loughton, Delea, Price, Butcher, Ferry, West, Dilsworth. **Sub:** Thornley.

Borough welcomed Chelmsford City to Manor Park for an Easter Tuesday Southern League Premier Division fixture.

Paul Cutler nodded an inch perfect header to help Borough pick up a point in their bid to make mathematically sure of a place in the Southern League Premier Division for another season. The London-based striker scored in the 50th minute of a drab game, before Nuneaton almost tossed away the match.

Chelmsford hauled themselves back into the game with a 65th minute equaliser from winger Terry Price, the player who destroyed Borough in their 6-1 thrashing in Essex the night before. And, with only seconds to go, Price went desperately close to a winner. He had one shot blocked before he was foiled by a brave save from Borough keeper Reg Edwards.

Borough learned a lot of lessons from the previous night. Gerry Kavanagh was drafted in at left-back to keep a tight rein on Price and the City front line lost a lot of its threat. But with Price in check and the Borough front runners also forced to work hard for openings, much of the game was fought out in midfield – and it was dull.

There was a scare for Borough early on when Dilsworth stumbled into the penalty box after an Ernie Wilkinson challenge. But Borough's bright start to the second half, sparked off by Cutler's goal, gave the match a much needed shot in the arm. Five minutes later, Len Harris hit the crossbar when he took careful aim and let fly after the ball had been headed out from the City defence. Borough improved and Bobby Allen ended a 30 yard run with a shot that goalkeeper Laurie Taylor did well to turn over the bar.

They were brought down to earth with Price's equaliser. Most of City's attacks had come down the left hand side where

Dilsworth proved an awkward customer for the Nuneaton defence. But this time the ball came across from right-back Bobby Smith and Dilsworth's persistence helped to create the chance for Price.

Malcolm Allen came on twenty minutes from the end after Alan Jones limped off with a leg injury. He steadied the side down when things could have gone against them – and he created a chance for Roger Smith, only to see the ball roll wide. In between times Reg Edwards pulled off a fine save from Pat Ferry and then – with the final seconds ticking away, thwarted Price's victory bid.

Crump Among Five Not Retained

Goalkeeper Fred Crump, one of the longest serving members of the Manor Park club, is among five players who will not be retained by Nuneaton Borough at the end of this season.

Crump, a star in the 1966-67 FA Cup run, will be released – along with centre-half Stan Aston, midfield player Brian Billington and forwards Terry Owen and Bobby Allen.

Margate v Nuneaton Borough 17-04-1971

Margate: Clark, Yorath, Lloyd, Clayton, Paton, Houston, Jarman, Cochrane, Hyman, Brown, Baber. **Sub:** Wickens.

Borough: Edwards, Jones, Wilkinson, Goodall, Kavanagh, Harris, Lewis, Smith, Cutler, Shinton, R. Allen. **Sub:** M. Allen.

Borough made the journey to Hartsdown Park to face Margate in a Southern League Premier Division game.

Borough moved to within one point of safety – after a cliff-hanger of a finish. The Kent side equalised with a few minutes left and pounded away at the Nuneaton goal in a bid to force a winner. But Borough clung to their hard earned point which went a long way towards clearing up the confusion in the bottom of the table area.

It took a crazy goal from Roger Smith to help to sort out the doubts. His 37th minute shot hit the far post, rebounded – and went into the net off the back of the helpless Margate keeper Alan Clark. The goalkeeper had been beaten by the shot, and there was nothing he could do as the ball rolled over the line.

That goal gave Nuneaton a point, but a string of tremendous saves from Reg Edwards and a magnificent display by defensive kingpin Ernie Wilkinson formed the back-bone of Borough's display. Edwards was in constant action in the closing minutes when Nuneaton showed signs of panic for the first time in the match. And one of his saves, just before the Kent side levelled the scoreline, had brilliance written all over it.

Ex-Spurs star Eddie Clayton, who starred for the home side in midfield, lobbed a free-kick goalwards from just outside the 18-yard box. It was on its way underneath the crossbar

when Edwards launched himself across his goal to claw it out and force it away. For one split second the goalkeeper's hand actually trapped the ball under the bar – and Borough's survival hopes were suddenly frozen into one moment.

Edwards was beaten a few minutes later when Hughie Cochrane chipped the ball goalwards and it went in off the far post. But his saves and the inspiration of Wilkinson lifted Borough's fighting qualities and they held out for their most important point of the season.

New Borough Manager To Be Announced

Nuneaton Borough, whose name has been linked with some of soccer's top names, may give the player-manager's job to a virtual "unknown". He is Peterborough United midfielder, David Pleat, who will see the Manor Park board later today – and is almost certain to get the job.

Said Borough chairman, Alf Scattergood: "He hasn't been appointed, but we have told him we would like him to become our player-manager and we have only to agree on the terms."

Pleat, who is in his mid-twenties and a fully qualified FA coach, has been recommended to Nuneaton by some of the top people inside the Football League.

"He has been tipped as a top manager of the future," said Mr Scattergood. "His ambition is to become a Football League manager." Pleat's link with Nuneaton comes as a surprise after speculation about Maurice Setters, George Curtis and Dave Gibson in connection with the job.

Setters was interviewed, but medical reports on a knee injury ruled him out. Explained Mr Scattergood: "He said himself that he didn't think he would be able to give the service we require – meaning that he doesn't think he will be able to play a lot himself."

If today's meeting goes through without any setbacks Pleat will become the youngest player-manager in the Southern League. "A younger man is bound to be more effective on the field," said the club chairman. "He will be out there driving the players on for his own good."

Pleat, who has played for Luton and Exeter, as well as Peterborough, still lives at Luton. But he would be full-time at Nuneaton and live in the town. Today's board meeting is to finalise terms. "We have agreed on the basic wage, but we have to decide on the fringe benefits," said Mr Scattergood.

If everything goes through Pleat will take charge on May 1 so that he can have a full close season to prepare his plans. The board will also discuss the future of Malcolm Allen, who has been team boss at Manor Park for 12 months and he has already been promised a job at Manor Park next season.

The board is also expected to confirm plans for a reserve team for next season. This has already been discussed, but the club has to decide on a league for the second team.

Pleat Agrees Terms

David Pleat has agreed terms with Nuneaton Borough and will take over as the club's new player-manager at the end of the month. And Malcolm Allen, in charge of the team for the past 12 months, will be his right hand man – as assistant manager.

Pleat has a few things to settle at Peterborough before he signs his Manor Park contract on May 1 and takes over officially as team boss.

Nuneaton Borough v Worcester City 19-04-1971

Borough welcomed Worcester City to Manor Park to play a Southern League Premier Division fixture.

Paul Cutler scored his 98th goal for Nuneaton last night to clinch Premier Division safety. He made sure that new player-manager David Pleat will take charge of a top flight non-league side when he takes over in May. And he could have had a hat-trick and joined Tony Jacques in the 100 goals bracket as determined Borough picked up two vital points.

The goal, in the eighth minute, followed one of the best moves of the match and gave the Manor Park side a well earned win. Roger Smith started off the raid and when Alan Shinton centred, Bobby Allen unsighted the Worcester defence as he went in for a header. The ball ran to Cutler, who lashed it past the stranded City keeper Bob Knight.



Paul Cutler shapes up for the goal that meant Southern League Premier Division safety for Nuneaton Borough. Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune

That settled the game, but Borough packed enough grit and effort into their play to deserve the win. They were solid in defence, worked hard in midfield – and showed a lot more flair up front where strong running Bobby Allen had one of his best home games. Allen, a retained list borderline case, has been told officially that he will be released. But he showed last night that there is still time for a rethink.

After Cutler's goal Borough had a scare when Mick Lewis hit an upright after his first shot had been blocked by Edwards. But, for the next 25 minutes, the game threatened to die as the sides struggled for midfield command. It woke up again after the change of ends when Dave Lewis had two goal attempts in as many minutes.

Nuneaton Borough 1970-1979 – Part 1



Cutler should have scored when he had a free header from one of a stream of right wing crosses from Bobby Allen. And then Cutler had a shot kicked off the line by McEwan after Goodall had headed on a corner from Harris.

With five minutes to go Edwards made a brave save to foil what looked a certain equaliser. He was put in desperate trouble by a suicidal back pass from Brian Billington into the path of McEwan and Aggio, but saved at their feet. Just before the end Billington, who had one of his best games in midfield had a chance to make amends with a shot from the edge of the box. He mis-hit the ball and it ballooned high into the covered stand at the Cock and Bear End.

Bedworth United v Nuneaton Borough 22-04-1971

Bedworth: Crosby, Sheppard, Howkins, Anderson, Busby, Liggins, Hambridge, Storer, Mason, Eades, Parker. Sub: Heal.

Borough: Crump, Harris, Wilkinson, Goodall, Kavanagh, Lewis, Billington, M. Allen, R. Allen, Shinton, Cutler. Sub: Aston.

Borough travelled to The Oval to face Bedworth United in a President's Cup game.

Bedworth United, the club that broke the no-hope barrier after years of struggles, wrote their name back on the local soccer map last night with their first win over Nuneaton for 14 years. And the players who made it possible were Steve Storer and John Mason, both discarded by Borough after short spells at Manor Park.

They scored the goals that gave Bedworth a richly deserved win in a President's Cup game that almost turned into a grudge match. Played under the guise of a friendly, it was riddled with needle - and Borough defenders Ernie Wilkinson and Dave Lewis were booked. The game was reminiscent of the tough clashes in the past between two teams who were once arch rivals on the local soccer scene.

But Bedworth – Gordon Dougall's one hundred percenters – kept their heads and won the trophy which is to be played for annually by the two clubs. From the early minutes when Fred Crump made a fine save from John Mason, United always looked the team more likely to score. And they won the game in the 18-yard box, despite a lot of midfield possession by Borough, who had pressure – but no goal power.

Storer, one of the stars of the Bedworth side, shot them ahead with a well taken goal in the 20th minute. He lashed the ball home with his left foot from just outside the six yard box. But Borough should have been level when Malcolm Allen and Dave Lewis set up a golden chance for Cutler. His shot, on the turn in front of the net, was pushed over the top by John Crosby.

Borough tried to hit back just before half-time but they lost their chance and Mason increased Bedworth's lead five minutes after the break. Two minutes later Paul Cutler put Nuneaton back into the game with a far post header which gave him his 99th goal for the club.

Nuneaton searched hard for an equaliser, but they lacked

inspiration in their play, despite a hard working midfield performance from Malcolm Allen. They were always in danger of losing their heads and the Wilkinson-Lewis bookings underlined their frustration.

Nuneaton Borough v Dover

24-04-1971

Borough: Crump, Harris, Kavanagh, Lewis, Wilkinson, Goodall, R. Allen, R. Smith, Shinton, Cutler, M. Allen. Sub: Billington.

Dover: Bowley, Cartwright, Hall, Hurley, Carragher, Robinson, Fursden, Gould, Moy, Clewlow, Harrison. Sub: Armstrong.

Borough welcomed Dover to Manor Park to play a Southern League Premier Division game.

Paul Cutler and Fred Crump, who played major roles in Borough's most successful team, left Manor Park on Saturday with mixed feelings – and uncertainty about the future. Crump, about to be released by the club after five seasons, played his last Southern League game for Borough. And Cutler, whose goal against Dover was his 100th in Nuneaton's colours, has been told he can stay – providing he lives in the area. Both players were in the record breaking 1966-67 side – but both are now at the crossroads.

Cutler's goal, which made him only the third Borough player to reach the 100 goal mark was watched by only a handful of fans. Less than 900 people huddled under the stands out of the rain, saw Cutler join Ken Plant and Tony Jacques as a century maker. But his 65th minute effort failed to end Nuneaton's season of set-backs on a winning note against a determined Dover side.



A picture for Fred Crump's scrapbook of Manor Park memories – the last goal he conceded in the Southern League after five seasons with the club. It gave Dover a point, but Crump pulled off a number of brave saves.

Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune

Dover twice hit back from behind to pick up a well-won point and take the edge off an afternoon that should have belonged to Crump and Cutler. Appalling conditions – constant driving rain on an already sodden pitch – made it almost impossible for good football to be played. The game was, understandably, riddled with free kicks and stoppages as the players slipped and slithered.

Neither side managed to command and hold midfield and the front runners lacked imagination and flair against two solid defences. Alan Shinton shot Nuneaton ahead before Robinson equalised for Dover and the teams were still deadlocked after the break. Cutler's 65th minute goal

restored Borough's lead and raised the biggest cheer of the afternoon, but this had some of its importance taken away by a Chris Hurley leveller for the Kent side late in the game.



Paul Cutler is about to enter Nuneaton Borough's record books as the ball flies towards the net for his 100th goal for the club.

Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune

And, in the closing minutes, Chris Robinson, who turned in a hard running performance in the number eleven shirt for Dover, hit the woodwork with Crump beaten. The game also provided a farewell for Malcolm Allen – who was in charge for the last time in the Southern League.



Fred Crump's farewell from the fans who waited as he walked sadly off the Manor Park pitch at the end of Saturday's game to look for a new club after five years at Manor Park.

Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune

Telford United v Nuneaton Borough 28-04-1971

Telford: Weir, Grice, Richards, Shepherd, Bright, Davies, Roberts, Amey (Doodson), Seaton, Thompson, Corbett.

Borough: Crump, Harris, Kavanagh, Lewis, Wilkinson, Goodall, Billington, R. Allen, Cutler, Smith, M. Allen. Sub: Jones.

Borough made the journey to the Buck's Head to play Telford United in a Midland Floodlit Cup match.

Two late goals saved Nuneaton's blushes after they had looked in danger of being beaten by a Telford team which included eight amateurs – five of whom were making their debuts. Borough were right out of touch in the first-half when the enthusiastic home side gave better than they got and, on balance, deserved to be leading at the break

Keith Shepherd got a goal on his first outing when he headed in a left-wing cross after 25 minutes. It inspired the home side and they carried the fight to Borough who looked ragged and out of sorts and whose attack made little impression

on a quick tackling home rearguard. But in the later stages Nuneaton's greater stamina began to tell and at last their superior ability showed itself.

Brian Billington hit a post with one shot and there were one or two other close calls for Telford before Ernie Wilkinson finally headed the leveller from Billington's centre in the 72nd minute. As Telford ran out of steam Nuneaton brought heavy pressure to bear and five minutes later Gerry Kavanagh slammed a fierce shot past Phil Weir from just inside the penalty area.

Telford fought gamely after that, but rarely looked like retrieving the situation. And in the end Borough deserved their win, albeit by the narrowest of margins. After the game Telford skipper Roger Grice received the Midland Floodlit Cup from the competition secretary Geoff Harrower.

Southern League Premier Division 1970-71

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Yeovil Town	42	25	7	10	66	31	57
Cambridge City	42	22	11	9	66	38	55
Romford	42	23	9	10	63	42	55
Hereford United	42	23	8	11	71	53	54
Chelmsford City	42	20	11	11	61	32	51
Barnet	42	18	14	10	69	49	50
Bedford Town	42	20	10	12	62	46	50
Wimbledon	42	20	8	14	72	54	48
Worcester City	42	20	8	14	61	46	48
Weymouth	42	14	16	12	64	47	44
Dartford	42	15	12	15	53	51	42
Dover	42	16	9	17	64	63	41
Margate	42	15	10	17	64	70	40
Hillingdon Borough	42	17	6	19	61	68	40
Bath City	42	13	12	17	48	68	38
Nuneaton Borough	42	12	12	18	43	66	36
Telford United	42	13	8	21	64	70	34
Poole Town	42	14	6	22	57	75	34
King's Lynn	42	11	7	24	44	67	29
Ashford Town	42	8	13	21	52	86	29
Kettering Town	42	8	11	23	48	84	27
Gloucester City	42	6	10	26	34	81	22

Hednesford Town — 1st Qualifying Round

Borough made the journey to the Cross Keys to play Hednesford Town in a 1st Qualifying Round FA Cup tie.

Hednesford: Cullen, Taylor, Sedgewick, Babb, Palin, Dennison, Lycett, Shinton, Percival, Westwood, Rushton.

Borough: Crump, Jones, Aston, Goodall, Wilkinson, Boot, Smith, Cutler, Punter, Jacques, Allen.

Borough took the first anxious steps along an FA Cup trail that could turn back the clock. And Malcolm Allen, star of their great Cup run in 1966-67, set up the goal that gave Nuneaton their first win in the competition for three years.

Allen went on as substitute for Brian Punter with half-an-hour to go and, in the 70th minute, turned the ball back across the Hednesford penalty box to Tony Jacques to snap up the winner.

That was the tension breaker – the goal the 300-plus Borough fans had made the short trip along the Watling Street to see. But it took an all-round fighting performance from the Manor Park side to shake off the fierce challenge from the West Midland Leaguers.

Borough had to pull out all the stops in an exciting, action-packed first qualifying round tie that meant so much to their hopes for the season.

And the team showed its character and grit after Hednesford centre-forward Larry Percival had cancelled out a 26th minute Tony Jacques' goal. At that moment it looked as if Borough would have to pull out everything to get a replay – let alone win.

But if the Cross Keys ground is the graveyard for Southern League clubs, then Nuneaton came back from the dead. They hit back to become only the third side in the past two years to win on the rutted, sloping pitch.

The two first half goals were each scored against the run of play. When Jacques slotted home his first, Hednesford had done most of the early forcing. And Percival's 37th minute

gift equaliser – from a Dave Goodall back pass – was scored at a time when Borough had begun to take command.

In the second half, each team had only one real clear cut chance – Jacques netted Borough's and Hednesford missed theirs. Just before Jacques' winner, the ball flew across the face of the Nuneaton goal and Hednesford winger Lycett was only a heartbeat away from the cross.

That was before Jacques moved on to Allen's pass, left three defenders standing and lashed the ball home. Jacques was swamped by his happy team-mates after the goal that put him on the winning side in an FA Cup tie for the first time since he joined the club.

Although a team effort, three Borough players earned particular praise – Roger Smith, Ernie Wilkinson and Stan Aston. And, of course, Tony Jacques, who has the knack of scoring goals that count, despite his critics on the terraces.

Smith covered a tremendous amount of work in midfield and Wilkinson, who took over the left back spot at the last minute, played as if he was tailor-made for the job. But Aston was outstanding in the heart of the defence, particularly in those vital first 25 minutes.

For Hednesford, midfield operator Shinton, a newcomer to their side,

outshone his team-mates with an all-out effort in the number eight shirt.

When it was all over, Malcolm Allen congratulated his players as they left the field. Borough fans cheered the team into the dressing rooms – they had waited a long time for that moment.

Lye Town — 2nd Qualifying Round

Borough welcomed Lye Town to Manor Park to play a 2nd Qualifying Round FA Cup tie.

Borough: Crump, Jones, Wilkinson, Goodall, Burckitt, Boot, Smith, Owen, R. Allen, Jacques, Cutler. Sub: Punter.

Lye: Everton, Peakman, Hulston, Wood, Instone, Plant, Thomas, Campbell, Fogarty, Kynnersley, Dams. Sub: Johnson.

Borough chalked up their 13th win in 16 games and their fifth victory in a row as they brushed aside West Midland Leaguers Lye Town.

Despite their success, the crowds have been struggling around the early 2,000s mark and Saturday's win went a long way towards supplying one of the answers for this. The present Borough side has grit, team spirit and ability to maintain a consistent winning streak, but it lacks flair – that extra sparkle that separates a workmanlike side from one that sets the fans talking – but that will come.



Goal number two against Lye – Dave Goodall forces the ball into the net from a corner as keeper Everton makes a brave bid to block the effort.

Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune

Malcolm Allen has had to rebuild from the wreckage of a team that crammed the terraces with disillusionment – he has to coax them back in a critical season for the club.

But Saturday's result, rather than the way it was achieved, will go a long way. There's nothing in soccer like FA Cup success that has the same instant impact on crowds. Much of Nuneaton's play lacked imagination, although they were never extended by poor opposition. Lye had only two serious shots at goal the whole of the match.

In fact, the game was more notable for the professional debut of Terry Owen and the sending off of Ernie Wilkinson more than anything else. Owen, from Mancetter Sports, signed professional before the kick-off, and his signing fulfilled a promise Allen made when he took over to give local players a chance.

Wilkinson was sent back to the dressing rooms early in the second half after a clash with ex-Bedworth striker Alan Fogarty, who kicked the Borough centre-half. Wilkinson retaliated with his fist and the referee had no alternative but to send him off. Fogarty was fortunate to escape scot-free.

Even when they were reduced to ten men, Nuneaton were able to dictate the match without much trouble. It was a lack lustre display which frustrated the fans who wanted a bagfull of goals – goals that Nuneaton promised but did not deliver.

The ones they notched were a 25-yarder from Mickey Boot, one forced over the line by Dave Goodall and the third from Tony Jacques with a shot into the roof of the net from an Owen centre. Lye were not given even a glimpse of a goal chance by the Nuneaton defence.

Even without injured centre-half Stan Aston, who is playing better than ever, the defence had Lye's energetic but struggling forward line in its pocket. It was the fourth game in a row in which the Manor Park side's rearguard has not

conceded a goal. And Borough have yet to be beaten in any cup competition at home this season.

Inside two years Nuneaton have gone from one extreme to the other. From the inconsistent but talent laden squad which pulled in the crowds during the 1968-69 campaign to the present honest, hard-working set-up which gets results. It all depends which way you look at it.

Stourbridge – 3rd Qualifying Round

Borough welcomed Stourbridge to Manor Park to play a 3rd Qualifying Round FA Cup tie.

Borough: Crump, Jones, Aston, Wilkinson, Burckitt, Boot, Smith, Owen, R. Allen, Jacques, Cutler. Sub: Billington.

Stourbridge: Edwards, Green, Stanley, Crompton, Davies, Taylor, Parkin, Bates, Holbutt, Cocker, McGrath. Sub: Carter.

Borough carried their Cup run to within 90 minutes of a First Round tie by the skin of their teeth on Saturday. But they had to fight to the bitter end of an incident packed clash that threatened, at any minute, to explode into a full scale brawl. Both sides were left to count the bruises after an hour and a half of hacking, kicking and chopping and knee high tackles.

It was a wonder no-one was sent off – and a miracle that not one player was booked as the teams stretched their ding-dong battle to the last kick. Some of the tackling would have brought a Rugby League crowd to their feet, but

referee Mr Civil turned a blind eye.

He handed out a couple of verbal warnings but did nothing else to calm the players as they traded kick for kick. At the very least, he could have called both skippers together for "a cut out the rough stuff" chat. At most, four players could have been back in the dressing rooms for an early bath.

Despite the rough stuff, the match had all the ingredients of an FA Cup tie – two teams who refused to yield an inch, bags of goalmouth incidents, a fight-back from Borough and a nail biting finish when Stourbridge twice went within an ace of a replay.

Tension that had built up on the terraces was demonstrated at the end when the Nuneaton fans greeted the final whistle with a roar of relief.

The hard tackling pattern was set early on – Stourbridge's teak hard Irish midfield player Pat McGrath was always in the thick of the action. McGrath, as tough as a shillelagh, was one of the players fortunate not to get his marching orders.

One of the others was Borough centre-forward Tony Jacques, who felled Stourbridge centre-half Davis. The defender went down as if pole-axed, was carried off and went to hospital for treatment to injuries to his face. Jacques could at least claim provocation. He was hacked and kicked from start to finish.

Jacques, who shrugs off the knocks in the hit and hurt department, had



Aston's header powers its way into the net – and Nuneaton are back on level terms after the shock of a 16th minute goal from Stourbridge striker Chick Bates.

Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune

the last laugh when he notched what proved to be the winning goal in the 60th minute. But the goal that turned the game for Borough came four minutes into the second half from centre-half Stan Aston. It was a superb far post header from a John Burckitt free-kick – and richly deserved by Aston who has been one of the cornerstones of Nuneaton's 12 match unbeaten run.

That cancelled out a 16th minute effort from livewire Stourbridge leader Chick Bates which stunned the crowd. The West Midland Leaguers showed from the outset that they did not intend to be pushovers for Nuneaton who entered the game with the confidence of their unbeaten spell behind them.

After 45 minutes it was obvious that Borough had a tremendous battle on their hands. Fortunately they refused to panic – and Aston's goal could not have come at a better time.



Borough centre-half Stan Aston climbs above Stourbridge defenders Taylor and Davis, to win an airborne battle to connect with John Burckitt's free-kick for Borough's first goal.

Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune

It was the signal for Nuneaton to break the grip that the Amblecote side had threatened to tighten on the game.

When Jacques shot the Manor Park side in front it looked all over – but Stourbridge were far from finished.

Borough survived two incredible goalmouth scrambles as the game swayed from end to end in the action packed closing stages. Both goals had narrow escapes before the referee's whistle signalled the end and assured Borough of their spot in the final qualifying round.

Tamworth – 4th Qualifying Round

Borough made the journey to Kettlebrook to play Tamworth in a 4th Qualifying Round FA Cup tie.

Tamworth: Richards, Whitehouse, Ball, Seedhouse, Newton, Jessop, Hall, Millard, K. Smith, Holmes, Morrow. Sub: Hope.

Borough: Crump, Jones, Aston, Wilkinson, Burckitt, Boot, R. Smith, Owen, Allen, Jacques, Cutler. Sub: Goodall.

Malcolm Allen, star of Borough's last great Cup run, watched his side carve out a replay from a granite hard fourth qualifying round battle at Tamworth – and then paid tribute to all of his players. Player-manager Allen, forced out of the side with a broken ankle, said: "They did a magnificent job.

Before the game I asked everyone for one hundred and ten per cent, and that's what they gave me."

Added Allen: "We must fancy our chances at home. It will be another physical battle, but we should see some open football. Our pitch is a lot bigger than Tamworth's and the playing surface is a lot better."

Looking back at Saturday's tension packed tie he said: "I didn't think they created a chance. As I saw it we created four, the goalkeeper stopped three and we got the other."

The goal that gave Borough their replay was an ice cool 37th minute penalty from John Burckitt – his first for the

club. He showed no signs of nerves, but the terraces almost shuddered with silent tension as he stepped up and beat Tamworth keeper Mick Richards with a picture book spot kick.

Tamworth can complain that they had most of the play, they can point to the fact that it was a penalty that earned Borough a second chance and they can say that the crossbar prevented a Graham Jessop header from putting them through to the first round.



Concentration is masked on the faces of Borough's Bobby Allen and Tamworth defender Dave Seedhouse as they battle for the ball in the first half. Allen won this tussle, but Seedhouse kept a tight grip on the number eight for much of the game.

Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune

But no-one can deny the determination of the Nuneaton side. They shook off waves of Tamworth pressure, but flatly refused to throw in the towel. The back four were magnificent. One split second of panic, one moment of indecision from either one of them could have been disastrous.

And behind them, Fred Crump made his performance in the same round last year look like a bad dream. Twice in the dying minutes his courage denied Tamworth a goal as the tension built up to nerve-wracking proportions.

The character of the Nuneaton side was tested to the full when Ian Hall equalised for Tamworth in the second



John Burckitt's penalty finds the net as Tamworth goalkeeper Mick Richards dives the wrong way, giving Borough a 1-0 lead.
Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune

half to stack the odds mountain high against Borough.

From then until the final whistle it was touch and go. But despite their territorial superiority, Tamworth were unable to convert their attacks into goals. Wingers Tommy Morrow and Bill Millard, particularly Millard, offered the main danger to the Nuneaton defence.

They far outshone their opposite numbers Terry Owen and Paul Cutler – and this was the most marked difference between the two attacks.

It was a hard, physical battle. Neither side gave away any quarter – or asked for any – in a full-blooded pitched battle. Tamworth centre-half Keith Ball was booked for a tackle from behind on Tony Jacques and both Jacques and Graham Jessop were lectured after a clash off the ball.

Fortunately for both of them the referee was not in a position to see what went on. And his linesman failed to throw any light on the matter. But it was a case of six of one and half-a-dozen of

another as Jacques slumped to the turf and Jessop decided that the best thing he could do was to go down as well.

But that was the only moment when real needle crept into the game as the two hottest rivals on the local scene fought to push each other off the glory trail. Now the stage is set for another tremendous clash – a tie that should pull back the fans to Manor Park.

Tamworth – 4th Qualifying Round Replay

Borough welcomed Tamworth to Manor Park to play a 4th Qualifying Round FA Cup replay.

Borough and Tamworth stretched their FA Cup fourth qualifying round saga into a second replay in an incredible game at Manor Park. They are still locked together after three and a half hours of soccer – but last night Tamworth deserved to wriggle clear. Reduced to ten men when Ray Holmes was sent off in the 60th minute, they outshone Borough in every department.

In a game full of incident and drama – and littered with stoppages – Nuneaton were forced to take a back seat to Hughie Morrow's Cup fighters.

They conquered the hearts of the Manor Park crowd while Borough struggled, they fought while Nuneaton faltered – and they twice hit back when all looked lost. Twice they came back from behind as they shrugged off the loss of Holmes as if it had never happened.

Had they lost it would have been the greatest injustice of this round or any round. Lesser sides would have crumbled – and been forgiven. Not Tamworth. They were magnificent. The fans who turned up to cheer Nuneaton through to a First Round tie against York finished up shouting for the Kettlebrook side.

They overshadowed Nuneaton on their own pitch in a game that was often scrappy, always tense – but never dull. Last Saturday, in the 1-1 draw at Kettlebrook, Borough took the honours, for their flat refusal to throw in the towel.

But last night, Tamworth were twice counted out and came back fighting. Not even Nuneaton's most loyal fan could deny them their draw.

They dominated in midfield, set up a series of soundly built attacks and looked much the better side – even with ten men. Only in defence did Nuneaton match their red-hot rivals. It should have been Borough's big night – but Tamworth twisted that theory upside down and turned Nuneaton's Cup hopes inside out.

But in the 38th minute, it looked as if the Manor Park side had booked their tie against York when Tony Jacques shot them ahead. It was a superbly created effort which would have knocked the bottom out of most teams.

Mickey Boot pushed a 40 yard pass through to Bobby Allen, who beat goalkeeper Mick Richards with one flash of brilliance and pulled the ball

back across the middle for Jacques to rifle it home.



Tony Jacques receives the salute of the Cock and Bear end fans after he notched the first goal of the FA Cup replay against Tamworth.

Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune

Three minutes after half-time Tamworth were level. Full back Keith Whitehouse hit the post with a 25-yard drive and Ray Holmes followed up to score. Tamworth, dominant in midfield, quicker on the ball and incredibly determined, threatened to give Nuneaton a rousing after the break.

Even without Holmes, sent off for butting Stan Aston in the 60th minute, they put Borough under severe pressure. But when the game went into extra time it looked odds on against them winning.

Somehow they summoned up extra reserves of strength. But no-one would have blamed them if they had given up the ghost when Nuneaton restored their lead in the eighth minute of extra time. Mick Richards failed to hold a Cutler shot and Bobby Allen was on the spot to bang the ball home.

Within two minutes Tamworth were back level. An Ian Hall free-kick was deflected and Keith Smith coolly controlled the ball before beating Fred Crump.

The last few minutes were crammed with tension, but nothing Nuneaton

did could break the spirit of Tamworth. Now the stage is set for a third clash which will give the “if and but” brigade a headache.

Tamworth – 4th Qualifying Round 2nd Replay

Borough made the journey to St Andrew’s to play Tamworth in a 4th Qualifying Round FA Cup 2nd replay.

Tamworth: Richards, Whitehouse, Ball, Seedhouse, Newton, Hall, Jessop (Hope), Millard, Holmes, Smith, Morrow.

Borough: Crump, Jones, Aston, Goodall, Kavanagh, Smith, Boot, Owen (Billington), R. Allen, Jacques, Cutler.



It looks simple enough. The ball tucks itself into the back of the net with the goalkeeper sprawled on the deck – but there’s more to it than that. For this goal, scored by Tony Jacques in the 38th minute, was a picture book effort. It was sparked off by a 40 yard pass from Mickey Boot, engineered by a flash of brilliance from Bobby Allen – and rounded off by Tony Jacques.

Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune

Borough’s Cup marathon against Tamworth was settled in two sensational first-half minutes at St Andrew’s last night. And brave Tamworth, Hughie Morrow’s magnificent West Midland Leaguers, surged through to a money-spinning First Round home tie against York.

Four times in the three ties, Tamworth have come from behind. Last night Nuneaton trailed for the first time – and lost. That summed up the fighting qualities of the two sides. Tamworth didn’t know when they were beaten and Borough could not find the power to fight back.

But for half-an-hour last night,

Nuneaton’s hopes burned bright. They were headed into a 26th minute lead by Tony Jacques and played some of their best soccer for weeks. For once, they dominated the midfield play, but they failed to deliver the knock-out blow and Tamworth roared back.

But, almost on the stroke of half-time Tamworth’s superb skipper Ian Hall, hit a brilliant 30 yard equaliser that almost scorched the rigging. Two minutes later Keith Smith shot the Kettlebrook side ahead and it was all over as the Tamworth fans went wild.

The 5,000-plus crowd sounded like four times that number as Hughie Morrow’s

side went ahead for the first time in the three games. Borough folded up. They were transformed from a skilful, confident side into a shadow squad as Tamworth took hold of the game by the scruff of the neck.

They lost composure, threw away their midfield superiority and too many players began to hang their heads as their Cup hopes were counted in the minutes that slowly ebbed away.

Twenty minutes into the second half Tamworth underlined their win when Ray Holmes signalled the final death knell to Nuneaton’s hopes. He rose unchallenged to a Tommy Morrow

corner and headed the ball into the net from close range. That was it. And despite a brave bid by Mickey Boot to rally his team, Borough were beyond hope. At no time after Holmes' goal did they look like staging a revival as Tamworth soldiered on and took absolute command.

Borough made the same old mistakes. They allowed Ian Hall too much room in midfield after the break and he had a field day. He was the inspiration behind Tamworth – and how his side responded.

Centre-half Keith Ball, striker Keith Smith and grafter Bill Millard took the honours along with Hall, but the whole team fought like tigers.

Goalkeeper Fred Crump turned in a brave display for Borough, the back four fought a losing battle, Tony Jacques was stranded on his own up front and Mickey Boot had his best game for some time.

But Tamworth adapted themselves better to the game. After the first half hour, when Nuneaton shone, they dropped Billy Millard back in midfield to help Graham Jessop and Hall against Boot and Smith.

And they earned their First Round place against York City with skill, courage and the will to win that keeps them going when the chips are down – something Nuneaton could not match, and which lost them the game.



An anxious moment in the Nuneaton defence as a shot from Ian Hall cannons off Fred Crump. The goalkeeper then blocked an effort from Jessop before Jones relieved the danger with a desperate tackle on Keith Smith for a corner.

Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune

Bury Town — 1st Round Proper

Borough made the journey to Metropolitan League Bury Town to play a 1st Round Proper FA Trophy tie.

Bury: Slack, Rayner, Hewitt, Roe, Haffer, Docherty, Porter, Crighton, Buckie, Goday, Campbell. Sub: Turner.

Borough: Crump, Jones, Aston, Goodall, Kavanagh, Boot, Smith, Burckitt, Owen, Jacques, Cutler. Sub: R. Allen.

This dismal defeat in West Suffolk destroyed Borough's one chance of recapturing the imagination of the stay-away fans.

Borough could not match Bury's grit and determination. Aston headed against the crossbar, Jacques had a goal disallowed and Bury keeper Slack pulled off some fine saves.

But the plain truth of the matter is that Nuneaton were not good enough. Only in the first fifteen minutes of the second half did they raise any hope of salvation. They were outfought by a side that played as if it wanted to win.

Too many players in the side have skill, but lack application and purpose. Malcolm Allen put an extra man in midfield to give the side added security and made a second half reshuffle in an attempt to save the game.

But Nuneaton were on their way out of the competition at 4-15pm when Bury struck with the goal that confirmed their place in the last 32. The decisive goal was created by John Campbell, a Newmarket stable boy.

Campbell, all 7st. 3lb. of him, beat

Cutler in a challenge and raced along the line before swinging the ball across to centre-forward Roy Buckle who beat Crump. Campbell also had a hand in the first goal, three minutes before half-time. His free kick was pushed out by Fred Crump and Bury player-manager John Docherty showed the calmness of his years of experience to drive it back into the net.

For most of the game Nuneaton went through the motions – as if the importance of the tie had not sunk in.



Bury goalkeeper Rodney Slack and Borough's top scorer Tony Jacques hit the turf as a shot from the centre-forward rolls into the net with only twenty minutes to go. But the goal was disallowed because of an infringement against the goalkeeper.

Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune

Nuneaton Borough 1970-1979 – Part 1



Southern League Premier Division: Fixtures, Results & Scorers- 1970-71

Nuneaton Scores First

Date	Opposition	Venue	Competition	Score	Scorers	Attendance
08.04	Enderby Town	A	PSF	1-0	Mason	
08.10	Coventry City Reserves	H	PSF	0-2		2852
08.15	Wimbledon	H	L	0-2		3152
08.19	Kettering Town	A	L	1-1	Punter	
08.22	Hereford United	A	L	0-2		4157
08.25	Canterbury City	A	SLC1-1L	1-0	Punter (pen)	250
08.29	Margate	H	L	4-1		2354
08.31	Canterbury City	H	SLC1-2L	2-0	Jacques (2)	2614
09.02	Birmingham City Police	H	BSC1	2-1	Mason, Butterworth	
09.05	Wimbledon	A	L	0-4		1440
09.07	Kettering Town	H	L	1-0	Jacques	2329
09.12	Weymouth	H	L	3-1	Jacques (2), R. Allen	1870
09.14	Telford United	A	L	0-4		2244
09.19	Hednesford Town	A	FAC 1Q	2-1	Jacques (2)	1347
09.21	Bedworth United	H	MFC	3-1	Jacques (2), Mason	2252
09.26	Ashford Town	H	L	1-1	Cutler	2377
09.28	Bedford Town	H	L	2-1	Jacques (2)	2594
10.01	Lower Gornal Athletic	H	BSC2	2-0	Jacques, Aston	800+
10.03	Ashford Town	A	L	1-0	Aston	
10.05	Bedworth United	A	MFC	2-0	Busby (o.g.), Owen	2000+
10.10	Lye Town	H*	FAC2Q	3-0	Boot, Goodall, Jacques	2827
10.12	Atherstone Town	A	CC1	1-0	Punter	1963
10.17	Bath City	A	L	1-1	R. Allen	1532
10.19	Telford United	H	MFC	2-0	Halford (o.g.), Cutler	1470
10.24	Stourbridge	H	FAC3Q	2-1	Aston, Jacques	3022
10.31	Romford	H	L	1-1	Boot	2547
11.02	Tamworth	A	MFC	1-4	Aston	2281
11.07	Tamworth	A	FAC4Q	1-1	Burckitt (pen)	3177
11.09	Tamworth	H	FAC4Qr	2-2 aet	Jacques, R. Allen	6354
11.14	Barnet	H	L	1-1	Cutler	1910
11.16	Tamworth	At St Andrews	FAC4Qr2	1-3	Jacques	5160
11.21	Poole Town	A	L	1-1	Goodall	538
11.24	Lockheed	A	MFC	0-1		
11.26	Rugby Town	A	BSC3	0-1		394
12.05	Romford	A	L	0-1		1405
12.07	Weymouth	H	SLC3	1-1	Jacques	1553
12.12	Cambridge City	A	L	2-2	Boot, Goodall	
12.16	Weymouth	A	SLC3r	0-5		942
12.19	Telford United	H	L	0-2		c1300
12.26	Kings Lynn	A	L	2-0	Jacques (2)	1082
12.28	Kings Lynn	H	L	1-2	Jacques	1071
01.02	Dartford	H	L	1-1	Jacques	1200
01.04	Bromsgrove Rovers	H	MFC	2-1	Jacques (2)	500+
01.09	Dartford	A	L	0-0		1143
01.16	Bury Town	A	FAT1	0-2		807
01.20	Yeovil Town	A	L	0-3		
01.28	Hereford United	H	L	2-1	Jacques, Smith	1185
01.30	Barnet	A	L	0-3		922
02.01	Tamworth	H	CCQF	1-2	Shinton	1779
02.06	Gloucester City	H	L	2-1	Burckitt (pen), Shinton	1107
02.08	Burton Albion	H	MFC	1-1	Cutler	875
02.15	Tamworth	H	MFC	0-1		1587
02.20	Hillingdon Borough	H	L	0-4		1174

Nuneaton Borough 1970-1979 – Part 1



Southern League Premier Division: Fixtures, Results & Scorers- 1970-71

Nuneaton Scores First

Date	Opposition	Venue	Competition	Score	Scorers	Attendance
02.22	Stafford Rangers	H	MFC	0-1		585
02.27	Bedford Town	A	L	0-4		
03.06	Poole Town	H	L	2-0	Arrowsmith (o.g.), Cutler	650
03.08	Hednesford Town	H	MFC	0-1		586
03.10	Dover	A	L	1-0	Cutler	962
03.13	Gloucester City	A	L	1-2	Cutler	413
03.15	Stafford Rangers	A	MFC	0-1		
03.17	Burton Albion	A	MFC	2-2	Jacques, R. Allen	278
03.20	Yeovil Town	H	L	1-2	Cutler	1057
03.22	Worcester City	A	L	0-2		1452
03.27	Hillingdon Borough	A	L	0-1		
03.29	Bath City	H	L	4-0	Jacques (2), Goodall, Cutler	835
04.03	Weymouth	A	L	0-1		
04.05	Bromsgrove Rovers	A	MFC	3-2	Jacques (2), Billington	
04.08	Lockheed	H	MFC	1-1	Kavanagh (pen)	490
04.10	Cambridge City	H	L	1-3	R. Allen	1059
04.12	Chelmsford City	A	L	1-6	Cutler	1948
04.13	Chelmsford City	H	L	1-1	Cutler	1005
04.17	Margate	A	L	1-1	Smith	809
04.19	Worcester City	H	L	1-0	Cutler	1200
04.22	Bedworth United	A	PC	1-2	Cutler	1300
04.24	Dover	H	L	2-2	Shinton, Cutler	847
04.28	Telford United	A	MFC	2-1	Wilkinson, Kavanagh	

KEY : L = Southern League Premier, FAC = FA Cup, SLC = Southern League Cup, BSC = Birmingham Senior Cup, MFC = Midland Floodlit Cup, CC = Camkin Cup, PC = President's Cup, PSF = Pre Season Friendly

Season 1971-72

Peter Barratt To Join Borough Board

Nuneaton Sunday League secretary Peter Barratt has joined the Nuneaton Borough board of directors. And the appointment completes the nine man team that will plan and guide the future of the Manor Park club.

Said chairman Mr Alf Scattergood: "We wanted one more director to complete the team and we now have a good blend of youth and experience.

"We were looking for someone of Peter Barratt's calibre – someone who is prepared to work."

Mr Barratt, a motor agent in Nuneaton, was founder secretary of the Nuneaton Sunday League and has watched it grow from one division to five.

He said: "I am optimistic in view of my involvement with the Sunday League that I can help to foster closer understanding between the Borough and local amateurs..."

New Boss Gets Down To Work



Nuneaton Borough players are now enjoying a hard earned break after the struggles of another long season. But for the club's new player-manager David Pleat the busy spell is just beginning. He got down to business at his Manor Park office after travelling from his Luton home.

"I have been in touch with several contacts today and have a good idea of the men I want," he said. "I need five or six players to make up the first-team squad."

Borough Reserves Boss

Thirty-two-year-old David Kite has been appointed reserve team manager of Nuneaton Borough. Kite, who is a qualified FA Coach, is a former Coventry Amateurs' player and has assisted with the club's coaching over the past two years.

Nuneaton have not run a reserve side for five years, but manager David Pleat is anxious to give local youngsters every opportunity with the Manor Park club.

Taylor Sacked

Trainer Joe Taylor, one of the most familiar figures at Manor Park, has been sacked by Nuneaton Borough Football Club. And his wife Anne, the club's caretaker for a number of years, has also left in another behind the scenes re-shuffle.

Mr Taylor has been connected with the club for 25 years as groundsman, reserve team trainer, kit manager and then first team trainer. During his spell with the club he also served on the executive committee of the Nuneaton Amateur League.

Borough Signings

Borough player-manager David Pleat announced the first of his new signings – ex-Derby County forward Barrie Notley and goalkeeper Brian Robinson from Bletchley.

Notley has been signed from Cork Hibernian in the Irish Republic where he won representative honours. He went to Ireland from Derby after beginning his soccer career with Burton Albion in the Premier Division of the Southern League.

Robinson has been signed to provide goalkeeping cover and compete with Reg Edwards for the first team spot. He left Bletchley after a dispute with the club. Last season he was rated as one of the top goalkeepers in the Metropolitan League.

Reserve Team Scrapped

Nuneaton Borough Football Club, struggling in the shadow of a £6,000 debt, have abandoned plans for a reserve side.

Player-manager David Pleat announced the news less than 24 hours before Borough were due to apply for membership of the West Midland League First Division.

Manor Park Admission Price Rise

Nuneaton Borough fans will have to pay more for Southern League soccer at Manor Park when the new season opens – an increase of five new pence.

The minimum charge throughout the Southern League has been raised to 25p following a decision by the clubs at their annual meeting.

Tony Jacques Joins Kettering

Tony Jacques, Borough's record breaking goalscorer, has been sold to Kettering Town for a small fee. The deal was finalised after talks at the weekend between David Pleat and Poppies' team boss Steve Gammon.

John Gill Signs For Borough

Nuneaton Borough have signed defender John Gill from Fourth Division Hartlepool to add experience to the squad. Gill, who is 30, was at Hartlepool for five years and has made more than 200 appearances in the Football League. He was signed by Brian Clough and Peter Taylor during their spell in the North East and given a free transfer at the end of last season.

Gill, described by Borough player-manager David Pleat as a “strong, determined player” has spent most of his career at centre-half. He played with Pleat for a short time at Nottingham Forest before he moved on to Mansfield and then Hartlepool United.

Stan Marshall Rejoins Borough

Stan Marshall, in charge of the Borough youth team in the early 1960s, has rejoined the Manor Park staff. He takes over the job as trainer, a job similar to the one he has had with Atherstone Town for the past two years.

Bobby Allen Given A Reprieve

Bobby Allen, Nuneaton Borough’s “problem” player, has been given a reprieve. He has been re-signed by the Manor Park club and told: This is your last chance with us.

Allen, who made 37 appearances last season, half of them in the Southern League, was released when his contract ran out in May.

Joe Lloyd Quits Borough Board

Coach operator, Mr Joe Lloyd, has resigned from the board of Nuneaton Borough Football Club – after only ten months as a director. He said: “With three businesses to run, I am not able to devote as much time to the football club as I would like and this throws pressure on to the other directors.

“In fairness to them, I have decided to step down to make way for someone who can.”

Cutler Re-signs

Paul Cutler has re-signed for Borough after further talks at the weekend with player-manager David Pleat. The one hundred goal striker, only the third player in the club’s history to top the century mark, will continue to live and train in Kent.

There was more speculation that Borough would insist that Cutler would be asked to move to Nuneaton but Pleat said: “I feel we will be able to sort this out and I am quite happy with the arrangement.”

Tony Bircumshaw Signs

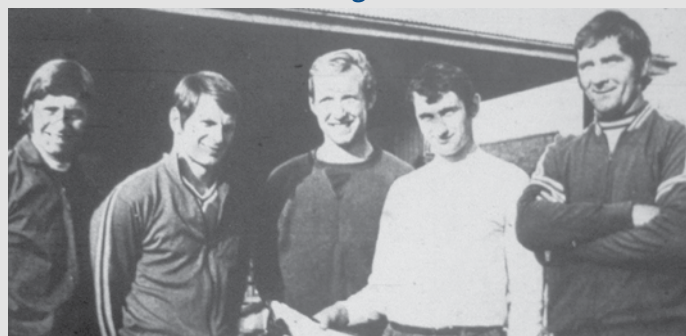
Nuneaton Borough player-manager David Pleat clinched another major signing when Hartlepool United full-back and skipper Tony Bircumshaw agreed to move to Manor Park. Afterwards the Borough boss said: “I now have every confidence that we have the basis of a winning side.”

Bircumshaw is the second Hartlepool defender to join the Borough this summer. The other is centre-half John Gill.

Another signing is Ken Howells, a 19-year-old winger from

Shrewsbury, who has signed a month’s contract. Howells has been at Shrewsbury for two and a half years.

Newcomers Meet At Training Session



Borough player manager David Pleat discusses his plans with four of the newcomers at Manor Park during last night’s training stint. The players – Ken Howells, Brian Robinson, Tony Bircumshaw and John Gill, met their new team-mates for the first time – and were soon hard at work.

Howells, from Shrewsbury Town, was out on the pitch only a matter of minutes after he had signed a month’s contract with the club.

Goalkeeper Robinson is from Bletchley and both Bircumshaw and Gill were in the same Hartlepool side last season. Barrie Notley, the other newcomer, was also at the session.

Allen Rejects Terms

Malcolm Allen, Nuneaton Borough’s longest serving player, may have made his last appearance for the Manor Park club. The former player-manager, who has made a record 459 appearances in the Southern League side, rejected the terms he was offered for this coming season.

After talks at the ground with club chairman Alf Scattergood and new team boss David Pleat, he said: “I told them that the terms they offered were not acceptable.”

He added: “I don’t want to get involved in a mud slinging argument with the club where I have spent ten happy years. But the reason I rejected them is because they were not the terms originally offered. They are nowhere near the terms I was offered last season.”

More Borough Signings

Borough have signed ex-Coventry City forward Trevor Shepherd, who immediately told player-manager David Pleat: “I don’t intend to stay here long.” He wants to get back into the Football League and sees the Manor Park set-up as the perfect stepping stone for a return to the big time.

Also joining the Manor Park club is Gerry Howshall, who cost Norwich City £29,000 from West Brom only two years ago, but who is joining Borough on a free transfer. The move was finalised after talks with player-manager David Pleat, who again faced strong opposition from a string of clubs.

David Pleat explained: “The player is on a free because he has a very good job in insurance in the Birmingham area.”

Rugby Town v Nuneaton Borough 31-07-1971

Rugby Town: Jones, Kavanagh, Thomas, Griffiths, Knox, Hopkin, Martin, Hakutis, Adcock, Lee, Chambers. Sub: Morgan.

Borough: Robinson, Jones, Bircumshaw, Smith, Gill, Lewis, Howells, Shinton, Notley, Cutler, Harris. Subs: Edwards, Shepherd, Pleat.

Borough made the journey to Oakfield to play Rugby Town in a the Sir Jack Scamp Trophy.

Borough emerged from the close season break much fitter, more confident and full of determination. These were the major factors that came out of the game. And the players showed that they are prepared to knuckle down to the stiff demands of new player-manager David Pleat.



Borough past and present. Alan Shinton, who joined the club last season, is challenged by Clive Hopkin, who left Manor Park in May 1966, during Saturday's Sir Jack Scamp Trophy match.

Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune

Both sides fought hard for a prestige win. At times it was as intense as any battle for Southern League points. Pleat fielded six of his summer signings and Borough staged a solid, workmanlike display with flashes of flair.

Borough's goal, scored by Paul Cutler, was a spectacular effort – because of its sheer simplicity. Impressive Ken Howells outstripped Rugby defender Thomas and pulled the ball back across the middle to Cutler's feet. Rugby's goal, only a minute into the second half, followed a quickly taken free-kick. Steve Lee whipped the ball into the Nuneaton goalmouth while the referee was in the process of lecturing John Gill and Graham Nakutis headed it in.

Centre-half Gill was a powerful force in the Borough back four, a rugged, determined performer in a defence that should give

little away. Goalkeeper Brian Robinson, one of the smallest keepers in Borough's history, also excelled, with some fine saves – one a superb effort from a Jimmy Knox free-kick which he could not have seen until the ball was on top of him.

In all, it was a satisfactory performance from the first Borough team to be fielded by the new team boss. At the end the teams shared the trophy, but Rugby won the toss for the first six months and the winners' medals.

Nuneaton Borough v Coventry City XI 02-08-1971

Borough: Edwards, Bircumshaw, Gill, Lewis, Harris, Pleat, Howshall, Smith, Shepherd, Cutler, Allen. Subs: Jones, Howells.

Borough welcomed a Coventry City XI to Manor Park to play a pre-season friendly match.

Borough stamped their authority on this game with another vintage style goal. One-time Coventry City starlet Trevor Shepherd created the chance against the young Sky Blues with a 27th minute flash of brilliance. It was a poetic goal from a smooth text-book type move that put Nuneaton into the lead.



Paul Cutler shoots Borough into the lead in the 27th minute with a picture book goal.

Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune



Coventry goalkeeper Brian Goodbourn wins an airborne challenge with Paul Cutler in the first-half of last night's hard fought friendly.

Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune

Roger Smith sparked it off when he won the ball on the half-way line and pushed a pass to Shepherd. The centre-forward drew and outfoxed two City defenders in a two against one situation to send a raking pass to Cutler, who drew City goalkeeper Brian Goodbourn before gliding his shot in off the

Nuneaton Borough 1970-1979 – Part 1



far post. The goal was Cutler's second in the pre-season build-up and both have had a touch of quality and class.

Coventry equalised mid-way through the second half with an opportunist goal from Alan Green, which looked ordinary alongside the Smith-Shepherd-Cutler combo. Borough impressed with another solid all-round performance with touches of promising flair. They were powerful in defence, strong in midfield and packed a lot of hard-running up front.

Defensively Nuneaton again looked sound with Dave Lewis and John Gill a powerful pair in the heart of the back four. Lewis, who played alongside Gill for the second time, appears to have found his niche after his excursions in midfield.

Reg Edwards showed that he has lost none of his tremendous skill and potential with a string of fine saves. The goalkeeping youngster starred in a match full of teenage talent and highlighted by Borough's stunning goal.

Malcolm Allen New Adders' Manager

Malcolm Allen last night stepped out of soccer's shadows as the new player-manager of West Midland Leaguers Atherstone Town. He was appointed at a special meeting of the Sheepy Road club's four man committee and afterwards said: "I am now more determined than ever to do well."

Nuneaton Borough v Leicester City Res. 05-08-1971

Borough welcomed Leicester City Reserves to Manor Park for a pre-season friendly game.

Paul Cutler maintained his practice match goal monopoly with a goal that gave Borough their third consecutive 1-1 draw. Borough's 100 goal striker netted with a header in the tenth minute to give Nuneaton the lead.

The Filbert Street youngsters equalised 15 minutes into the second half when six-foot front runner, David Tearse, slammed in a cross which should have been cut out. It was another useful workout for Borough. Cutler's goal led to a flurry of activity which should have led to another goal. Seconds after he had scored, Cutler hit the crossbar after Notley and Shinton had challenged for a Smith centre. Shinton then had a header pushed around the post by Leicester's teenage goalkeeper, Carl Jeyes – and Barrie Notley missed from underneath the posts.

After a smooth build up Jeyes let a Dave Lewis cross slip through his hands. It fell to Notley who shot over a gaping net. In between times impressive Paul Matthews, the midfield star of the Leicester side, weaved his way past Alan Jones and John Gill in a 35-yard run and hit the woodwork. After the early activity Nuneaton found themselves holding the eager City starlets who, though not half as impressive as the young Sky Blues, did a lot of hard running.

But the defence, with Dave Goodall in for his first pre-season appearance, held out and David Pleat showed some neat touches in midfield

Nuneaton Borough v Derby County XI 09-08-1971

Borough welcomed a Derby County XI to Manor Park to play a pre-season friendly match.

Workmanlike Borough wound up their impressive pre-season build-up with another solid display. Two first-half goals, one from Barrie Notley and the other from John Gill, gave them a win over a Central League strength Derby side. And, after three warm-up draws and a win, player-manager David Pleat now faces his most important task – choosing the side for the Weymouth trip on Saturday.



A picture for Barrie Notley's scrapbook – his first goal for Nuneaton Borough. Notley put Borough ahead in the eleventh minute from the edge of the six yard box after a through ball from Roger Smith.

Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune

Borough were particularly sound in the first-half – at the back and in midfield. Pleat's major problem, like dozens of managers, lie up front. Dave Lewis and John Gill have already struck up an iron hard partnership in the heart of the back four and it doesn't look as if the defence will give much away. But Pleat has Dave Goodall and Ernie Wilkinson, still recovering from injury, waiting in the wings.

In midfield, the Pleat-Gerry Howshall-Roger Smith line-up looked impressive. Howshall, in particular, fits the bill with his terrier-like tenacity and shrewd distribution. Notley staked his claim for a place in the opening day line-up, with a goal in the 11th minute. Cutler and Smith figured in the move before a 20 yard pass from Smith evaded the Derby defence and Notley slipped it home as the keeper came out.

Borough's second goal came on the stroke of half-time from a John Gill header at the far post after a Tony Bircumshaw free-kick had floated across the County defence. Derby pulled a goal back from the penalty spot after Reg Edwards had upended County centre-forward Sims. Toon scored from the penalty spot.

Weymouth v Nuneaton Borough 14-08-1971

Weymouth: Clarke, Flay, Ronsevell, Hill, Hobson, Bradbury, Bumstead, Goodfellow, Allen, Barry, Ames. **Sub:** Adams.

Borough: Edwards, Bircumshaw, Gill, Lewis, Harris, Pleat, Smith, Howshall, Cutler, Motley, Shepherd. **Sub:** Jones.

Borough made the journey to The Rec to play Weymouth in a Southern League Premier Division game.

Borough's hopes of a point crumbled when Weymouth hit

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back from behind. Cutler headed the Manor Park side into a 25th minute lead from a David Pleat cross. Trevor Allen equalised for the Dorset side only four minutes later and, with 16 minutes to go, Ames put them in front.

Borough pushed forward in the early stages but both sides were troubled by a blustery wind. Weymouth threatened when Bircumshaw was deceived by a cross from Flay.

Allen laid the ball low across the goalmouth and Edwards saved at the feet of Amos. Weymouth, with the conditions in their favour, came more into the picture. But Borough were tight at the back. A sudden break ended when Cutler was tackled by Flay as he shaped up for a cross. Pleat, with his coolness in midfield, helped to steady down the side as they fought the vital first 20 minutes. Notley missed a golden chance for Borough and Allen had a shot kicked off the line by Gill.

Two goals inside two minutes suddenly injected new life into the game. Cutler headed Borough into the lead when he dived to meet a cross from Pleat and placed the ball wide of Clarke. Borough's joy was short lived, and in the 29th minute Trevor Allen beat the Borough defence in the air from a Barry centre. Gill had an effort cleared off the line by Flay and Bumstead turned the ball inches wide from an Allen cross.

Weymouth forced two corners – one hotly contested by the Nuneaton defence. But the pressure was soon eased. That was until a shot from Allen, from a free kick taken short by Barry, dipped dangerously over the top.

The tense struggle continued until half-time – but Borough went in at the break with added confidence after an impressive first 45 minutes. Weymouth faced a strong wind in the second half and the game took some time to settle itself down again. Edwards clutched a long centre from Flay out of the air before Borough built up an attack. It ended when Clarke left his line to cut out a cross from Harris as Notley and Cutler closed in.

Shepherd dropped a ball through to Cutler and Weymouth hesitated, waiting for the offside whistle. It didn't come, but Cutler's path to goal was quickly closed and he was crowded out. Harris cut out a cross from Flay before Rounsevell broke up a move between Shepherd and Notley.

Allen, who had posed a big threat in the air to the Borough defence, managed to head onto the crossbar. In the 74th minute Ray Ames scored for the hosts and sealed the victory on this league opener.

Borough Await Planning OK

Nuneaton Borough Social Club could receive planning permission for their new extensions within the next month. Directors and representatives of the social club met yesterday with the council's planning sub-committee to discuss the problem which results in planning permission being refused.

"We were concerned about the car parking arrangements. The social club put forward suggestions which we were not happy about and this is why we met them," explained

Councillor Albert Childs, chairman of the sub-committee. "We had a good discussion and by the next planning committee meeting on September 7th, something will be received."

Nuneaton Borough v Hereford United 16-08-1971

Borough: Edwards, Bircumshaw, Gill, Lewis, Harris, Pleat, Smith, Howshall, Shepherd, Notley, Cutler. **Sub:** Allen.

Borough welcomed Hereford United to Manor Park for a Southern League Premier Division match.

Borough slipped to defeat last night – on a mistake, a stroke of luck and a flash of brilliance. The incident, five minutes before half-time, summed up what football is all about. Player-manager David Pleat played a hurried return pass to Gerry Howshall, who had slipped on the edge of United's 18-yard box. The ball was whisked through to Dudley Tyler, the £10,000 rated Southern League gazelle, who set off on a solo run.

He collected a lucky rebound from John Gill without having to check his stride, drifted around a Dave Lewis challenge and coolly drove the ball home. Those few seconds destroyed Nuneaton's hopes in front of an expectant 3,000 plus crowd. Despite a late bid to save the game, Nuneaton had to take second best against John Charles' confident outfit.

Borough had their chances in some frantic goalmouth melees, but lacked the crispness and confidence in the box that brings goals. Both sides did a tremendous amount of running, although for long periods Hereford, understandably, looked the more polished side.

Early in the second half, after that stunning goal, they began to demonstrate the gulf David Pleat has to bridge to put Borough back among the Southern League elite. Yet the fact that they were brave enough to come back proved that the foundation is there – and certainly the spirit. It was, again, up front where they lacked the skill and power that separates a good side from an average one.

Much of the first-half was untidy as the sides fought for space and this threw extra weight on the front runners. During Borough's late pressure Notley, Cutler and Lewis had chances in a crowded Hereford 18-yard box. Notley was booked when he flashed his studs at United keeper David Icke, after another chance had gone begging.

Nuneaton Borough v Chelmsford City 21-08-1971

Borough: Robinson, Bircumshaw, Harris, Howshall, Gill, Lewis, Shepherd, Smith, Notley, Cutler, Pleat. **Sub:** B Allen.

Chelmsford: Taylor; Lawrence, Gomersall; Delea, Loughton, Smith, Coakley, Stevenson, Dilsworth, Grant, Thornley. **Sub:** Ferry.

Borough welcomed Chelmsford City to Manor Park for a Southern League Premier Division game.

Borough put their fans on the rack with a brave, but vain attempt to save two more precious Southern League points. They fell behind to a 13th minute goal by Eddie Dilsworth,

Nuneaton Borough 1970-1979 – Part 1



staged a tremendous bid to get back into the game, and then had their hopes crushed when Paul Delea scored Chelmsford's second near the end.

Borough played some attractive football but they were not good enough in front of goal. Borough goalkeeper, Reg Edwards had to pull out of the side with a hand injury. Brian Robinson stepped in.

Coakley slipped past Harris and sent the ball into the side netting. City continued to move forward and Dilsworth, challenged by both Gill and Lewis, won a free kick just outside the box. Stevenson hit the free kick across the face of goal.

Borough were within inches of a goal when Pleat laid on a centre for Bircumshaw. The full-back dropped his cross at the far post and Notley headed over. Notley then had the ball taken from his toe by Delea before Thornley shot wide for Chelmsford. Another Bircumshaw free kick, again to the far post, had City's defence in trouble before Loughton cleared a goal bound header from Gill.

City took the lead in the 13th minute. The goal followed a corner. Gomersall dropped a diagonal ball across the Nuneaton defence, Harris miskicked to let in Coakley and Dilsworth added the final touch. Borough, stunned by the goal, tried to regain their composure but Robinson had to race off his line to boot the ball into the crowd.

Shepherd raised Nuneaton's hopes when, after more good work by Pleat, he dived full length and headed wide from a Bircumshaw centre. Dilsworth was only inches away from a Thornley centre in front of goal after a Borough attack had broken down. City keeper Taylor saved a Notley header.

Harris cleared off the line from Loughton, who had moved in behind the Borough defence to meet a corner from Thornley. Stevenson fired over from 20 yards for Chelmsford after Harris had half cleared a left wing centre by Dilsworth. Cutler tried to turn onto a centre from Harris, but failed to control the ball.

A heading duel in the City 18 yard box ended when Shepherd nodded the ball wide after it had bobbed around in front of goal. Borough made a determined start to the second half, but Cutler should have done better with a chance which fell to him from a Roger Smith centre. He delayed his shot, with a clear look at goal, and was tackled by Gomersall.

Stevenson shot wide for City before keeper Taylor gave them a scare when he dropped a high ball from Smith. Nuneaton continued to search for an equaliser but they lacked that extra edge up front. Appeals for a penalty, when Smith was brought down by Loughton, were ignored by the referee. Pleat swung a free-kick into the middle and Notley headed it against a defender for a corner.

The Manor Park side maintained pressure and Cutler stretched Taylor with a shot which dipped goalwards from 20 yards. The tempo built up as Nuneaton threw players forward in a bid to break-through but the agony continued for the Royal Blues in front of goal.

Then Borough, after attacking for most of the second half, found themselves 2-0 down – and out of the game – when Delea ended their hopes with City's second goal five minutes from time.

Nuneaton Boro' v Brierley Hill Alliance 23-08-1971

Borough: Robinson, Bircumshaw, Lewis, Gill, Jones, Shinton, Smith, Goodall, Allen, Notley, Howells. **Sub:** Howshall.

Borough welcomed Brierley Hill Alliance to Manor Park to play a Birmingham Senior Cup first round tie.

Barrie Notley, the striker who plays in the shadow of Tony Jacques, scored the two goals that steered Borough into the second round of the Birmingham Senior Cup. He equalised only seconds after the West Midlands Leaguers had gone ahead in the first-half and then hit the winner with ten minutes to go. But it was an unimpressive performance by the Manor Park men.

They struggled for long periods in a scrappy game that died after a promising first half-hour. Borough began in characteristic style – by missing early chances. Notley had one with the game just a few seconds old. And they paid the penalty when, after 15 minutes, Wyatt put Brierley Hill ahead following a slip by Dave Goodall.

Less than a minute later Brierley Hill's keeper Hackett failed to hold a shot from Ken Howells and Notley was on the spot to level the scores. Borough, with Shinton working hard in midfield and Dave Goodall showing his usual determination at the back, looked the better side until half-time.

After the break, however, the game became lethargic with too much "big boot" and not much constructive football. Brierley are only an average West Midlands League outfit, but Borough could not take over and dictate the game. They lost control in midfield and Wyatt and Dave Lewis summed up the striking power of the two sides. Lewis blasted a shot almost into Beaumont Road after Notley had knocked back a cross from Shinton and, in the next attack, Wyatt shot over the Cock and Bear stand.

The goal that won an uninspiring match came from a Tony Bircumshaw cross. He dropped the ball to the far post where Notley headed it home.

Hereford United v Nuneaton Borough 25-08-1971

Borough: Edwards, Bircumshaw, Harris, Howshall, Lewis, Shepherd, Cutler, Notley, Pleat, Smith. **Sub:** Goodall.

Borough made the journey to Edgar Street to play a Southern League Premier Division game.

Nuneaton crashed to their fourth consecutive defeat of the season when they were outplayed by a talented Hereford side. After a bright opening they fell away badly, and at the end of the game they were lucky that the scoreline was only four. In previous games this season Borough have failed in

front of goal, but last night they were beaten by a side that was superior in every department. Borough never held a grip in midfield, where Rodgers had a superb game for the home side, and the defence was pulled out of position time and again by the rampaging Hereford forwards.

At times they played some attractive football but in general the build-up was laborious and far too slow and caused very few problems for Icke and his fellow defenders.

Borough found themselves trailing after only 13 minutes – to a goal that should never have been. Rodgers hit a high ball into the Borough penalty area, it bounced high in the air, and as Dave Lewis challenged Brown, Reg Edwards came off his line. The Borough keeper failed to get to the ball and Brown headed it over him into the empty net.

Hereford really piled on the pressure and Meadows hit the bar with a tremendous volley with Edwards well beaten. Just before half-time Gill almost snatched an equaliser when he got in a header from a right wing corner but Griffiths cleared off the line.

Ten minutes after the re-start and Borough were two behind. Dave Lewis fouled Tyler on the edge of the box and the rangy Hereford striker hammered the free-kick into the roof of the net. Inglis, who came on for the injured Brown, went close to increasing Hereford's lead on a couple of occasions before George made it 3-0 with another soft goal. Meadows hit a long ball down the middle, George fastened onto it in the penalty area, and although confronted by both Bircumshaw and Edwards, he finished up walking the ball into the net with the two Borough defenders on the floor.

George completed a night of misery for Borough eight minutes from time when he was given yards of room to flick a corner up into the air before hammering in the fourth. Borough did snatch a consolation goal right on the final whistle when substitute Dave Goodall, fastened onto a back pass from Griffiths to slip the ball past Icke.



The Borough Youth team squad pictured before a training session. They are (left to right): Back row: Gary Cart, Les Perkins, Mick Flay, Stephen Quiltar, Brian Goss, Phil Thompson, Tony Crisp. Front row: Robert Blades, Robert Bucys, Adrian Newbury, David Kite (manager), Geoff Timms, Gordon Richie and John Gore.

Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune

Merthyr Tydfil v Nuneaton Borough 28-08-1971

Merthyr: John, Bird, Davies, Harrid, Hendy, Hayes, Collins, Wilkins, Crotty, Murphy, Matthews. Sub: Best.

Borough: Robinson, Jones, Bircumshaw, Howshall, Gill, Lewis, Shepherd, Shinton, Notley, Goodall, Smith. Sub: Cutler.

Borough made the journey to Pennydarren Park to face Merthyr Tydfil in a Southern League Premier Division game.

Barrie Notley broke Borough's losing spell with a 78th minute goal at Merthyr. Until he ended the deadlock, the crowd had been subjected to a scrappy game between two sides that were weak in front of the net. But Borough travelled back from Wales with their first points from five Southern League matches, just the tonic they needed after their grim start.

Goalkeeper Brian Robinson came in for his second Southern League game for Nuneaton when Reg Edwards had to withdraw due to a back injury. Merthyr pushed forward in the early stages and forced two successive corners. Robinson clutched the second out of the air and sparked off a smooth Borough attack which was broken down by Hendy and Harris. Another Merthyr corner was cleared, but neither side managed a shot at goal for the first ten minutes. The first one came when Murphy turned on a cross from Bird and hit a weak left foot drive back to Robinson.

Seconds later Crotty was only inches away from a Bird centre before Borough moved upfield. Bird again overlapped and his centre was pushed around the post by Robinson. Merthyr did much of the early attacking, but Nuneaton's controlled moves out of defence showed promise.

Goalkeeper John had to go full length to save a corner from a deflection off full back Davies. More pressure built up against Borough, again down the right flank. Robinson pushed out a cross from Collins and Howshall swept the ball out of play to complete the clearance. Notley and Jones each shot wide before Notley was inches from a goal after Shepherd and Shinton had made the running.

Merthyr's rearguard gave little away, as both sets of forwards fought hard for an opening. They put a lot of effort into their build-up, but both teams were weak in front of the net. The tense struggle for goals continued after the break. Shepherd failed to reach a pass from Howshall and Lewis and Gill combined to clear another centre from Bird. Continuous drizzling rain made the clash even more depressing. But there was a flurry of excitement in the 53rd minute – which almost cost Nuneaton a goal.

Gill fluffed a clearance and the ball ran to Collins. He screwed it across the face of the net to Crotty who tried to place his shot only for it to hit Goodall on the line and rebound for a corner. Borough secured their first league win of the season when Notley put them ahead in the 78th minute from close range after Paul Cutler had played the ball across the face of an empty net.

Poole Town v Nuneaton Borough 31-08-1971

Poole: Buck, Stockley, Taylor, Pegram, Knapp, Eyden, Down, Brown, Keeley, Thornhill, Fern. Sub: Hancox.

Borough: Robinson, Bircumshaw, Harris, Howshall, Gill, Lewis, Shepherd, Cutler, Notley, Goodall, Smith. Sub: Jones.

Borough made the journey to Dorset to play Poole Town in a Southern League Premier Division game.

Borough slumped to their fifth Southern League defeat in six games. The forwards failed to cash in on chances that fell to them and eventually Borough went down to a first-half goal. There was more method in the Nuneaton team than Poole showed in the opening stages and the Borough attack carried the greater threat, but Buck was in the right place to save a good header from Shepherd.

Playing five men at the back, Nuneaton easily contained the three Poole strikers. After 25 minutes Poole player-manager Tony Knapp was forced to kick over his own bar to save a dangerous situation set up by a return header from Shepherd after Notley had crossed the ball from the right. Robinson showed a safe pair of hands when Poole attacked.

Nuneaton were a little unlucky to concede a goal after 40 minutes when Down, Poole's liveliest forward, crossed the ball from the left and found Fern unmarked to beat Robinson with a well-directed and forceful header. After Nuneaton had survived a period of pressure early in the second half, Cutler had a great chance to equalise in the 55th minute when Notley miscued a Shepherd cross and Cutler found himself in possession with only Buck to beat, but blazed over.

With Nuneaton's finishing poor and Poole showing few attacking ideas the game deteriorated. Cutler might again have saved a point in the 79th minute when a mix-up between three Poole defenders left him with the ball but with his back to goal. His hurried shot on the turn flew wide.

The final minutes belonged to Poole, and Robinson crowned a very useful display with a fine reflex save from Down's low shot after the winger had beaten three men in a weaving run.

Nuneaton Borough v Yeovil Town 04-09-1971

Borough : Robinson, Bircumshaw, Harris, Howshall, Gill, Lewis, Shepherd, Cutler, Pleat, Walker, Smith. Sub: Notley.

Yeovil : Clark, Harrity, Smith, Bayliss, Dixon, Harris, Housley, Myers, Cotton, Thompson, Weller, Sub: McCluskey.

Borough welcomed Yeovil Town to Manor Park for a Southern League Premier Division game.

Borough saw another home point slip away at in a game that had an explosive start and then died. Nuneaton's all too familiar goal scoring problems again let them down against Yeovil, who shook off a second minute goal from Paul Cutler to equalise through Terry Cotton five minutes later.

The second half failed to live up to the expectations of the

first 45 minutes. After Cutler's goal, Borough just didn't look like scoring.



Yeovil goalkeeper Tony Clark dives in vain as Paul Cutler's second minute shot heads inside the far post for Borough's goal. Cutler had spotted Clark off his line and chipped the ball goalwards.

Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune

Borough made a spectacular start. A partial clearance from a Trevor Shepherd centre and Roger Smith's persistence carved out the shooting chance for Cutler. He chipped the ball inside the far post from an almost impossible angle, despite a vain attempt by Clark, who touched the ball, but could not keep it out. It was an astonishing goal and a tremendous boost for Borough's hopes – but their lead was short-lived. Only five minutes later Yeovil striker Cotton moved on to a right wing cross at the far post and left Robinson helpless.

Two minutes later, a cross from the right gave Weller a chance, but he headed wide. Borough, with newcomer Bruce Walker in the number ten shirt, began to push forward. Walker demonstrated his shooting power when he picked up a loose ball and hit a 30-yard scorcher which flashed across the face of the Yeovil goal.

There were appeals for a penalty when Cutler was sent sprawling by Clark before Cutler again tested the visitor's keeper with another awkward effort.

Borough began to look unsteady at the back, but the game was wide open as half-time approached. Nuneaton had much of the play but Yeovil threatened with quick breaks. Seconds before half-time Borough had the Yeovil defence in a mess when a hard hit low cross from Bircumshaw was prodded forward by Pleat and booted clear by Smith as Cutler closed.

After the break Cutler knocked a long clearance from Lewis back to Walker who failed to connect properly with his left foot and drove the ball wide. Borough were still on the attack, but could not pack enough pressure into the Yeovil penalty box.

Nuneaton almost paid the penalty for their weaknesses up front when, in the 52nd minute, Housley had the ball in the back of the net after a sharp Yeovil raid – but was fractionally offside. Pleat raised hopes when he neatly beat Harrity near the right hand corner flag and swung the ball into the middle where it was headed away by Dixon. At the other end Harris crash-tackled Cutler who had to have treatment.

The game, at this stage, had gone limp after the promise of the first 60 minutes.

Nuneaton Borough v Poole Town 06-09-1971

Borough: Robinson, Lewis, Gill, Goodall, Smith, Howshall, Pleat, Walker, Shepherd, Notley, Cutler. **Sub:** Jones.

Borough welcomed Poole Town to Manor Park for a Southern League Premier Division game.

Borough got back on the goal trail last night, while at the same time easing their Southern League points problem. Goals from Trevor Shepherd and Paul Cutler earned them their first home league win of the season. But the Manor Park side had their shaky moments. After Shepherd's spectacular 13th minute goal they went dangerously close to losing their lead.

And, in the second half, Redditch referee Mr George Trout, almost lost control of a game full of incident. It looked as if he had never heard of the referees' get tough policy as players hacked each other down from behind and launched themselves into crunching tackles.

But Paul Cutler released the tension with the decisive goal 15 minutes from the end to put the game out of the Dorset club's reach. Both goals were worth watching – particularly Shepherd's which involved four players, six moves and a stunning shot. Cutler netted after player-manager David Pleat had dropped a corner to the near post. Poole keeper Alan Buck failed to gather it. Cutler seized on the ball, turned quickly and scored with a left foot shot.



The Poole defence is in all sorts of trouble as Paul Cutler nets Borough's second goal – the one that made sure of their first home league win of the season.

Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune

Until that goal went in the game was always in the balance as Poole, with number eight John Brown the most impressive forward on the field, probed for an equaliser. Borough again missed chances, but this time lived to tell the tale. They had some anxious moments in the final 15 minutes of the first-half when the defence showed some of the shakiness that has cost them vital goals already this season.

There was one almighty scramble when the visitors looked certain to force their way back into the match. Cutler hit the post early in the second half – just before the hectic spell when Mr Trout lost control.

Gravesend & Northfleet v Nuneaton Boro' 11-09-1971

Gravesend: Gunner, Dudley, Crudate, Sitford, Burrett, Thurgood, Read, Adams, Brooks, Bibby, Moss. **Sub:** Hall.

Borough : Robinson, Lewis, Smith, Howshall, Gill, Goodall, Shepherd, Cutler, Notley, Pleat, Walker. **Sub:** Jones.

Borough made the journey to Gravesend and Northfleet to play a Southern League Premier Division game.

Paul Cutler, Borough's Kent based striker, netted a 37th minute equaliser for Nuneaton to take a point at Gravesend. Unfortunately, the Manor Park side were well below par in an untidy game. Borough almost gave away a goal in the opening minute when a bad throw from Robinson let in Gravesend. From the slip Adams was put clear by Brooks, but sliced his shot to let Nuneaton off the hook.

But the Manor Park side should have scored when a smooth four-man move split the home defence. Shepherd turned the ball inside to Notley who failed to connect properly. His shot struck a defender and ran out for a corner. In the 7th minute, Gravesend were in the lead from an own goal by Dave Lewis. Walker lost the ball and chased back in a bid to repair the damage with a challenge on Bibby. Walker tackled and the ball ran towards the net. Lewis tried to clear but failed to control it on the bumpy pitch, and it ran off his knee.

Notley should have equalised. He was put clear, but lobbed the ball straight into the arms of Gunner. Walker had a glorious chance when he ran through unchallenged. His shot was going wide as it hit a defender and rebounded to Cutler who shot into Gunner's arms. Shepherd then drove a shot over the bar after a pin-point crossfield pass from Walker. Borough improved as half-time approached and Gravesend's early eagerness began to wear off.

Borough equalised in the 37th minute through Paul Cutler. Goodall sparked off the move, Lewis swung over a cross Notley knocked it back to Cutler and he drove it home. Borough pushed forward until half-time but were slack up front and could not cash in.

Walker ran in at the near post to meet Pleat's flag kick and skimmed the bar with a header. Borough needed more speed and urgency inside the Gravesend penalty box. They had a shaky moment when a shot from Bibby reared up at Robinson and the goalkeeper saved at the second attempt.

Nuneaton Borough v Merthyr Tydfil 13-09-1971

Borough: Robinson, Lewis, Gill, Goodall, Bircumshaw, Walker, Smith, Pleat, Cutler, Shepherd. **Sub:** Notley.

Borough welcomed Merthyr Tydfil to Manor Park for a Southern League Premier Division game.

Borough ended their goal famine last night – and gobbled up Merthyr with a five star feast. They treated their goal-starved fans to a banquet with their best performance of the season.

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The door to the net, which had been barred for so long by their own shortcomings, was suddenly unlocked – and the goals flowed. Borough, inspired by player-manager David Pleat, and prompted by Trevor Shepherd, took the game by the scruff of the neck. They ran Merthyr ragged with skilful, entertaining soccer that the Welshmen just could not match.



Trevor Shepherd flashes a glancing header into the net from a David Pleat cross to stretch Borough's lead to 3-1 early in the second half.



Ice cool Paul Cutler slots the ball home for goal number four – after a Trevor Shepherd pass had shattered Merthyr.



Player-manager David Pleat strands Merthyr keeper Dilwyn John to crown a superb display with Borough's fifth goal 13 minutes from the end.

Photos: Nuneaton Evening Tribune

Bruce Walker hit two goals inside the first 36 minutes – one an explosive left foot drive that tore into the back of the net. And Trevor Shepherd, Paul Cutler and player-manager David Pleat scored in the second half for Nuneaton's biggest win of the season. Pleat's goal 13 minutes from the end, crowned a fine display from the Manor Park team boss. He took a pass from Shepherd, sold Merthyr keeper Dilwyn John a superb dummy and stroked the ball into an empty net.

Only two minutes earlier, Shepherd, who had his best game of the season, set up Borough's fourth goal with a stunning through ball to Paul Cutler which destroyed the Merthyr defence. And, in the early stages of the second half, Shepherd had netted himself with a glancing header from a Pleat cross.

Merthyr were in the game for only a few fleeting minutes before half-time when Harry Robinson scored to make it 2-1 from bad defensive play. But the Welshmen could not curb Borough's flair. They were forced to their knees and finally knocked out by a Nuneaton side that managed at last to add goal punch to their approach play.

Bedworth United v Nuneaton Borough 20-09-1971

Bedworth: Haynes, Busby, Howkins, Anderson, Parker, Hambridge, Knox, Healey, Deakin, Mason, Storer. **Sub:** Heal.

Borough: Robinson, Jones, Gill, Wilkinson, Ritchie, Harris, Smith, Lewis, Shepherd, Notley, Shinton. **Sub:** Thompson.

Borough made the journey to The Oval to take on Bedworth United in a Midland Floodlit Cup game.

Borough gave Bedworth a taste of their new found goal power with a confident performance. The Manor Park side, with six changes from the team that thrashed Loughborough on Saturday, overpowered and outshone the West Midland Leaguers. Two goals each from Barrie Notley and Trevor Shepherd rounded off the attacking flair that United just could not match.

Notley, sharper than he has been so far this season, notched two goals inside the first 15 minutes. His first came when big John Gill headed a Lewis free-kick down at the far post and he forced it home. And his second, from another free-kick, was parried by United keeper Paul Haynes, but the referee was on the spot to see that the ball had crossed the line.

John Mason should have scored when he was presented with a gift chance from an Ernie Wilkinson back pass. Brian Robinson was out quickly to the edge of the box to save at the feet of the ex-Borough centre-forward. Shepherd stretched Borough's lead to 3-0 ten minutes before half-time with a left-wing shot that slipped under Haynes. And he cracked the fourth early in the second half with a piledriver that exploded into the net from a free-kick.

Youngster Gordon Ritchie, from the youth side, impressed with his coolness at left-back for Borough and his youth team colleague Phil Thompson gained more first team experience with a second half appearance in place of Roger Smith.

Ilkeston Town v Nuneaton Borough 23-09-1971

Ilkeston: Piggott, Fallon, Gulson, Beresford, Brown, Stainwright, Brewster, Patrick, Naylor, Buckley. **Sub:** Bayliss.

Borough: Robinson, Lewis, Gill, Goodall, Bircumshaw, Howshall, Smith, Walker, Shepherd, Notley, Cutler. **Sub:** Jones.

Borough visited the Manor Ground to face Ilkeston Town in a Southern League Cup first round, first leg tie.

Flame haired Gerry Howshall shot Borough into a first round lead with an ice cool goal. He bought time and space in a crowded penalty area with the skill that once cost Norwich City £28,000. The second half was just five minutes old when

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Howshall beat one man and slipped another before slotting the ball into the net. That goal should make sure of Borough's place in the second round. They should have no trouble beating the Derbyshire outfit in the second leg.

Yet, in a ten minute period just before half-time they were fortunate to survive. Borough goal led a charmed life as Ilkeston tied together a string of misses and could have had two goals. In one attack, Ilkeston centre-forward Bill Naylor nodded a header towards the far post. The ball was on its way into the net when centre-half Ken Fallon tried to make sure – and headed against the crossbar.

But Howshall's goal pulled Borough round and they took complete command in the second half. Three players were booked, Ralph Brown and Dave Stainwright for Ilkeston and Borough's Dave Goodall. But their bookings came from isolated incidents in an otherwise hard fought game which was well controlled by Walsall referee Mr Les Bates.

The sloping pitch with its craggy playing surface stifled any hopes either side had of playing good football. It was almost impossible to control a ball that played tricks as soon as it hit the ground. After the goal Borough should have increased their lead – Trevor Shepherd and Bruce Walker each missed easy chances. But, with Howshall prompting them from midfield and John Gill and Co. in complete command at the back, they turned in a workmanlike display.

Margate v Nuneaton Borough 25-09-1971

Margate: Thomas, Yorath, Butterfield, Clayton, B. Wickens, Houston, Jarman, King, Brown, J. Wickens, Saber. **Sub:** Summers.

Borough: Robinson, Lewis, Bircumshaw, Howshall, Gill, Goodall, Shepherd, Cutler, Notley, Smith, Pleat. **Sub:** Jones.

Borough made the journey to Hartsdown Park to face Margate in a Southern League Premier Division match.

Borough added another game to their unbeaten run thanks to a dramatic penalty scored by Tony Bircumshaw on the stroke of full-time. In a see-saw struggle, they withstood heavy second half pressure from Margate and looked happy to settle for a draw until Trevor Shepherd was pulled down by goalkeeper Paul Thomas in the dying seconds.

The Kent side had taken the lead through Saber. Nuneaton then went ahead through goals from Shepherd and Howshall before Clayton equalised and then came the last-ditch drama.

The first chance of the game fell to Barrie Notley in the opening minutes. Howshall won the ball and set up the chance for the centre-forward who shot wide from a good position. But Margate went ahead after only eight minutes with a shock goal from Saber. He let fly from 30 yards, the ball bent as it reached Robinson, left the keeper stranded and tucked itself inside the post.

Notley was close to an equaliser when Thomas had to dive full length to push the ball around the far post. Brown headed

across the face of the Borough goal from a Butterfield centre as the game continued to flow from end to end. Robinson saved Borough with a spectacular save when Brown hit a right-foot shot on the turn.

Borough needed to sharpen up their tackling, but Cutler raised their hopes after a slip by Clayton. He was robbed by Bob Wickens as he shaped up for a shot. Nuneaton's approach work continued to look good, despite their tendency to over-play. But Borough were the better footballing side and it paid dividends when they equalised four minutes from half-time. A Pleat corner was half cleared, Lewis drove the ball across the box and Trevor Shepherd side-footed it over the keeper's head. Margate immediately tried to hit back. Lewis saved on the line from John Wickens and the Kent side forced successive corners.

Margate pushed Borough back in the early stages of the second half. Four minutes after the restart, Notley, who twice had treatment in the first half, was replaced by Alan Jones and Dave Lewis was pushed forward. Robinson made a second attempt to save from Saber and fisted out an awkward cross from Jarman as the Kent side continued to attack.

Nuneaton began to settle as the game went on and showed signs of their first half smoothness. Although Eddie King almost ended their hopes with a first time shot that flashed wide. Gerry Howshall shot Borough ahead with a left foot drive from the edge of the 18-yard box in the 68th minute. Clayton then equalised for Margate following a corner ten minutes from time. But Bircumshaw was Borough's saviour with a coolly taken last minute penalty.

Nuneaton Borough v Hednesford Town 27-09-1971

Borough: Robinson, Jones, Wilkinson, Goodall, Bircumshaw, Harris, Shepherd, Smith, Shinton, Notley, Pleat. **Sub:** Ritchie.

Borough welcomed Hednesford Town to Manor Park for a Midland Floodlit Cup game.

Two goals each from Alan Shinton and Barrie Notley, a last minute thunderbolt from Trevor Shepherd – and an inspiring performance from player-manager David Pleat – destroyed Hednesford. Borough were always skilful, sometimes casual and often arrogant in the way they romped home against the West Midlands League title contenders.

The last time they played at home the Royal Blues walloped Merthyr 5-1 to give the fans hope of better things. Since then they have won four away games on the trot – and last night they reappeared in front of their own fans to prove that their new found form is no flash in the pan. David Pleat, who has put the smile back on the face of football at Manor Park, had a hand in three of the goals after Nuneaton had made a sloppy start.

They were too casual in the opening minutes and Hednesford could easily have been ahead if Westwood had taken his time from a good position. But then Borough opened up with



two goals inside three minutes – and went on to entertain. Shinton, playing against his old club, hit the first with a powerful shot that squeezed past goalkeeper Cullen on the post. Shinton then made the second with a run from the half-way line, a cross into the middle – and a superb volley from Barrie Notley.

Ten minutes before half-time Shinton struck again. Pleat cashed in on a Terry Bate slip, his shot was pushed out by goalkeeper Cullen and Shinton was on the spot to hammer the ball home. The fans had hardly settled in their seats after the break when Notley hit Borough's fourth, after another run by Pleat. Borough, so much on top that the game was in danger of being declared no contest, rested on their lead.

They could afford the luxury of over indulgence, tended to over-play – and Hednesford cashed in. Mason took advantage to score the Staffordshire side's goal ten minutes from time. But Trevor Shepherd rounded off a great night for Nuneaton with the fifth goal on the stroke of full-time.

Smith and Harris worked an opening on the left. Harris' cross was knocked back by Notley and Shepherd cracked the ball in from the edge of the box for a superb goal.

Highgate United v Nuneaton Borough 02-10-1971

Highgate: Williams, Niblett, Cahill, Plumb, Murphy, Davies, Cowen, Deehen, Shaw, Leonard, Mellor. **Sub:** Buffery.

Borough: Robinson, Jones, Gill, Goodall, Bircumshaw, Harris, Howshall, Smith, Shepherd, Notley, Cutler. **Sub:** Walker.

Borough made the journey to Highgate United to play a Birmingham Senior Cup quarter-final tie.

Sloppy Borough struggled for long periods against hard-running amateurs Highgate in Worcestershire. They were pushed to the brink of a shock defeat in their bid for a place in the Senior Cup quarter-final by the team that conquered Kidderminster in the FA Cup. Barry Notley headed Nuneaton ahead before a scrambled goal from Cowen and a penalty by Leonard put the amateurs in front. Notley struck again to ease the Borough's worries – but they were out of touch for long periods in the second half.

Borough dominated the early play, apart from one tame effort from Davies which rolled across the goalmouth. Cutler hit a side stanchion and Shepherd headed over before the Manor Park side went into a 7th minute lead. Notley beat centre-half Cahill to a free-kick from Jones. His header went into the net with goalkeeper Williams off his line.

Borough sprayed the ball about well in midfield and always threatened a suspect Highgate defence. Notley climbed well to knock the ball down for Howshall who shot over.

Borough continued to look comfortable and Williams did well to push out a Shepherd cross as Cutler moved in. But Highgate hit a surprise equaliser in a 20th minute goalmouth scramble. Cowen had one shot blocked by Robinson, saw another from Deehen stopped by the keeper's legs, and then

made sure. After 31 minutes Howshall went off, apparently for tactical reasons, and Walker came on. Almost immediately, Mellor switched the ball from his right foot to his left and landed a shot on the top of the net. As half time approached Highgate's effort continued to cancel out Borough's superior approach play. But ten minutes before half-time Highgate went ahead with a penalty. Jones handled as he challenged Deehan and Leonard scored from the spot. Borough were back in the game five minutes before the break when Notley scored a coolly taken goal.

The second half opened with end to end soccer. Borough, despite their superior skill could not get a grip on the game. They need to calm themselves down and tighten up their play. Highgate's hard running on the other hand always promised another upset, Shaw missed a chance after Deehan had made the running from a quick break.

Highgate almost stole the game when Leonard netted, only to be thwarted by a close off-side decision.

Walker Stays At Borough

Bruce Walker, on loan to Nuneaton from Hereford, is to stay at Manor Park for another month. But the Edgar Street club has made it clear that if Borough want him after that they will have to pay a fee.

Gerry Baker Joins Borough

Former Coventry City and Ipswich centre-forward Gerry Baker was at Manor Park today and signed for Nuneaton Borough.

Borough stepped in when Baker resigned as player-manager of struggling Margate with nine months of a two-year contract to run. Baker, who is 31, is returning to Coventry and wanted to join a non-league club in a playing capacity only.

Worcester City and Bedford Town were also in the hunt for Baker, who said: "So far about ten clubs in the Midlands had let me know that they were interested."

Nuneaton Borough v Highgate United 06-10-1971

Borough: Robinson, Jones, Wilkinson, Shepherd, Gill, Goodall, Pleat, Cutler, Shinton, Harris, Smith. **Sub:** Notley.

Borough welcomed Highgate United to Manor Park to play a Birmingham Senior Cup second round replay.

The bubble finally burst over Manor Park on a night of agony and frustration as Borough slid to their first defeat in 11 games. Midland League amateurs Highgate United thoroughly deserved their 1-0 victory in a match that must rate as Borough's worst of the season.

The goal that divided the two teams was the brightest spot in a game that Pleat's men will want to forget. The matchwinner came in the 57th minute and was the crowning blow as Borough failed to find anything like their usual form.

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Bobby Mellor, Highgate's liveliest forward, gave the Borough defence the run around. The number 11 set up the winner when he nodded on a Cahill free-kick into the path of Kevin Deehan, whose first-time shot left keeper Robinson with no chance. All the old problems were back in Borough's make-up. Highgate's goalkeeper Williams was merely a bystander for Borough's attack failed to produce more than three shots all through the match.

Highgate were quicker on the ball, harder in the tackle, found more space and dominated the middle of the park. On the other hand Borough looked jaded and happy to concede defeat. Highgate were first to settle and Mellor saw his shot go wide after a fine pass from James. In the 10th minute the Borough goal suffered one of its many miraculous escapes. Bobby Mellor beat four men on his dazzling run, drew Robinson, then turned his back on the goal and by the time he had regained a shooting position the Borough defence were back to cover.

Borough's best effort of the match came in the 12th minute when a Shepherd free-kick produced the best save of the night from Williams. Referee Tregellis ruled the match with the big stick and four names went into the book.

Nuneaton Borough v Bath City 16-10-1971

Borough : Robinson, Lewis, Bircumshaw, Howshall, Gill, Goodall, Shepherd, Baker, Notley, Pleat, Smith. **Sub:** Harris.

Bath City: McCauley, Ryan, Seybourn, Burt, Swift, Marsland, White, Clarke, Taylor, Mitten, Albin. **Sub:** Hurford.

Borough welcomed Bath City to Manor Park for a Southern League Premier Division game.

Two second half goals from Trevor Shepherd clinched a Southern League victory for Nuneaton at rain-swept Manor Park. He struck in the 77th minute to put Borough 2-0 up. The home side, leading 1-0 at half-time, lost the initiative and allowed Bath to get back into the picture. But Shepherd's two-goal burst did the trick for Nuneaton.

Player manager David Pleat returned to the Borough side after shaking off an ankle injury. Tony Bircumshaw recovered from the effects of cold to line up at number three. Lenny Harris was named as substitute.

Borough threatened first when Lewis ran well to get a cross from the right. Shepherd controlled the ball inside a packed penalty area but his back-heeled pass was too quick for Notley. McCauley had to come off his line in the 6th minute to foil Notley after Baker had headed on a Lewis centre.

Robinson rescued Borough when he went down full-length to save a crisp effort from Taylor following a free-kick by Clarke for a foul by Lewis. He failed to hold the ball first time but recovered well as Ryan challenged.

Lewis got in a saving tackle after a slip by Gill, but the ball still ran to Marsland who was off target with his shot. A smoother right flank raid from Nuneaton ended with Shepherd hitting

a 20-yard shot wide. Then Smith was caught offside as the home side searched for a gap down the middle. Notley had a great chance to put Borough ahead in the 17th minute. He lobbed over the top as McCauley came out after slack play by Burt and Seybourn.

Baker put his side in trouble when he was robbed in midfield but he more than made amends with a superbly taken goal in the 32nd minute. Nuneaton broke quickly from defence to attack. Lewis fed Howshall, who stroked the ball forward to Baker, on the edge of the box. Despite the close attention of Seybourn he turned well to hit a shot wide of McCauley's right hand and inside the far post.

Bath had the ball in the net seven minutes from half-time, but Taylor had clearly handled after good approach work by Marsland and Clarke. It was nearly 2-0 in the 41st minute when Bircumshaw overlapped into space on the left to take a pass from Pleat. The full-back's shot was beaten out by McCauley and the danger was cleared.

On the stroke of half-time Robinson came off his line to charge down a cross from Mitten after the No. 10 had cleverly evaded tackles from Lewis and Gill.

City pushed Borough back into their own territory in the opening minutes of the second half. Goalkeeper Robinson again had to leave his line to halt Ryan and as the visitors kept up the pressure Clarke volleyed wide.

David Pleat's men had a set-back less than five minutes after the break when Gill hobbled off with a knee injury. Lewis moved into the middle with Bircumshaw switching to the right and substitute Harris at left back.

Borough seemed to have lost their rhythm when they snatched a goal out of the blue in the 77th minute. Pleat prompted a smart move on the right, feeding Baker. McCauley misjudged the resulting cross under a Notley challenge and Shepherd, unmarked, dived to head in. Trevor Shepherd then made it 3-0 for Borough in the dying minutes of the game.

Bedford Town v Nuneaton Borough 18-10-1971

Borough: Robinson, Bircumshaw, Allton, Howshall, Lewis, Wilkinson, Shepherd, Cutler, Baker, Pleat, Smith.

Borough travelled to The Eyrie to play Bedford Town in a Midland Floodlit Cup game.

Borough had victory snatched from their grasp when Bedford struck twice in three minutes to snatch the game out of the fire. George Cleary got the equaliser when the Borough defence failed to clear and he seized on a rebound to drive the ball into the roof of the net from close in. Then three minutes later Borough's hopes received the hammer blow when left-back Norman Cooley gave Bedford an unexpected win. Right-back David Skinn hammered a corner across the penalty area and Cooley raced in to head the ball home with tremendous power.

Nuneaton must have felt sick at this stage for they had turned

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on a first-class performance. They defended well, with Dave Lewis and Ernie Wilkinson dominant at the back, and broke from deep positions with speed and precision. The whole side had worked for one another and during the second half had the Eagles' defence at full stretch.

Gerry Baker's speed up front caused the home defence a lot of problems and with a little luck Borough could have been well out in front. It wasn't to be their night, however, although if it is any consolation they will surely play a lot worse than this during the season and win. On the brighter side, Reg Edwards came through his first game for nearly two months with flying colours.

He was quickly into action in the opening minutes and hardly looked as if he had missed a game. There were times when he looked just a little bit rusty but he pulled off two fine saves from David Henderson and was off his line in a flash to save at Roger Figg's feet in the first-half. Alan Allton, one of the youth squad, made his debut at left-back and gave quite a useful performance. The youngster quickly settled into the game. He wasn't overawed by the occasion and played some intelligent football well within himself.

Nuneaton Borough v Ilkeston 25-10-1971

Borough: Edwards, Lewis, Gill, Goodall, Smith, Howshall, Shinton, Cutler, Pleat, Notley, Baker. Sub: Shepherd.

Borough welcomed Ilkeston to Manor Park to play a Southern League Cup first round second leg tie.

Borough went through to the third round on the strength of their 1-0 win in the first leg. At times they limped along in a game that promised a great deal but never got going. Ilkeston, in spite of the one goal deficit, were cautious. They started as if their number one aim was to avoid a hammering.

Borough, with FA Cup success and a string of goals behind them, were anxious. They desperately wanted to please their home crowd, but lost themselves in a web of midfield scrappiness. It was a neurotic clash. The anxiety and caution made it that way. Some of Nuneaton's play was slap happy. They had by far the best of the chances, but the goal flair they have shown in recent weeks deserted them.

Saturday's hat-trick hero Gerry Baker, had a couple of snap shots that could easily have gone in and should have scored 17 minutes from the end. Cutler beat Ilkeston full-back Atkinson and pulled the ball back across the goal for Baker whose header hit the woodwork with the goalkeeper stranded. But the Nuneaton front runners received little support from the midfield where Gerry Howshall, Alan Shinton and Paul Cutler failed to take a grip on their play.

Shinton had a good first half, before he faded and both Cutler and Howshall were well below par. At times Borough showed flashes of their true flair without being able to maintain it long enough to dominate the game.

Barrie Notley and Gerry Baker were left alone up front for

long periods and Gulson stuck to the former Coventry and Ipswich forward like a limpet. Ilkeston had a handful of shots at goal. Reg Edwards pushed a low shot from Rann outside the post early on, but was rarely troubled afterwards.

In all, it was a luke-warm performance from a Nuneaton side that has proved beyond doubt that it has loads of talent and flair. Perhaps it was complacency built on the 1-0 lead from the first leg or it could have been over confidence.

Nuneaton Borough v Wimbledon 30-10-1971

Borough: Robinson, Lewis, Smith, Howshall, Gill, Goodall, Shepherd, Baker, Notley, Pleat, Cutler. Sub: Shinton.

Wimbledon: Guy, Marchant, Stanley, Rice, McCready, Law, Armstrong, Cooke, Morton, Collins, O'Rourke. Sub: Bailham.

Borough welcomed Wimbledon to Manor Park to play a Southern League Premier Division game.

Brave Barrie Notley earned the salute of the fans with the goal that gave Borough two diamond-studded points. Notley swept home a Roger Smith pass to break the deadlock after 75 minutes of an intense but entertaining struggle against the joint league Leaders

Both teams settled quickly and Borough player-manager David Pleat sent in the first shot of the game which brought out a spectacular save from Wimbledon goalkeeper Guy. Baker failed to reach a cross from Howshall as both teams maintained a fast pace before a free-kick, the third against Nuneaton in the opening exchanges, halted the flow. Shepherd chased hard to win a corner for Nuneaton and Cutler headed over from Pleat's flag kick.

Another Nuneaton corner, again taken by Pleat, was headed over at the near post by Baker before Notley was only a hair's breadth from a Howshall centre and Cutler made a diagonal run across the penalty area and pulled the ball back into the middle in a bid to set up a chance.



A golden goal for Barrie Notley who turns away in triumph as his left foot shot beats Wimbledon goalkeeper Guy after 75 minutes of a thrilling see-saw struggle.

Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune

Borough forced a scramble in the Don's goal area when Guy challenged by Baker to a Lewis centre failed to hold the ball. Notley had a stab at the ball, but Guy managed to get his body in front of it and the danger was cleared.

Wimbledon pushed forward and only a reaction save by Robinson from a Cooke snap shot prevented them from taking the lead. Nuneaton broke clear and a solo burst by Baker almost caught the Dons' defence. But he had no support and was blotted out.

The second half started with Cutler swinging over a free kick but Notley's powerful header flashed wide. Wimbledon hit back and an O'Rourke centre carried too much power to give Moreton a chance at the far post. A saving tackle by Stanley thwarted Cutler as he tried to break through and the game was still balanced on knife edge.

Wimbledon managed to curb much of Borough's flair. They were well organised and efficient and their new signing, David Armstrong from Dover, gave the home fans an anxious moment when he unleashed a low shot which stretched Robinson into a full length save.

Borough built up pressure after being denied loud protests for a penalty but it was Barry Notley who broke the deadlock with 15 minutes to go. He moved onto a fast ball from Smith and swept it into the net with his left foot.

Nuneaton Borough v Weymouth 01-11-1971

Borough: Robinson, Lewis, Gill, Goodall, Smith, Howshall, Cutler, Shepherd, Pleat, Notley, Baker. Sub: Walker.

Borough welcomed Weymouth to Manor Park for a Southern League Premier Division game.

Borough came down to earth with a bump with a performance that handed Weymouth two Southern League points on a plate. The Dorset side cashed in on a 15th minute penalty; dominated the first-half; and then survived heavy pressure to cling to their win. But they were given a lot of help by a Nuneaton side that was just a pale shadow of the team that beat Wimbledon.

Borough tossed away a string of gilt edged chances as they tried to salvage the successful run that stretched into seven league games without defeat – the best since they joined the premier division. And the 3,000 plus crowd, the biggest since the Hereford match at the start of the season, became more and more frustrated.

The game turned against Nuneaton early on – and left big-hearted Dave Goodall the sickest player on the field. In the 12th minute he shot against the underside of the crossbar from four yards after a hard-hit, low cross from Trevor Shepherd had flashed across the goalmouth. And, three minutes later his foul on ex-Leicester forward Jimmy Goodfellow gave Weymouth a penalty which Trevor Allen banged home from the spot.

Weymouth began to take command after the goal before Borough had two glorious chances in the dying minutes of the first-half. The first fell to Paul Cutler six minutes from the break when a Dave Lewis cross hit Gerry Baker and left him clear. He lobbed the ball wide.

Baker had the second when Roger Smith put him clear, but Weymouth goalkeeper John Clarke raced out to smother the ball. Three minutes earlier Trevor Shepherd had missed with a close range header from an unchallenged position after Barrie Notley had knocked the ball across the goalmouth.



The miss of the match. Dave Goodall, hidden in the ruck of players, crashes a shot against the crossbar in the 12th minute – three minutes later he gave away the penalty which secured Weymouth' win.

Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune

Borough needed to forget their first-half shambles and they came out after the break in a more determined mood – but they still struggled to find anything like their true form. Paul Cutler raised hopes with a 65th minute shot which crept through the Weymouth defence, beat the goalkeeper and hit the foot of the far post. It was a fair relection of Borough's efforts – nothing went right.

Weymouth looked the more polished all round side. They had defensive stars in left-back Benny Glover and centre-half Tony Hobson and Rod Adams, Ray Bumstead and Terry Bradbury always looked on top of their game in midfield.

Borough Away To Torquay

Nuneaton Borough have been drawn away to struggling Third Division side Torquay United in the First Round of the FA Cup. It means a return to the West Country for player-manager David Pleat, who spent a lot of his career at Exeter City. He greeted the draw with mixed feelings: "I am disappointed for our supporters, but it is surprising what can happen in the FA Cup," he said.

He added: "They are struggling and I think we can do well there. I shouldn't think they are too pleased about the prospect of playing us. Obviously it won't be easy – but we are the underdogs and have nothing to lose."

Borough may charter an FA Cup Special from British Rail for the trip to Torquay. There is also a chance that a small party of fans will fly down to the West Country for the match.

Coaches will leave Nuneaton Bus Station early on the morning of the match to make the 200-mile trip to Plainmoor. And many fans will make the trip to Devon by car in what should be Borough's biggest away following for some time.

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Burton Albion v Nuneaton Borough 10-11-1971

Borough: Edwards, Bircumshaw, Gill, Wilkinson, Ritchie, Newshall, Thompson, Lewis, Shepherd, Notley, Baker. **Sub:** Goodall.

Borough made the journey to Eton Park to play Burton Albion in a Midland Floodlit Cup encounter.

Borough opened with a flourish, spluttered and finally bowed tamely to workmanlike Albion. With far more important league and cup matches on their minds David Pleat's men never showed the determination or understanding to match the home side.

Trevor Shepherd, after being barged off the ball 20 yards out, ran well to collect Gerry Howshall's free-kick. He pulled it low across the goalmouth where Lewis was on hand to apply the finishing touch. Nuneaton's joy ended there. They spent the rest of the first-half defending as Albion dominated, with former Manor Park man Lol Wright showing up well for the home side.

Goals from Pete Waller and Graham Brown in the space of four minutes came as no surprise and gave Burton a 2-1 interval lead. Stewart Masefield put the issue beyond doubt in the 86th minute.

Reg Edwards, bidding to regain his spot as number one goalkeeper, had a night of mixed fortunes. He rescued Borough with a string of fine saves and on more than one occasion had to throw himself bravely at the feet of on-rushing forwards. But his one handling slip could easily have cost a goal and his ground kicking was atrocious. Wilkinson found himself having to take the goal kicks.

Highlight of the night for Nuneaton was the promising debut of Phil Thompson, another fine prospect from the youth squad. He looked full of confidence in his midfield role, never afraid to hold the ball or take on a man.

Apart from Borough's goal the only real threats to Burton were a couple of headers from Barrie Notley and a second half drive from Gerry Baker, which brought the best out of Mick Allsopp.

Nuneaton Borough v Dover 13-11-1971

Borough: Robinson, Bircumshaw, Smith, Howshall, Gill, Goodall, Shepherd, Baker, Notley, Lewis, Cutler. **Sub:** Wilkinson.

Dover: White, Reynolds, Hall, Beesley, Carragher, O'Connell, Johnson, Robinson, Crush, Hoy, Gould. **Sub:** Clewlow.

Borough welcomed Dover to Manor Park to play a Southern League Premier Division game.

Borough carved a point out of a granite hard battle against title chasers Dover. Two players, Borough's Dave Lewis and Dover's Barrie Gould, were sent off, Tony Bircumshaw was booked – and all of the action was crammed into the last half hour. It followed a two-goals-in-two-minutes spell after Paul Cutler had headed Nuneaton in front and then Tony Moy had

equalised for the Kent club. Just before the end Cutler almost won the game for Borough with a 20-yard shot which hit the woodwork.

Borough, skippered by Gerry Howshall in midfield, set up an early attack. Notley knocked a Bircumshaw centre back to Baker, who shot over from 35 yards. Dover began to push forward but a bad crossfield pass from Crush let in Cutler and set up an attack from which Baker won a corner. Cutler's centre was easily taken out by goalkeeper White.

Both teams had to work hard for openings against two quick tackling defences and Notley glanced a header wide from Baker. Notley then tried to set up a chance for Baker, but Dover had packed their defence and the chance was quickly shut out. An overhead kick from O'Connell found Moy, whose shot was saved by Robinson as the Nuneaton defence waited for an offside whistle which never came.

Cutler sent over a cross but Baker headed wide, and the referee was kept busy with a series of free-kicks, most of them against Nuneaton. Neither side looked like breaking the deadlock before half-time. Dover centre half Carragher was forced into a hasty clearance after a midfield error by O'Connell. Cutler then ruined a promising Borough build up with a poor final pass as the pace of the game increased.

Then, after nearly an hour of stalemate the game suddenly burst into life with two goals in as many minutes. Cutler headed Borough into the lead from a Bircumshaw cross in the 57th minute. But they had hardly finished congratulating themselves before Dover equalised. Johnson had a shot parried by Robinson and Moy followed up to score.

Ten minutes after the excitement of the two goals there was a further spell of action – which ended with two players being sent off. The incident happened after Howshall had been tackled. Lewis and Gould clashed and a bunch of players were involved in a near-brawl. Referee Mr L. H. Holland sorted it out and gave Lewis and Gould their marching orders. Fifteen minutes from time Borough full back Tony Bircumshaw was booked after a tackle on Dover striker Dave Crush.

Nuneaton Borough v Bedworth United 15-11-1971

Borough: Edwards, Jones, Wilkinson, Goodall, Bircumshaw, Harris, Thompson, Pleat, Shepherd, Notley, Smith. **Sub:** Lewis.

Bedworth: Kennedy, Knox, Anderson, Sheppard, Busby, Burckitt, Hambridge, Deakin, Eades, Mason, Parker. **Sub:** Howkins.

Borough welcomed Bedworth United to Manor Park for a Midland Floodlit Cup game.

Sixteen-year-old, Bedworth-born, Phil Thompson gave a terrier-like display and his general all-round display marked him down as a youngster to watch. Borough won easily after a scrappy first-half against a disappointing Bedworth team that offered only a weak challenge.

The Manor Park team, with Saturday's Cup trip to Torquay uppermost in their minds, did enough to win well without



being pushed. Roger Smith starred with the infectious skill and enthusiasm that put him a class above everyone else – except Thompson and defender Ernie Wilkinson.

Borough went ahead in the 53rd minute with a Roger Smith goal direct from a corner. Thompson bravely launched his frail nine stone frame at United keeper Tom Kennedy and Smith's corner sailed straight into the net. Borough scored again 22 minutes later from the best move of the match. David Pleat laid a ball down the line for Alan Jones, who ran well and pulled it back for Trevor Shepherd to score with a header. Dave Lewis came on for Smith in the 82nd minute and scored Borough's third goal with two minutes to go.

Again Pleat had a hand in the goal, but his pass should have been cut out by Ken Anderson. It wasn't and Lewis beat the Bedworth defender, shook off a challenge from centre-half Dick Sheppard and scored.

Borough Players Injured In Car Crash

Two Nuneaton Borough footballers were involved in a car crash on the eve of the club's FA Cup tie with Torquay. Midfield player Roger Smith and centre-forward Barrie Notley were in collision with another car at Tamworth on their way to join the team coach at Nuneaton.

Smith, who is 26, received cuts to the head and 19-year-old Notley injured an elbow.

"We were both quite shaken up at first. But we're OK now and we are fit to play in the cup-tie," said Smith as he left the hospital after treatment.

Nuneaton Borough v Burton Albion 22-11-1971

Borough: Edwards, Jones, Lewis, Thompson, Shepherd, Wilkinson, Goodall, Harris, Pleat, Baker, Smith. **Sub:** Bull.

Burton: Allsopp, Goodwin, Butler, Annable, Royall, Hickton, Wright, Bostock, Brown, Masefield, Cowlshaw. **Sub:** Fairbrother.

Borough welcomed Burton Albion to Manor Park for a Midland Floodlit Cup encounter.

An explosive goal from Gerry Baker and a penalty, rifled home by Trevor Shepherd, earned Borough a 12 point haul against Burton. They were denied the chance of a bonus haul with a series of near misses that let Albion off lightly. Nuneaton could have been four goals in front at half-time after a whirlwind start.

Baker shot them ahead with a superbly set up goal after only five minutes' play. Dave Goodall pushed a pass out to player manager David Pleat in the right wing spot. Trevor Shepherd stepped over his centre to throw the Burton defence – and Baker provided the finish with a stunning shot. Five minutes later Baker flung himself full length at a Shepherd cross, only to see his header strike the goalkeeper's legs.

Then, a measured pass from Roger Smith allowed Pleat to run in behind the Albion defence. He connected – but Burton

keeper Allsop saved with his legs. Shepherd, Baker and Pleat each stretched the Albion keeper before Borough's pressure eased and Burton came back into the game. Reg Edwards made a fingertip save to push a Goodwin shot over the top and Masefield had a similar effort saved by the keeper.

Borough, free from the tensions of cup and league soccer and sensing an easy win, became casual in the second half. They attacked in bursts to keep Burton in check, but never exerted anything like their early pressure. Edwards saved at Masefield's feet 15 minutes from time to prevent an equaliser and Baker was denied a goal by another good save from Allsop.

Shepherd eventually made sure of Nuneaton's win with his 80th minute penalty – created by youngster Phil Thompson. The 16-year-old won a 50-50 ball and carried it bravely into the penalty box where he was sandwiched between Fairbrother and Annable and brought down. Shepherd blasted his spot kick into the roof of the net. It was hit straight – but carried too much power for Allsop.

Bedworth United v Nuneaton Borough 24-11-1971

Bedworth: Kennedy, Busby, Burckitt (Parker, 60), Hambridge, Sheppard, Anderson, Deakin, Knox, Mason, Eades, Warrington.

Borough: Edwards, Jones, Ritchie, Wilkinson, Gill, Howshall, Smith, Shepherd, Baker, Lewis (Allton, 70), Harris.

Borough made the journey to The Oval to take on Bedworth United in a Camkin Cup first round tie.

The first action came after only 50 seconds. Borough defender Ernie Wilkinson was booked – surely one of the quickest bookings on record. Bedworth quickly showed their intentions of avenging their two previous defeats as they stole into a second minute lead. Goalkeeper Reg Edwards, who had a poor night, stood and watched a looping cross from in-form full-back Bobby Busby and Warrington ghosted from behind to head home from an acute angle.

Borough fielding six of the side that lost to Torquay, were crowded out in their bid to draw level. Battling Busby struck Borough's crossbar before the dangerous Warrington added the finishing touch to the best move of the match. John Mason chipped a splendid through ball to winger Roy Deakin, who shrugged off Wilkinson to pull back a bye-line cross for Warrington to make it 2-0. Bedworth pulled back striker David Eades for set-pieces in an attempt to repel Borough's onslaught, but they could not stop Gerry Baker reducing the arrears on the stroke of half-time. Lewis floated a pass over the heads of a retreating defence, and Baker placed a perfect cross-shot past the diving Kennedy.

A Borough comeback looked on the cards in the second half until midfield ace Roger Hambridge ripped in one of his 20-yard specials to put Bedworth 3-1 up after 62 minutes. It was still anyone's game, as Trevor Shepherd repeated the dose with 20 minutes left. Gerry Baker floated an effort over the bar, and Borough fans howled for a penalty when the number nine appeared to be pushed down inside the penalty area.

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As the tempo quickened, John Gill was booked for the fourth time in 12 months. But it seemed as if referee Baker had picked the wrong man after a tackle on Warrington. Then, with two minutes left, Warrington clinched it for Bedworth. Edwards stepped outside his area and from the free-kick Knox touched it to Warrington, who somehow crept a left foot shot through the wall past an unsighted Edwards, to earn a home tie against Tamworth in round two.

Nuneaton Borough v Bedford Town 27-11-1971

Borough: Robinson, Bircumshaw, Smith, Howshall, Gill, Goodall, Cutler, Baker, Shepherd, Lewis, Pleat. Sub: Notley.

Bedford Town: Alexander, Dougan, Skinn, Scurr, Roach, Cooley, Davies, Henderson, Cleary, Fry, Byrne. Sub: Silous.

Borough welcomed Bedford Town to Manor Park for a Southern League Premier Division game.

Trevor Shepherd took over the number nine shirt and scored the goal that gave Borough both points against Bedford. It was a superb effort, taken on the volley following a Baker centre and a Lewis header in the tenth minute. But it was one of the few highspots in an otherwise scrappy game.

Bedford moved forward and both Figg and Cleary each had chances. Robinson saved Cleary's shot with his feet. But, after an end to end start, Trevor Shepherd shot Nuneaton ahead with a superb tenth minute goal. Baker sent over a cross, Lewis headed it down and Shepherd volleyed it past a helpless goalkeeper for a picture-book goal.

The game continued to flow easily from end to end and Bedford looked dangerous on the break. But most of the good football came from the Nuneaton side in an open first half hour. Bedford's threat to Borough during the early period came down the left hand side where their forwards were given a lot of room.

Alexander went down at the foot of the posts to save a shot from Baker as Nuneaton attempted to increase their lead. A right wing raid broke down after successive throw-ins from Bircumshaw before Goodall set Borough in motion again with a crossfield pass to Smith. The number three accelerated and fed Howshall who attempted a one-two with Baker which failed to come off.

Then the Eagles won a free kick in a good position when Byrne was held back on the edge of the penalty area. From the kick, Lewis finally cleared after Howshall had miscued. As half-time approached, Pleat was halted by Roach as he tried to burst through the middle and then Byrne cut inside and tested Robinson with a powerful drive.

Shepherd missed a chance of a second goal seconds after the break. He headed wide from a good position following a right-wing cross by Pleat. The game began to deteriorate with some scrappy play before Lewis gave it a spark of life. He collected a free-kick from Bircumshaw with his back to the Bedford goal and sent in an overhead kick which flashed

over the top and made goalkeeper Alexander struggle. Bedford began to threaten Borough's lead, but neither side did much to excite the 2,000-plus crowd. The Eagles showed more midfield aggression against casual Borough who were never sharp and often slap happy. Twenty minutes from time, Barrie Notley came on as substitute for Borough player-manager David Pleat.

Nuneaton Borough v Telford United 29-11-1971

Borough: Robinson, Jones, Gill, Goodall, Bircumshaw, Howshall, Lewis, Shepherd, Baker (Cutler), Notley, Smith.

Telford: Irvine, Harris, Ray, Coton, Carr, Croft, Hart, Jagger, Fudge, Bentley, Owen. Sub: Ross.

Borough welcomed Telford United to Manor Park for a Southern League Cup second round tie.

Borough kept themselves on the honours trail when they inched their way through to the quarter-finals of the Southern League Cup. A spectacular goal from Barrie Notley after only 12 minutes won a clash between two well-matched and workmanlike sides. And Telford, a far better side than the league table suggests, hit the woodwork three times in their bid to cling to the trophy they won last season.

But Borough, playing their fifth match in eight days, just about deserved their win. What they lacked in flair they made up for in all round effort with goalkeeper Brian Robinson and full back Tony Bircumshaw their outstanding performers.

The goal that won the match would have graced any game. Dave Lewis pushed a pass out to Gerry Baker on the left wing. He centred and Notley, running towards the near post, sent a glancing header neatly into the far side of the net. The goal followed a spell of pressure from Telford – and a rare disallowed goal decision from referee Mr R. Snedler.

A cross from Harris was pushed out by Robinson, hit back into the middle by Hart – and headed in by Mickey Fudge as a gap appeared in the Borough defence. But Joey Owen had stepped out of play from an offside position – and the referee pulled him up for “ungentlemanly conduct.”

After Telford's early attacking spell, Borough began to look dangerous in front of goal and Howshall had a scorcher stopped on the line by Croft. Then Owen rapped out a warning just before the break when he cracked a free kick against the crossbar and Jack Bentley headed the rebound over. Only six minutes later, Bentley, still a prince among Southern League centre-forwards, hit the bar with a header from a corner. Owen had two shots saved at full stretch by Robinson as the see-saw struggle continued.

Twelve minutes from time Bentley again hit the bar, but Telford began to run out of steam and Borough underlined their win with a closing spell of attacking play. It was close – but Borough again showed the tremendous strength of character that David Pleat has instilled into the squad. They have the confidence to shrug off set-backs.

Cutler To Join Dover

Paul Cutler, Borough's Kent-based striker, is all set to join Southern League championship chasers Dover. The surprise deal is expected to be completed at any time – with Nuneaton collecting a fee for the second highest scorer in their history.

Travelling problems rank high on the list of reasons behind the move. Cutler lives in Sevenoaks and has missed many midweek matches. Explained Manor Park player-manager David Pleat: "Under the present circumstances we don't think it is fair to get him up for midweek matches."

Coventry City Res. v Nuneaton Borough 07-12-1971

Coventry: McManus, Dugdale, Philpotts, Cahill, Cattlin, Cartwright, Machin, Stevenson, Green, Ferguson, Smith. **Sub:** Crossley.

Borough: Edwards, Jones, Wilkinson, Goodall, Bircumshaw, Howshall, Lewis, Harris, Pleat, Notley, Shepherd. **Sub:** Gill.

Borough made the journey to Highfield Road to play Coventry City Reserves in the President's Cup.

Sky Blue starlets Alan Green and Mick Ferguson scored the goals that destroyed Borough's hopes. Green, on the verge of England Youth honours and Ferguson, City's latest recruit, each scored twice in a one sided game. And they could have had hat-tricks as Nuneaton were outshone. Two goals just before half-time, after Nuneaton had recovered from a shaky start, gave Borough a glimpse of the tremendous teenage talent in the Sky Blue ranks.

Green struck first with an explosive shot from 25 yards. But goalkeeper Reg Edwards judged it badly as it dipped underneath the bar. Almost on the half-time whistle, Edwards came out and missed a centre and Ferguson, on his home debut, scored with a header. Ferguson struck again ten minutes into the second half when Gerry Howshall lost the ball to Chris Cattlin.

And Green rounded off the rout in the 67th minute with a spectacular goal. He pulled the ball back through Ernie Wilkinson's legs and hit a tremendous left foot drive just inside the far post. City could have had more as Nuneaton struggled under heavy pressure and rarely looked like scoring.

Nuneaton Borough v Worcester City 11-12-1971

Borough: Robinson, Jones, Bircumshaw, Howshall, Gill, Goodall, Hutchinson, Shepherd, Motley, Lewis, Smith. **Sub:** Pleat.

Worcester City: Knight, Lobban, Bassett, Newton, McQuarrie, Bloomfield, Dyer, Jones, Kelcher, McEwan, Aggio. **Sub:** Carson.

Borough welcomed Worcester City to Manor Park for a Southern League Premier Division match.

Borough staged a thrilling second half fight back to snatch a draw out of the jaws of defeat. Two down at half-time, they rallied with goals from Trevor Shepherd and Dave Lewis to take a point. Ernie Hutchinson, on a month's loan from Derby County, made his debut for Nuneaton at outside-right.

Gill headed out a Newton free-kick in the first minute before Borough began to move forward. Howshall was prominent in their attacks, but City's defence was solid. Nuneaton, more methodical in their build-ups, had a chance after ten minutes when Notley headed over after Shepherd had flicked on.

City applied a spell of pressure. Robinson went down full-length to save a header from Kelcher, after a free-kick, before Hutchinson hit a long-range ball which ran through to Knight. Borough had a let off on the half hour when Dyer hit the crossbar from the edge of the box.

Smith was tackled in full flight by Lobban at the expense of a corner before Worcester stunned Nuneaton with two goals in as many minutes. Dyer scored the first in the 40th minute. Kelcher chested the ball down to Newton who lobbed it over the Nuneaton defence for Dyer to score at the far post. Nuneaton had no time to recover before McEwan cracked City's second with his left foot.

After the break Lewis went close from 35 yards with a shot which dipped at the last minute and went inches over. Pleat came on as substitute for Jones in the 55th minute. Nuneaton reshuffled the side and were back in the game 10 minutes later. Bircumshaw swung the ball into the middle and Shepherd scored with a close range header. Borough applied tremendous pressure in a bid to save the game.



The equaliser. Dave Lewis is frozen by the camera as he powers home Borough's second goal after a five-man move 14 minutes from the end of the match.
Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune

Knight pushed a shot from Howshall on to the crossbar with a fingertip save. Shepherd then turned a pass from Pleat across the goalmouth before Worcester showed signs of throwing back Nuneaton's attacks. Then Borough struck with the equaliser – a classic goal from Lewis. Hutchinson hit a crossfield pass to Lewis, he pushed a short ball out to Pleat whose centre was nodded down by Notley for Lewis to drive home with his right foot in the 76th minute.

John Gill Fined And Disciplined

Nuneaton Borough centre-half John Gill has been given a 28 days suspended sentence and fined £20 by an FA disciplinary committee. Gill, an ever-present in the Southern League side this season, was dealt with by the committee after being booked three times in a year. He is the first of three Borough players to be dealt with by the FA following misconduct. Dave Lewis and Tony Bircumshaw are also due to face action.



Corby Town v Nuneaton Borough 14-12-1971

Borough: Robinson, Newbury, Harris, Howshall, Gill, Wilkinson, Hutchinson, Shepherd, Notley, Lewis, Shaw. **Sub:** Cooper.

Borough made the journey to Occupation Road to take on Corby Town in a Midland Floodlit Cup match.

Borough emerged with 12 points from trouble-torn Corby to move into third spot in the Midland Floodlit Cup table. They survived a penalty miss and a pitch invasion as the game was almost abandoned 15 minutes from time. More than 50 fans, most of them schoolboys, raced across the grass bringing the match to a halt. At that stage Borough were two goals up and had exposed a declining Corby team, short on skill and ideas.

Barrie Notley put Borough in front in the 18th minute with a well-taken goal, set up by newcomer Roger Shaw. And Shaw, from Midland Combination side Highgate United, scored the second with one of the softest goals of the season just before the crowd trouble. Adrian Newbury, skipper of the Youth Team, sent over a cross which was completely missed by Corby keeper Dave Tennant. All Shaw had to do was to recover from his surprise at such an easy opening and tap the ball home at the far post.

Both Shaw and Newbury had impressive debuts for Nuneaton, particularly Shaw in his front-running role. Twenty minutes from the end Borough introduced another newcomer, Steve Cooper from Racing Club Warwick, who showed an impressive turn of speed during his short spell on the field. In between the Notley-Shaw goals Corby added to their misery when Holder missed a penalty, the fourth spot kick miss in a row by the Steelmen.

Team Coach Smashed

Nuneaton Borough's team coach was attacked when fans ran riot during last night's game at Corby. The rear window was shattered by an iron bar after a horde of youngsters had charged across the pitch while the Midland Floodlit Cup match was still in progress. A Borough player was hit by a missile. It was the third attack on Nuneaton coaches at Occupation Road in three years.

A spokesman for the coach firm said: "We will not be sending coaches to Corby again. We cannot afford it."

Bath City v Nuneaton Borough 18-12-1971

Bath City: McAuley, Ryan, Hallern, Clarke, Burt, Marsland, White, Pleat, Taylor, Rose, Mitten, Fry. **Sub:** Albin.

Borough: Robinson, Jones, Bircumshaw, Howshall, Gill, Goodall, Pleat, Lewis, Shepherd, Notley, Baker. **Sub:** Smith.

Borough made the journey to Twerton Park to take on Bath City in a Southern League Premier Division game.

Borough's unbeaten Southern League run came to an end at Bath City after they had twice lost the lead. They failed to convert their late pressure into goals and lost their first

Premier Division game since the beginning of November. City hit two goals in the last 20 minutes to clinch it after a four goal first-half.

Borough took the lead against strife-torn City from their first attack. Hallam failed to cut out a cross from Bircumshaw and Notley moved in behind him to snap up the chance inside the first minute. Bath tried to hit back and there was a scramble in the Nuneaton goalmouth after Robinson had punched out a corner. The goalkeeper recovered to save.

Nuneaton, encouraged by a goal, pushed forward with some impressive midfield play. Mitten tried a 25-yarder which was confidently taken by Brian Robinson, before City should have scored when Taylor missed a glorious chance from a twice taken free-kick. They were back on level terms in the 15th minute when Rose scored with a header from a Fry cross. Rose went up with Gill and nodded the ball into the net with Robinson off his line.

Borough regained their lead five minutes from half-time with a spectacular goal from Baker. He cashed in on a defensive slip and curled a left-foot shot inside the far post from the edge of the penalty area. On the stroke of half-time, Bath were back on level terms when Mitten scored with a header from close range after Fry had pulled a free kick back from the by-line.

Baker failed with an overhead kick from a Notley back-header in the early seconds after the break. But Bath, who made a determined start to the second half, launched a spell of pressure and there were loud appeals for a penalty when Mitten sprawled in the box.

Both teams carried a lot of threats in their attacks, but fell down in the 18 yard box. Baker had a chance a few minutes later when he had wretched luck with a lob which hit the foot of a post from a Pleat pass.

Still Nuneaton could not force home their attacks and fell behind with 20 minutes to go. Dave Clarke latched on to a half clearance and hit a 25-yard half-volley. Robinson managed to get his fingertips to the ball, failed to divert it, and Jones made a vain attempt to save on the line. Fry scored Bath's fourth goal seconds before time.

Lenny Harris On Transfer List

Nuneaton Borough utility player Len Harris has gone on to the transfer list at his own request. Harris, who can play in midfield or in either full back position, wants the chance of first team football elsewhere.

Said Manor Park player-manager David Pleat: "He is unhappy at being out of the Southern League side. But until he moves he is still a member of our squad and it is up to him to try and get back into the team."

Borough have circularised clubs in the area about Harris, who rejoined his home town club last season after five years with Nottingham Forest.



Nuneaton Borough v Corby Town 20-12-1971

Borough: Edwards, Harris, Gill, Lewis, Smith, Howshall, Hutchinson, Pleat, Baker, Notley, Shaw. **Sub:** Allton.

Corby: Tennant, Burns, Blick, Svenson, Morrison, Jardine, Etheridge, McGowan, Holder, Walker, Connery. **Sub:** Sherry.

Borough welcomed Corby Town to Manor Park to play a Midland Floodlit Cup game.

Unhappy Borough, chasing a hat-trick of wins against the Steelmen, lost to a last-gasp give-away goal. With three minutes to go Steve Holder lofted the ball from the left wing. It went over goalkeeper Reg Edwards at the near post and landed in the back of the net.

It wrote an unhappy ending to another disappointing game for Borough, who are having a bad patch. David Pleat's team reshuffle failed to pay dividends. Roger Shaw from Highgate was not as impressive as he was last time out and Ernie Hutchinson looked out of place in his midfield role.

Corby went ahead in the 21st minute when Edwards clawed out a stinging drive from full-back Morrison and Holder forced the ball home. The goal came after Morrison had shrugged off Pleat and won the ball from an unwise throw by the keeper.

Shaw hooked the ball against the woodwork two minutes later after a Gill free-kick had been pushed forward by Lewis and headed on by Notley.

Borough pushed forward early in the second half and Corby midfielder McGowan was booked in the 50th minute for a knee high tackle on Roger Smith. But the game deteriorated in a grim 20 minutes spell before Barrie Notley brought it back to life with a well-taken 75th minute equaliser. Morrison cleared off the line as Nuneaton searched for a winner and Corby keeper Dave Tennant was hurt in a brave save at Notley's feet from another back pass.

But Holder's late long range effort won the game and denied Nuneaton precious points in their bid to stay in the Floodlit Cup honours chase.

Nuneaton Borough v Cambridge City 27-12-1971

Borough: Robinson, Jones, Smith, Howshall, Gill, Goodall, Baker, Notley, Shepherd, Pleat, Lewis. **Sub:** Bircumshaw.

Cambridge City: Peacock, Smith, Keenan, Elliott, James, Stevens, Jones, Clarke, Hunter, Marshall, Hyde. **Sub:** Baker.

Borough welcomed Cambridge City to Manor Park for a Southern League Premier Division encounter.

David Pleat celebrated his first Christmas at Manor Park with the goal that set yesterday's Boxing Day clash alight. It was scored by Barrie Notley five minutes from half-time – but it belonged to the Borough player-manager. He destroyed the Cambridge defence with a run from deep inside his own half before sending over the cross for Notley to head home. City defenders Devlin Stevens and Malcolm Keenan were left in his

wake in the few exciting seconds that put Nuneaton on the victory trail. Before that, they had promised a lot, but failed to break down a stubborn Cambridge defence. And they did not underline their superiority until the final seconds when Trevor Shepherd made it 2-0 from another Pleat cross.

Cambridge hardly threatened the Nuneaton goal for the whole of the 90 minutes. They were pushed back for much of the match by a Borough side that won far more impressively than the scoreline suggests. City spend the majority of the game holding Nuneaton, but while Borough held their slender one goal lead there was always a chance that they would hit back.

Cambridge almost did just that in a short spell mid-way through the second half, but their way to goal was barred. Nuneaton lost Notley 15 minutes from the end when he ran on to a through ball from Shepherd, shot wide as he was tackled and had to be helped off the field with a leg injury.

Five minutes before time Pleat was upended by Keenan on the edge of the penalty box and goalkeeper Peacock parried a fierce shot from the player-manager after the free-kick. Gerry Baker had a scorching drive pushed around the post by the City keeper as the pressure built up on the Cambridge defence, to be climaxed by Shepherd's goal in the dying second of the game.

Cambridge City v Nuneaton Borough 01-01-1972

Cambridge: Peacock, Smith, Kennen, Elliott, James, Stevens, Bannister, Marshall, Hunter, Hyde, Jones. **Sub:** Saline.

Borough: Robinson, Jones, Bircumshaw, Howshall, Gill, Goodall, Baker, Smith, Shepherd, Notley, Lewis. **Sub:** Pleat.

Borough made the journey to Milton Road for a Southern League Premier Division encounter.

Gerry Baker shot Borough ahead with one of the fastest away goals on record at Milton Road. Baker scored after just 17 seconds, and Trevor Shepherd added a second five minutes before half-time.

But Nuneaton were forced to settle for a point in the end when City hit back through Hunter (43 mins) and a twice-taken 60th minute penalty from top scorer Stan Marshall.

Borough took the lead when a Roger Smith cross was headed out by City defender Tony Smith, to Baker who drove the ball just inside the post with his left foot from the edge of the box.

City won a free-kick, 25 yards out. Hyde chipped the ball over the top and Robinson pulled off a tremendous reflex save from Marshall. Borough dropped back and were under pressure, and gave away a string of free kicks. Gill was booked when he cut out Hunter after an awkward bounce had given the City striker a run for goal.

Borough began to put more pressure on the City defence and Howshall went close with a powerful right foot drive when the ball came out to him off a Cambridge defender. Former Spurs star, Cliff Jones was beaten by Notley as he tried to set

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up a break and then Robinson came confidently off his line to take a right wing cross.

Howshall hit a shot which was clawed down and clutched by Peacock as it headed towards the top corner. Cambridge launched another bid to get back in to the game but were stunned by another Borough goal in the 40th minute from Trevor Shepherd. Howshall, Baker and Smith all figured in the move before Shepherd scored from close range.

City roared back in to the game with a goal from Ian Hunter two minutes from the break. Peacock pumped a long clearance to the No. 9, who shot in off the far post.

Peacock pushed a half-volley from Shepherd around the post for a corner and Smith had a shot charged down by defender Tony Smith from a Shepherd pass. Nuneaton were good on the break as they showed so emphatically in the first half. They packed much more individual skill into their play than the Milton Road side, despite City's spells of pressure.

Robinson pulled off another fine reflex save, this time from Stevens. And then City equalised in the 60th minute from a twice-taken penalty. Hunter appeared to dive in between Gill and Bircumshaw, but referee Mr J. Jackson pointed to the spot. Marshall beat Robinson from the spot, but was ordered to take the kick again, and put it just inside the post.

Nuneaton Borough v Stafford Rangers 03-01-1972

Borough: Edwards, Harris, Newbury, Lewis, Gill, Wilkinson, Notley, Shaw, Shepherd, Smith, Hutchinson. **Sub:** Jones.

Stafford: Davies, Ritchie, Clayton, Sargeant, Chadwick, Perkins, Mottershead, Bailey, Barlow, S. Chapman, Cowan. **Sub:** Westcott.

Borough welcomed Stafford Rangers to Manor Park for a Midland Floodlit Cup encounter.

Trevor Shepherd kept Borough's slender Midland Floodlit Cup hopes alive with an injury time equaliser. He scored just before the final whistle to give Borough a six point share in the spoils. The goal saved the Manor Park side from defeat, but came too late to rescue the match from mediocrity.

It only softened the disappointment of one of the most drab games seen at the ground so far this season. Both sides were poor. They lacked determination, flair and imagination and the fierce competitive spirit that motivates them in league games. Apart from the goals, worthwhile shots were as precious as jewels throughout the game.

The game cried out for a goal until the 77th minute when Stuart Chapman put Stafford ahead with a shot that deflected off a defender and went over a helpless Reg Edwards. That should have been the signal for better things. It wasn't. And the game died again before Shepherd struck with his late, late goal.

Both sides showed extensive changes from their Saturday line-ups and seemed content to coast along. Borough had a good spell just before half-time. During the first-half Roger

Smith and Adrian Newbury took the honours for the home side – with Reg Edwards showing a vast improvement in goal. But Smith and Newbury faded after the break and Edwards, out of the Southern League side since the end of August, was left to provide Borough's bright spot. He showed much of his old confidence and command in his best game since he stepped into the shadows when Brian Robinson took over.

Borough's best chance of the game fell to Roger Shaw, from Highgate, early in the second half – from a back pass. He dribbled round Stafford goalkeeper Davies, only to see his shot kicked off the line by left full-back Joe Clayton, who was given time by the pace of the shot. That was one of the few flashes of excitement from one of the least competitive games seen at Manor Park this season.

Nuneaton Borough v Margate

08-01-1972

Borough: Robinson, Jones, Bircumshaw, Howshall, Gill, Goodall, Smith, Shepherd, Baker, Lewis, Pleat. **Sub:** Notley.

Margate: Brodie, Clewlow, Butterfield, Clayton, Paton, Houston, Baber, Hilt, Barry, Brown, Walker. **Sub:** Summers.

Borough welcomed Margate to Manor Park to play a Southern League Premier Division match.

Nuneaton looked to complete the double over Margate when they snatched a 77th-minute lead at Manor Park. But with six minutes left, Houston struck a superb equaliser to earn the Kent side a deserved share in the spoils.

Borough never hit form but still wasted a string of good chances. Baker was the chief culprit. He could have had a hat-trick against his old club. Borough's first raid ended with a poor pass from Smith, who then picked up a loose ball and, tried to find Shepherd. Paton intercepted.

Borough were in trouble when Jones failed to cut out a cross from the right. Walker had plenty of time for his shot but drove wide. Margate earned three corners in quick succession without creating a chance as they pushed forward against slow to settle Nuneaton.

Pleat sparked off a Borough breakaway, took a return pass from Baker, but only succeeded in winning a corner, which failed to produce any danger. Borough should have gone ahead in the 12th minute however. Pleat did well to regain possession after hitting a free-kick straight at Butterfield. His pin-point cross left Shepherd with only Brodie to beat, but his diving header was well saved by the keeper.

It was Borough's turn for a let off when Robinson looked hesitant as he moved to a centre from the left. Brown got a foot to the ball, it rebounded from an upright before being scrambled away. Nuneaton had another chance in the 24th minute when Shepherd created an opening for Baker. The former Margate player shot wide and Brodie advanced.

Pleat was hacked down by Houston ten yards inside the Margate half. Jones' free-kick led to a corner but the pressure was relieved when Howshall was penalised following the flag kick.



Yet another chance went begging when Pleat sent Baker clear. The striker's first shot was charged down by Brodie, and after getting the luck of the rebound he shot straight at a defender.



One of the many chances that went begging. Dave Lewis fails to connect only a few feet out with the goal at his mercy.

Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune

Borough threatened first after the break with a free-kick following a foul on Smith. Bircumshaw's high cross was headed over by Lewis.

Walker threatened Borough's defence with two left-footed efforts after shaking off the attention of Jones. From the second, Robinson was happy to palm the ball to one side and gather at the second attempt.

Borough grabbed a goal out of the blue in the 77th minute when full-back Jones raced forward, outpaced two defenders, and hit a left foot shot which struck Clayton and flew over Brodie into the net. Any hopes of maximum points were quashed when Houston equalised for Margate six minutes from the end with a 25-yard shot which caught Robinson unprepared.

Yeovil Town v Nuneaton Borough 15-01-1972

Yeovil: Clark, Herritty, Bayliss, Myers, Smith, Thompson, Housley, Jones, Cotton, Weller, Clancy. **Sub:** Wookey.

Borough: Robinson, Bircumshaw, Smith, Howshall, Gill, Goodall, Baker, Pleat, Shepherd, Notley, Lewis. **Sub:** Harris.

Borough made the journey to the Huish to take on Yeovil in a Southern League Premier Division match.

Two goals from Yeovil centre forward Terry Cotton sank Borough's hopes in the Huish mud. Cotton struck in the 55th and 80th minutes to give the Southern League champions a convincing win. Before the first goal Nuneaton had done well to contain the Somerset side. Afterwards though, it was a different story as Yeovil piled on the pressure.

Exeter referee Mr I. G. Kennard declared the pitch playable, despite heavy morning rain. Borough took time to settle and

in the opening minutes Cotton almost cashed in on slack defensive play. Jones then found Weller in yards of space, but he was too slow to turn it to his advantage.

Nuneaton threatened when, after a good build-up, Pleat hit a low cross hard into the Yeovil goalmouth. Weller got his foot to it and it ran loose before Yeovil conceded a corner which Shepherd hit into the side netting.

Weller then headed out from Pleat before the Nuneaton player-manager stretched goalkeeper Clark with another right wing cross. It was obvious that the conditions would play a major part in the outcome. Goodall came to Borough's rescue when he kicked a header from Cotton off the line from a Herritty free kick.

Nuneaton contained the Somerset side and Shepherd raised their hopes with a first time shot that cannoned off Notley. Notley then headed the ball into the net from a Shepherd cross, but the whistle had already gone.

Almost on half-time Weller went close with an overhead kick when a pass would have given Clancy an open goal. Borough cleared two Yeovil corners soon after the break and conceded two more in quick succession. Nuneaton, with the strength of Gill and Goodall at the heart of the defence, continued to stay cool.

Notley almost pounced on a casual back pass from Herritty before Yeovil took a 55th minute lead. Cotton headed in from point-blank range from a cross by substitute Wookey, on in place of Weller.

Another header from Cotton deflected from Goodall's knee and over the net. From the corner, Cotton had another header, this time taken low by Robinson. Cotton eventually had his reward when he scored again for Yeovil after 80 minutes with a shot from the edge of the 18-yard box.

Nuneaton Borough v Tamworth 17-01-1972

Borough: Edwards, Jones, Bircumshaw, Harris, Gill, Wilkinson, Baker (Howshall, 45), Smith, Shepherd, Notley, Lewis.

Tamworth: Richards, Thomson, Newton, Hall, Brown, Seedhouse, Millard, Foster, Holmes, Morrow, Hope. **Sub:** D. Smith.

Borough welcomed Tamworth to Manor Park for a Midland Floodlit Cup game.

Borough unleashed all of the frustration, power and fury that has been bottled up at Manor Park for the past month. And Tamworth caught the full blast of its volcanic ferocity as Borough ran riot in an incredible seven goal romp. They uncorked a magnum of champagne soccer that bubbled to the surface – and overflowed.

Tamworth were beaten out of sight as Nuneaton tore them apart. Smith, hit the first goal with an angled drive in off the far post and scored the second after a run down the left that left three Tamworth players in a daze. There was an element of luck about this goal – Smith's cross went straight in with goalkeeper Mick Richards at the near post.

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But that was just a taste of things to come. Seconds after half-time Trevor Shepherd cracked in the first of the 30 yarders and five minutes later Notley powered in a header after a move which involved Shepherd, Jones and Harris. Tamworth were dazed – and the destruction continued as Dave Lewis entered the goal scoring arena.

He scorched in a right footer as Richards dived in vain, and ten minutes later Notley hit his second – and Borough's sixth – with a header that went in off defender Bob Newton's knee. Three minutes from time Notley completed the annihilation when he forced the ball home after Richards had failed to hold a shot from Shepherd. That brought down the curtain on the seven goal spectacular which made a mockery of Borough's New Year struggles and destroyed the myth that Tamworth are Nuneaton's "bogey" side.

Telford United v Nuneaton Borough 24-01-1972

Borough: Edwards, Jones, Bircumshaw, Harris, Gill, Goodall, Shepherd, Wilkinson, Notley, Lewis, Smith. Sub: Baker.

Borough made the journey to the Buck's Head to play a Midland Floodlit Cup game.

Winger Roger Smith posed frequent problems for a Telford defence from which Graham Carr was withdrawn. But Smith lacked support from a Nuneaton side that rarely played more than two men up front. Borough were the first to look dangerous and, as was to prove the pattern, it was Smith who inspired the move.

His cross from the left split the home rearguard wide open, but Shepherd got his hand to the ball instead of his head. Seconds later only a brilliant finger-tip save by Weir prevented Notley converting another Smith centre. After 36 minutes Nuneaton took the lead they had often threatened. Weir palmed out a shot from Notley and Shepherd scrambled home the rebound. Borough introduced Gerry Baker for Notley at the interval, but the substitution seemed to have an adverse effect on their front line.

Telford gradually took control and two goals from leading scorer Jack Bentley gave them a somewhat fortunate victory. Bentley turned well on an Owen pass to net the equaliser in the 57th minute and ten minutes from time he outjumped Gill to reach an Alan Harris cross and send a glancing header into the corner of the net.

Borough Sign "Posh" Player

Nuneaton Borough have signed utility forward Bob Turpie from Peterborough United on a month's loan. Turpie comes to Manor Park after a personal arrangement between David Pleat and Jim Iley, his former team boss at London Road.

Said the Borough manager: "He has allowed him to come to help us out and do me a favour." Turpie, who is 22 and can operate in midfield or up front, played 27 times for Peterborough in the Fourth Division last season. He was signed last season from Queen's Park Rangers for a small fee.

Chelmsford City v Nuneaton Borough 29-01-1972

Chelmsford: Taylor, Oakley, Gomersall, Stevenson, Loughton, Delea, Dilsworth, Grant, Peterson, Tomkins, Thornley. Sub: Horrey.

Borough: Robinson, Jones, Smith, Howshall, Wilkinson, Lewis, Baker, Harris, Shepherd, Goodall, Turpie. Sub: Notley.

Borough made the journey to New Writtle Street to play Chelmsford City in a Southern League Premier Division game.

Borough stunned the Southern League leaders with a 23rd minute Gerry Baker goal. But the Essex side hit back to win with goals from Grant and Stevenson despite the fact that they were bottled up for much of the match by Nuneaton.

Bob Turpie made his debut in midfield. After a short spell of midfield play, Shepherd had a great chance to put Borough ahead. Smith played a ball through to Shepherd, who was clear but had his shot saved by Taylor.

Borough had five men at the back, three in midfield, and two up front against the Premier Division's top scorers. Robinson cut out a Gomersall centre, this time from a free kick, before Harris had his shot saved by Taylor

Dilsworth had a shot kicked away by Goodall after Peterson forced a corner off Lewis. Borough's tactics frustrated Chelmsford, who forced a string of corners but could not apply any real pressure.

Borough took a shock lead in the 23rd minute through Gerry Baker. Newcomer Turpie had a hand in the goal which was set up by a through pass from Harris. Baker, on the edge of his six yard box, pushed the ball under Taylor as both Coakley and Delea challenged.

Chelmsford tried to regain their composure after the shock goal and Robinson punched a Thornley cross over for a corner. Six minutes from half-time the home side were level when Grant scored in off the post after Dilsworth and Tompkins had set up the chance.

Lewis hooked the ball wide before Harris stopped a shot from Coakley after City's tenth corner of the first half. Shepherd went off clutching his left thigh only seconds after the re-start. He came back, but went down again only four minutes later and was replaced by Notley.

Borough continued to play cool, determined football which gave City few chances to display their goal flair. Jones was booked in the 53rd minute after a tackle on Gomersall as Nuneaton still held their own.

The onus was still on Chelmsford but they could not get anywhere as Borough blocked off the path to goal. The game was held up for treatment to Turpie before the Borough newcomer seized on a back pass and forced Gomersall to give away the first corner of the game to Nuneaton. And then Howshall was booked after he had bought down Gomersall.

Stevenson put City in front in the 71st minute after his first effort had been blocked.



Nuneaton Borough AFC AGM

Nuneaton Borough Football Club has fought its way out of financial trouble in the past nine months – from a £6,000 plus deficit said chairman Mr Alf Scattergood. “The club is now solvent due to director’s loans, economies, and general reorganisation.”

Earlier, he had reported to the annual meeting, that the club made a profit of £308 in the year ending May 31, 1971. At that time the balance sheet showed £6,700 in the red. Since then, said Mr Scattergood, the financial position has brightened.

“The Social Club has been the mainstay and the Supporters’ Association, under new chairman Ted Wicks, has definitely contributed something.”

Directors contributed towards an interest-free loan of £2,250 to keep the club going through its bad patch. And the club is also owed more than £1,000 by two former members of the development pool – Rugby Town and Dudley.

Dudley still owe Nuneaton £1,297.91 from when they were members of the Borough Pool and Rugby Town, loaned £1,000 to keep them going, have still to pay more than £150 to wipe out the debt.

Said Mr Scattergood: “Dudley’s debt comes from when they were allowed to fall into arrears in our pool. Steps are now being taken to recover this money.”

Falling gates and another sharp drop in revenue from the money-raising activities led to the £6,700 May 31 deficit...

Nuneaton Borough v Folkestone 05-02-1972

Borough: Robinson, Jones, Bircumshaw, Howshall, Gill, Goodall, Lewis, Smith, Notley, Baker, Turpie. **Sub:** Harris.

Folkestone: Hughes, Idle, Bibby, Weston, Pearse, Bentley, Smillie, Cook, Sharp, Terry, Tredwell. **Sub:** Bostock.

Borough welcomed Folkestone to Manor Park for a Southern League Premier Division match.

Borough halted their Southern League slide with a scrappy, but comfortable win over Folkestone in the Manor Park mud. Roger Smith shot them into an 18th minute lead with a coolly taken goal and Dave Lewis had a shot deflected into the net by a defender for the second, just before half-time.

Borough had a chance early on when Tredwell failed to cut out a long ball from Gill and let in Notley. But the centre-forward was too slow to cash in, carried the ball across the 18 yard box, and eventually pulled it back to a defender’s foot.

The Kent side had a chance a couple of minutes later when Sharp headed straight at Robinson after Smillie had back headed a corner at the near post. Notley then went close with a diving header after Baker had glanced on a centre from Jones. Then Smith showed them the way home when he shot Borough into an 18th minute lead with a coolly taken goal. He collected a long ball from Gill on the edge of the 18 yard box,

dragged it wide of goalkeeper Hughes and rolled it in from 16 yards. Borough, spurred on by the breakthrough, moved forward and Hughes did well to take an awkward cross from Lewis. Howshall sparked another raid with a smooth pass out to Baker whose centre was booted over the top by Pearce,

Gill was spoken to after a heavy tackle on Terry and there was a string of free kicks in another scrappy patch. That was before Lewis went close to a goal with a header from a chance created by Baker down the left touch-line. As half-time approached, Notley had a chance of a break and then Baker cashed in on another slip by Tredwell, but Hughes was quickly off his line and saved the shot with his legs.

Seconds before the whistle, Borough stretched their lead to two nil when a shot from Lewis was deflected into the net by Idle with the goalkeeper wrong-footed.

Borough did most of the attacking in the opening period of the second half. Nuneaton forced three successive corners and had a penalty appeal turned down as they began to apply pressure. Turpie had a shot blocked by Weston and Idle booted away after Hughes had failed to hold a centre from Lewis.

A brave effort by Notley – he launched himself into a full-length dive to a Smith centre, led to another stoppage, this time for treatment to the Nuneaton centre-forward. Borough began to settle on their lead and Folkestone were unable to throw enough players forward and open up the game.

But hard-working Lewis set up a chance for Baker, whose shot was smothered. In the closing minutes Nuneaton again moved forward with the points safely in the bag.

Stafford Rangers v Nuneaton Borough 08-02-1972

Borough: Edwards, Newbury, Bircumshaw, Howshall, Notley, Harris, Smith, Wilkinson, Baker, Lewis, Shaw. **Sub:** Goodall.

Borough made the journey to Marston Road to play Stafford Rangers in a Midland Floodlit Cup game.

Borough’s last chance of Midland Floodlit Cup honours disappeared at Stafford last night in an untidy game. They played out the final 20 minutes with ten men when they lost Gerry Baker with a leg injury.

Substitute Dave Goodall was already on for youth team captain Adrian Newbury when Baker limped to the dressing rooms. But Nuneaton lost because they conceded two soft goals and missed a couple of easy chances. And they are too far behind the Floodlit Cup leaders to add life for what is a dying competition as far as the Manor Park fans are concerned.

Stafford player-manager Roy Chapman – his club have already resigned from the Floodlit Cup – made eight changes and included four amateurs in his side.

Stafford went ahead after six minutes through Stewart Chapman after Tony Bircumshaw had been robbed on the edge of the box. Roger Shaw hit the crossbar and Ernie

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Wilkinson had a chance before Stafford increased their lead in the 63rd minute – with another give-away goal.

Notley, far from happy in the number five shirt, played a back pass straight to the feet of Roy Chapman, who snapped up the chance. Dave Lewis cut the arrears in the 75th minute before Stewart Chapman carved out Stafford's third goal for Kirkham after a solo run.

Almost on time, Lewis scored again for Nuneaton, with another header from a right wing centre which Stafford goalkeeper Davies failed to cut out.

Wimbledon v Nuneaton Borough 19-02-1972

Wimbledon: Guy, Marchant, Stanley, Silkman, Low, McCready, Armstrong, Cooke, Morton, Rice, O'Rourke. Sub: Shreeves.

Borough: Robinson, Jones, Goodall, Gill, Bircumshaw, Lewis, Howshall, Turpie, Shepherd, Notley, Smith. Sub: Harris.

Borough made the journey to Plough Lane to face Wimbledon in a Southern League Premier Division game.

Borough lost two more points in a grim, free-kick riddled struggle. They were beaten by a 60th-minute goal from Dons' winger, Dave Armstrong, and failed to hit back in a late rally.

Tony Bircumshaw and Alan Jones were booked as the free-kick tally climbed to the 30 mark on a porridge like pitch. Borough started well with early attacking play on a sticky, well-sanded surface. But the game soon settled and Nuneaton conceded a string of free-kicks after their opening flourish. Bad passing ruined attacks by both sides before Rice sent in the first shot after 15 minutes, which was smothered by Robinson. Borough's tough tactics upset the Wimbledon crowd, but the Manor Park side made it clear from the outset that they were determined to give nothing away.

Morton had a glimpse of a shot blotted out by a Howshall tackle before Gill calmly tidied up and O'Rourke was checked by Jones as he tried to cut into the penalty box.

Guy clutched a Bircumshaw free kick as Shepherd challenged and then Notley swung and missed at a glancing header from Curtis. Wimbledon launched another attacking spell and Robinson did well to turn a cross from Armstrong over the top. McCready was only inches wide when he beat the keeper to a Cooke free kick, the Dons' 12th in the first half.

Morton then tried to cash in on a quickly taken free kick, but was caught and tackled by Goodall. Notley and McCready missed a Turpie centre in the opening seconds after the break. Smith hit it back in the middle and Notley hooked over the top.

The free kick tally mounted. It reached 20-15 against Nuneaton when Howshall sent Armstrong sprawling. Cooke had a chance to break the deadlock, but he shot wide after Marchant had pulled a centre back from a corner flag.

Jones hooked the ball clear when Morton beat Gill in the air to a right wing cross and Wimbledon pushed forward.

The Londoners took the lead in the 60th minute when Armstrong bulged the net with a powerful angled drive, set up by Cooke. Morton made the early running. He found Cooke yards of space on the edge of the 18 yard box and Armstrong did the rest. Bircumshaw was booked five minutes later after a clash with Cooke. Jones was booked in the 69th minute.

Nuneaton Borough v Hereford United 24-02-1972

Borough: Robinson, Jones, Gill, Goodall, Smith, Howshall (Baker), Harris, Turpie, Shepherd, Notley, Lewis.

Borough welcomed Hereford United to Manor Park to play a Southern League Cup third round tie.

Borough's Southern League Cup hopes hang by a slender thread after 90 minutes of disappointing deadlock against Hereford at Manor Park. The width of a goalpost robbed Dave Lewis of a well deserved goal in the 73rd minute and Nuneaton had another effort scrambled away.

But they now face the awesome task of a quarter-final replay at Edgar Street, a prospect that has made First Division sides tremble. The League Cup provides the one chink of light for Borough in a gloomy end of the season fight against relegation. But even that has been dimmed in a "showpiece" game that failed to live up to its expectations.

A game that promised everything became a dour struggle with only rare flashes of good football. All the potential and flair was suffocated as the teams ambushed each other in midfield and ran into blind alleys. There were only a handful of worthy efforts at goal as both sides thumped a stream of long balls in a bid to by-pass the midfield congestion.

Only Dave Lewis, pushed forward by caretaker team boss Stan Marshall to add grit to the Borough front line, looked like achieving anything in the penalty box. And it was his courage, effort and persistence that almost won the game in the 73rd minute when he fought for a long free kick and hit the ball across the face of the Hereford goal. Keeper Fred Potter was beaten – but the ball ran across the line, hit the foot of the far post, and came out.

Hereford almost pulled off a match-winning stroke when Cup hero Dudley Tyler went on for Ricky George. Tyler harassed Borough down the left flank and was the inspiration behind a late bid to clinch the game.

Folkestone v Nuneaton Borough 26-02-1972

Folkestone: Hughes, Idle, Bibby, Weston, Pearce, Bentley, Tredwell, Cook, Smillie, Terry, Sharp. Sub: Burton.

Borough: Robinson, Wilkinson, Gill, Goodall, Bircumshaw, Harris, Lewis, Shepherd, Notley, Baker, Turpie. Sub: Jones.

Borough made the journey to Folkestone to play a Southern League Premier Division game.

Borough's point winning hopes were shattered when Folkestone scored two goals in a ten minute second half spell at Cheriton Road.



Baker created trouble when he broke down the right touchline and sent a swirling ball into the middle. Folkestone defender Dave Bibby raced across to head behind his own goal for a corner. A cross from Andy Smillie at the other end put pressure on the Borough goal as Terry Baker headed on, but Robinson came off his line to pick the ball up as Sharpe swept in.

Robinson had to move very quickly from his goal to snatch the ball from the toe of Sharp after Smillie had put him through. Barry Notley worked a good opening for Nuneaton after a cross-field ball from Harris had been pushed forward by Wilkinson but when the centre-forward crossed the hard working Bibby dived across to clear again.

A free kick by Smillie was headed on by Terry and Nuneaton escaped when a header by Sharp bounced off the top of their bar. Turpie put Borough ahead in the 37th minute. Folkestone waited for the offside whistle when Trevor Shepherd went on and crossed for Turpie who put the ball home. Two minutes later, Sharp equalised for Folkestone when Terry headed down a Cook cross.

Nuneaton found themselves under pressure at the start of the second-half. A corner on the right almost brought a second Folkestone goal within 60 seconds. Cook's cross was turned across the goal by Treadwell and Smillie headed against the Borough upright from five yards.

Following this Robinson had to save well from Cook but in the 52nd minute he could only palm away a shot by Idle and when Sharp scooped the ball back into the middle Treadwell blasted Folkestone into the lead from eight yards.

Harris and Bircumshaw combined well on the left to win a corner. It was taken by Harris and when Hughes dropped the cross Bentley had to hook the ball away. At the other end Robinson dealt with two corners by Cook, pushing the first over the bar and catching the second above Sharpe's head.

A driving run from midway in the Borough half sent Cook through the Borough defence in the 60th minute. When he passed to Sharp, the Folkestone leader fell but managed to scoop the ball back into Cook's path and he drove home their third goal. Borough's miserable afternoon continued as Folkestone got a fourth goal through Treadwell.

Dover v Nuneaton Borough

04-03-1972

Dover: Prior, Reynolds, Fursdon, Beesley, Dennis, O'Connell, Izatt, K. Robinson, Hoy, Horsfall, Cutler. **Sub:** Hall.

Borough: B. Robinson, Jones, Smith, Howshall, Gill, Lewis, Turpie, Shepherd, Notley, Goodfellow, Harris. **Sub:** Bircumshaw.

Borough made the journey to The Crabble to face Dover in a Southern League Premier Division game.

Nuneaton, desperate for Southern League points, let Dover off the hook with three glaring first half misses at The Crabble. Barrie Notley failed to cash in during the opening seconds, midway through the half Harris was the culprit with the goal at his mercy, and on the stroke of half-time Shepherd

missed with only the keeper to beat. Title chasing Dover began to get on top towards the interval but failed to create the clear cut openings which fell to Nuneaton.

Jimmy Goodfellow, the ex-Leicester City player signed by Nuneaton from Weymouth on a month's loan, lined up in midfield for his debut. Dover included former Manor Park favourite Paul Cutler.

In only the second minute Notley missed a great chance of putting Borough ahead. Howshall did the spadework for Harris to get in a cross which found Notley in space at the far post. The striker completely missed his header. Borough had the ball in the net through Shepherd when Prior failed to hold a free kick. But Notley was penalised for an infringement against the keeper.

Brian Robinson was in action twice in a minute when Dennis sent in a long-range effort and then he had to go full-stretch to collect a Horsfall centre. Nuneaton were in trouble when a right-wing corner knifed through to Moy who was only inches too high with his powerful shot.

Borough were only inches away from a penalty in the 22nd minute when Turpie was chopped down. Shepherd's drive from the edge of the box was blocked and Harris was left with a golden opening from close in only to shoot straight at the diving Prior. There was nothing between the two sides as play continued to swing from end to end but Dover had an anxious moment from a Harris free-kick when Notley headed down to Goodfellow. The Borough newcomer failed to connect with an attempted volley.

It was Nuneaton's turn to defend when Howshall conceded a corner but again Robinson's handling was faultless from the cross. Nuneaton missed another great chance on the stroke of half-time when Shepherd raced clear following a big kick from Robinson. His shot was deflected wide by the advancing Prior but the referee gave a goal-kick.

A hefty kick upfield by Harris had Dover's defence racing back soon after the break. Centre half Dennis was in trouble with the bounce and Shepherd intercepted but just failed to squeeze it past the onrushing Prior.

Pleat Out For Season

Borough player-manager David Pleat could be out of action for the remainder of the season. This is the shock news from the Coventry and Warwickshire Hospital where Pleat has been a patient for almost three weeks.

Pleat has been having traction treatment for a back injury, but there is no hope of him leaving hospital in the near future.

"I am still having a lot of pain from the back and at the moment I can't walk," said Pleat. "I am seeing the specialist again but I don't think that I shall be fit to play again this season," he said.



Hereford United v Nuneaton Borough 09-03-1972

Hereford: Potter, Mallender, McLaughlin, Tucker, Jones, Addison, Gough, Palmer, Meadows, Hollett, Tyler. **Sub:** Radford.

Borough: Robinson, Jones, Lewis, Gill, Bircumshaw, Howshall, Harris, Smith, Turpie, Shepherd, Notley (Goodall).

Borough made the journey to Edgar Street to play a Southern League Cup third round replay.

Borough's Southern League Cup hopes were crushed after a brave fight in the electric atmosphere. Their courage was not enough in an incident packed quarter-final replay, that thrilled and incensed a near 6,000 crowd. The tie always threatened to get out of hand. Bridgwater referee Mr W. B. Facey never had full control of a blood and thunder battle.

He booked Hereford player-manager Colin Addison and Borough centre-half John Gill – and Barrie Notley was carried off just before half-time with a shin injury.

Borough set out to contain Hereford. They packed midfield and left only Notley and Trevor Shepherd up front. They weathered United's initial flourish – and went into a shock lead through Dave Lewis after 24 minutes. He netted after a Roger Smith corner had deflected off Billy Tucker and unsighted the Hereford defence.

Just four minutes later the home side were back on level terms with a fluke goal. Dudley Tyler shot goalwards, Lewis and Billy Meadows challenged, the ball clipped Lewis' boot and went inside the far post. Borough continued their fight after the break. They contained Hereford at the back and matched them in midfield. But up front they could not match the skill of the home side. And when Tucker headed Hereford into the lead after 56 minutes it was all over. He scored with a close range header from a Tyler corner after a mistake by Turpie.

As soon as that goal went in the result became a foregone conclusion. Hereford began to turn on their class, inspired by the irrepressible Tyler, playing deep and wide on the left. Hereford keeper Potter was redundant for much of the game and United could have trebled their score in the last half-hour.

Lewis went desperately close to an equaliser in the dying seconds, but Nuneaton could not complain. They were beaten by a vastly superior team in a game that demonstrated the gap between the Southern League title chasers and the teams in the danger zone.

Nuneaton Borough v Guildford City 11-03-1972

Borough: Robinson, Jones, Bircumshaw, Howshall, Gill, Goodall, Smith, Shepherd, Goodfellow, Lewis, Harris. **Sub:** Wilkinson.

Guildford: Brooks, Sleep, Anthony, More, Harris, Kerr, Dobson, Gould, Burge, Burns, Tyler. **Sub:** Hunt.

Borough welcomed Guildford City to Manor Park to play a Southern League Premier Division match.

Full back Tony Bircumshaw missed a 53rd minute penalty as

Borough chased vital points in a mistake ridden relegation clash against Guildford at Manor Park.

Bircumshaw's spot kick was pushed out by City keeper John Brooks who then saved the rebound as the full back tried to follow up. The incident summed up a poor game, ruined by a biting crossfield wind, between two struggling sides.

Borough launched an early attack in front of the lowest Saturday afternoon crowd of the season. The raid broke down and Guildford threatened before Burns was pulled up for offside from a through pass by Tyler.

Nuneaton tried to take the game to Guildford after the opening exchanges but it was scrappy. Guildford won a corner, only to concede a free kick when Robinson was pushed. Burns then climbed high to head a free kick across the Borough goal.

Jones, Harris and Smith combined in a promising Borough attack before Lewis was robbed by Gould. Harris then let a ball from Howshall roll underneath his boot with yards of space, plenty of time and players up in support.

Guildford began to move forward and forced their fifth corner in the 18th minute. But the first 20 minutes were riddled with mistakes from both teams, and contained no signs of a goal. Bircumshaw then ruined a good Nuneaton move set up by Goodfellow when he hit a wild, hurried and off-target centre. Lewis raised Nuneaton's hopes four minutes from the break when he headed over from a Bircumshaw free-kick.

Guildford won three more corners in the closing minutes of the first half, taking their tally to 11 against Borough's three.

There was more action in the early stages of the second half than the whole of the previous 45 minutes. Burns had a shot deflected over the top by Lewis before the Nuneaton number 10 stretched Brooks into a fine full length effort at the other end. Nuneaton were awarded a penalty when Shepherd was pulled down by Brooks inside the six yard box. Bircumshaw's spot kick was pushed out by the City goalkeeper who again got his body behind the ball when Bircumshaw moved in for a second chance.

Hillingdon Borough v Nuneaton Borough 13-03-1972

Borough: Robinson, Jones, Bircumshaw, Howshall, Gill, Goodall, Smith, Harris, Goodfellow, Wilkinson, Lewis. **Sub:** Shepherd.

Borough made the journey to play Hillingdon Borough in a Southern League Premier Division match.

Borough pulled themselves off the floor, but could not bridge a two goal gap. They trailed 2-0 after only eleven minutes when the Londoner's striker Eddie Reeve struck two hammer blows. Reeve scored first after just four minutes when he cracked in a 25-yarder after a return pass from Johnny Bishop. And, seven minutes later, he notched the second after a crossfield centre by winger Tom Knox. Borough keeper Brian Robinson managed to get a hand to the ball, but it went in low off the post.

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In between times, Ernie Wilkinson thundered a shot against the Hillingdon crossbar when Jimmy Goodfellow headed back a Len Harris cross. Things looked black for Borough early on as Reeve and Bishop, watched by two Football League clubs and Hereford player-manager Colin Addison, threatened to run riot.

But the Manor Park side managed to recover, curb Hillingdon's thirst for goals and push forward. They contained the home side at the back and strung together a series of promising second-half attacks with a brand of determination missing from Saturday's debacle against Guildford. But it was the old, old problem. They had nothing up front which is, sadly, the story of the season.

Play anywhere Dave Lewis again added aggression when he was moved forward, but lacked support and it became painfully obvious that Nuneaton were fighting a losing battle. After Hillingdon's early pace and flair Borough came more and more into the game in every department except the one where it mattered – in the 18-yard box. And until they find more striking power they will continue to struggle in the Southern League Premier Division basement.

The sheer frustration of their inability to trouble the home defence pulled them down. And they became just good losers when points are badly needed to halt the decline. One success that did emerge from the defeat was a new role for midfield man Gerry Howshall – as sweeper in and around the back four. Howshall covered a tremendous amount of ground at the back – but it was up front where Nuneaton again fell down.

Borough Fans Receive Thanks From Paul Cutler

Former Manor Park striker Paul Cutler, has sent a letter of thanks to the Borough fans who raised money to buy a travelling clock, which was presented to him at Dover.

Cutler, sold to the Kent club before Christmas, was presented with the gift by Dave Lewis. It was given by the fans to mark his five seasons at Nuneaton. He said: "To have received something like this is especially nice."

The letter was sent to Social Club steward, Joe Gibson, who organised the collection among the regular away supporters. "The supporters always liked Paul," he said: "We were sorry to lose him and this is why we had the collection."

Nuneaton Borough v Telford United 16-03-1972

Borough: Edwards, Tedds, Jones, Newbury, Gill, Wilkinson, Shaw, Goodfellow, Woodhead, Shepherd, Harris. Sub: Timms.

Borough welcomed Telford United to Manor Park for a Midland Floodlit Cup game.

Nuneaton Borough's fortunes slumped to a new low when only 448 fans – the worst crowd in living memory – saw them brushed aside. Manor Park was a ghost ground as Telford cruised into second place in the Floodlit Cup table.

Apart from a short spell at the start of the second half,

Borough, with two youth team players and two triallists in the side, fought a losing battle. Telford showed that youth and enthusiasm is no substitute for experience and skill.

Mickey Fudge put them in front after only five minutes with a shot that was deflected past goalkeeper Reg Edwards off centre-half John Gill. The FA Trophy holders kept Edwards busy for the rest of the half, but could not increase their lead before the break. Nuneaton began the second half with more determination. There were appeals for a penalty when a Shaw header appeared to have been handled by a Telford defender and Shaw had another airborne effort well saved by Phil Weir.

Then, after 60 minutes, Trevor Shepherd equalised with a header after a challenge by triallist Dennis Woodhead from South Leamington, had paved the way. It was only the second goal for Nuneaton in six matches. But Telford, who had lost a lot of their first-half poise, stepped up the pace and two late goals by Fudge and Jack Bentley eased them to a clear win.

Fudge pulled the ball down on the edge of the box in the 76th minute and unleashed a left foot drive that went underneath the back of the net and slammed against the wall. And Bentley chipped the ball over Edwards' head from the same spot four minutes later.

Bedford Town v Nuneaton Borough 18-03-1972

Bedford: Alexander, Skirts, Boyd, Scurr, Roach, Lawson, Davies, Henderson, Cleary, Figg, Fry. Sub: Byrne.

Borough: Robinson, Jones, Smith, Howshall, Gill, Wilkinson, Notley, Shepherd, Goodfellow, Lewis, Harris. Sub: Baker.

Borough made the journey to The Eyrie to take on Bedford Town in a Southern League Premier Division game.

Borough lost a game at Bedford that they should have had won by half-time. The chances were there, but they failed to knock them in and travelled back home in deeper trouble after good results by their relegation rivals, Guildford and Poole. Nuneaton sparkled and spluttered in a game of two vastly contrasting halves.

Before the break they threatened to play Bedford off the park and looked nothing like a struggling side. They were confident, adventurous and skilful. Jimmy Goodfellow held the reins in midfield with his best performance and they had the Eagles on the run.

The ex-Leicester City star had one shot charged down and another kicked off the line, and Barrie Notley twice went close. In the second half it was a different game as Borough forgot they had been the better side. Their style, once adventurous, became cramped and scrappy.

Alan Davies shot Bedford ahead with just the sort of chance that Borough had missed early on. And a harsh 78th minute penalty put paid to their hopes. The defence was in a tangle when Ernie Wilkinson, a tower of strength in front of the back four in the first half, hit a goal-line clearance against Roger

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Smith. It was a pure accident – Smith could not get out of the way. But the referee said that the full-back had handled and Barry Fry beat Brian Robinson from the spot.

From that moment on there was no chance of Nuneaton getting back into a game they had allowed to slip away from them. By the time George Cleary hit Bedford's third goal in the dying second, Borough wore that all too familiar struggling label. He was given yards of space in front of goal by the once tight Nuneaton defence and planted the ball into the net to crown a Bedford win that was never on the cards until the dramatic second-half turn-about.

Phelan Set To Join Borough

Nuneaton Borough expect to complete the signing of Derby County forward Peter Phelan in time for Monday night's game at Guildford. Phelan, who is 18, and has been a regular goalscorer in County's Central League side, was with the Borough party at the game against Bedford.

Said club chairman Alf Scattergood: "Everything has been agreed and it's just a question of getting his parents' consent on the forms."

Guildford City v Nuneaton Borough 20-03-1972

Borough: Robinson, Jones, Gill, Lewis, Smith, Goodfellow, Howshall, Harris, Shepherd, Notley, Phelan. Sub: Newbury.

Borough made the trip to Surrey to play Guildford City in a Southern League Premier Division game.

Borough's relegation plunge accelerated against another relegation side fighting for their Premier Division life. It was another episode in the sad chapter of Nuneaton's decline – and puts them in deep trouble. They were out-run and out-fought by City, who at one time looked doomed for the drop, but are staging a last ditch bid to stay up.

That was the difference between the two sides. Guildford disguised their deficiencies with hard work, whereas Borough just struggled. They were pulled apart at the back and in the end just cracked. It was a tough baptism for newcomer Peter Phelan, who has dropped into a side that has forgotten how to score goals.

Borough were in trouble after 19 minutes. Dave Lewis kicked off the line and City went ahead from the corner. Burge headed the flag kick across the goal and Guildford skipper and full-back Darby Watts squeezed the ball past Brian Robinson as the keeper came out. Barrie Notley lobbed a shot wide ten minutes later as Nuneaton, led by an inspiring display from Dave Lewis, tried to fight their way back.

But just before half-time the Nuneaton defence was beaten again by a looping header from Burge that hit the far post. The game was all over six minutes into the second half when George Dobson increased Guildford's lead. Borough's defence was beaten by a cross pulled back from the by-line and Dobson drove the ball home.

Guildford could have increased their lead in the next 20 minutes. Their hard running had Nuneaton in all kinds of trouble. But it wasn't until 15 minutes from time that Tony Burge scored their third from another cross. He beat Gill and planted a header just inside the post which left goalkeeper Robinson flat-footed. Less than two minutes later, Len Harris scored for Borough when a Trevor Shepherd throw was laid back to him on the edge of the box. The shot cannoned in off the far post for the best goal of the night.

Nuneaton Borough v Romford 25-03-1972

Borough: Robinson, Jones, Wilkinson, Harris, Howshall, Smith, Shepherd, Notley, Goodfellow, Baker. Sub: Phelan.

Romford: Smith, Howe, Tapping, Sorrell, Robinson, Bailey, Andrew, Chandler, Ray, Tough, Manning. Sub: Obeney.

Borough welcomed Romford to Manor Park to play a Southern League Premier Division game.

Much improved Borough gave player manager David Pleat a welcome back tonic with a well deserved win against Romford. Trevor Shepherd headed the vital goal 20 minutes into the second half to crown a refreshing performance.

Lewis won the ball from Bailey and set up a shooting chance for Baker, whose shot was pushed over the top by Smith. Harris then swept a free-kick deep into the Romford 18-yard box which Smith punched out as Notley challenged.



New signing Peter Phelan – in his Manor Park debut – tries to steer the ball past Romford keeper Andy Smith in the second half.

Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune

Borough's defence was in a tangle as Ray had a shot pushed out for a corner by Robinson. The keeper did well to reach the shot which went at him over a ruck of players. Notley was inches away from a Baker centre at the far post and Ray booted clear for Romford after a Smith corner.

Goodfellow did well to pull the ball back into the middle for Notley, who was tightly marked by Robinson and shot wide. But there was still no sign of a goal, although Andy Smith had a couple of shaky moments in the Romford goal just before half-time. He recovered and five minutes from the break, pushed a header from Jones over the top during a spell of Borough pressure. Only seconds from half-time Baker chipped a cross from Goodfellow over the top.

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Romford threatened early in the second half when Chandler went down the line and chipped over a pass which Ray hit first time, but Robinson was off his line to parry the shot and save. Borough then pushed forward and Smith saved a close range shot from Baker with an outstretched leg.

New signing Peter Phelan went on for his home debut in the 60th minute. He replaced Ernie Wilkinson and Dave Lewis dropped back. And Nuneaton scored the goal they badly needed – and deserved – five minutes later. It was worth waiting for. Smith pushed a pass down the line to Baker whose centre was flicked inside the far post by a superb header from Shepherd.

Nuneaton Borough v Hillingdon Borough 27-03-1972

Borough: Robinson, Harris, Jones, Gill, Howshall, Goodfellow, Lewis, Smith, Baker, Notley, Shepherd. Sub: Phelan.

Borough welcomed Hillingdon Borough to Manor Park for a Southern League Premier Division game.

Borough wiped away the fears of the past five weeks with a performance that confirmed their return to form. And they can now look forward to the end of the season with hope after the problems that plunged them into deep trouble. Last night's win was another triumph for David Pleat. It showed that the display against Romford – which marked his return to the club – was no coincidence.

Borough went in front after ten minutes with a spectacular piece of opportunism from Trevor Shepherd. Hillingdon keeper Mick Lowe, unsighted by a Gerry Baker challenge, allowed a Len Harris centre to slip from his grasp. The Hillingdon defence froze as the ball rolled out to the edge of the box and Shepherd darted in like quicksilver to drive the ball into the net.

The visitors had a miraculous let off almost on the half hour. A headed clearance reached Jimmy Goodfellow on the edge of the box, but his thundering volley hit the foot of the far post – and thudded back to Lowe who was stranded on the floor. Hillingdon then enjoyed their best spell of the game as Borough lost some of their zest, but their sparkle was restored 15 minutes into the second half with a Gerry Baker goal. It was a brave effort by hard-working Baker. He lobbed the ball over Lowe's head in a 50-50 race after Barrie Notley had headed on a Len Harris free-kick.

The game was virtually over. Hillingdon showed few signs of being able to get back into the game and a lot of needle crept into the play. Alan Jones and Johnny Bishop were lectured by the referee and the fists began to fly before John Gill collected his third booking of the season.

Borough To Buy Goodfellow

Nuneaton Borough have agreed to pay a small fee for Jimmy Goodfellow, who has been on loan from Weymouth for the past month. The ex-Leicester and Mansfield forward was due to return to the Dorset club after Borough's game at Worcester on Saturday. Borough's player-manager David

Pleat agreed the fee after telephone talks with Weymouth. "We have also agreed terms with the player and it's just a question of him signing the forms," he said.

Worcester City v Nuneaton Borough 01-04-1972

Worcester: Knight, Allen, Bassett, McEwan, Newton, Lobban, Aggio, Inglis, Kelcher, Merrick, White. Sub: Lewis.

Borough: Robinson, Jones, Gill, Harris, Lewis, Howshall, Smith, Shepherd, Notley, Goodfellow, Baker. Sub: Phelan.

Borough made the journey to St George's Lane to play Worcester City in a Southern League Premier Division game.

Trevor Shepherd shot Nuneaton ahead with a 16th minute goal as the Manor Park side chased a hat-trick of Southern League wins. Borough maintained the form they showed against Romford and Hillingdon, despite some pressure by City just before the break.

Baker hooked a shot goalwards as Nuneaton moved quickly into the Worcester half. But they had an anxious moment in the third minute when Jones cleared off the line after a backheader from Harris had let in White. Lobban was halted in midfield by Lewis before Borough won a corner which almost led to a goal. Baker missed Smith's centre at the near post, but unsighted the City defence and Shepherd had a close-range shot cleared over the crossbar by Knight.

Worcester broke quickly and Merrick and Aggio combined to set up a chance for Kelcher, whose header glanced wide. Two minutes later Borough were in front – with a glorious goal from Shepherd. Harris played a pass from the wing and Shepherd turned on the edge of the box to crack a left-foot drive past Knight from 20 yards.

The pace quickened. Harris went close for Nuneaton and Bassett saw a similar effort flash wide at the other end. Baker had a 30th minute chance to increase Borough's lead. He sliced his shot wide from close range. Worcester tried to hit back as half-time approached. Merrick went close with a header from the edge of the box with Robinson off his line.

Nuneaton had some anxious moments just before the break. But they were well worth their half-time lead and were by far the better footballing side and had maintained the form they showed in the wins against Romford and Hillingdon. Nuneaton were soon on the attack after the break. Shepherd missed from close range after Notley had headed a long Harris centre back into the middle from outside the far post. Borough still looked good value for their lead although they showed signs of losing the initiative at times. Robinson palmed a corner away from White's head before Shepherd had a shot blocked after good work by Notley.

Borough May Pull Out Of Floodlit Cup

Nuneaton Borough will pull out of the Midland Floodlit Cup at the end of the season – unless the competition is split into two sections of four. And, other clubs, worried about an ever-increasing number of fixtures have said they will do the same.

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At a special meeting of the member clubs at Manor Park last night, chairman Alf Scattergood explained Borough's position. He said: "Playing 60-70 matches a year is getting too much for part-time pros. We have been struggling for the past two or three years, and this could be the reason."

Bedworth United and Tamworth backed Nuneaton's two divisions of four plan, which will go before the clubs at the annual meeting in June.

Romford v Nuneaton Borough 03-04-1972

Borough: Robinson, Harris, Jones, Gill, Howshall, Smith, Goodfellow, Lewis, Shepherd, Baker, Phelan. **Sub:** Bircumshaw.

Borough made the journey to Brooklands to face Romford in a Southern League Premier Division game.

Borough forged another link in the chain of success that has pulled them out of relegation trouble. They collected their seventh point of eight with another display of all-round effort. And the side that once slipped dangerously close to the Southern League's bottom four can now finish above half-way. The better side before the break, they survived periods of second-half pressure and were good value for their point.

Before half-time they pushed forward with a strong wind at their backs, ran well for each other and Dave Lewis went close with three shots. His best – from outside the box – was pushed around the post for a corner by Romford keeper Andy Smith. After the interval the main reason for their recent improvement became clear when the new look back four – with Alan Jones again outstanding in the middle, had to cope with the wind and Romford's attacks.

Jones has taken on a new lease of life, along with Len Harris and Gerry Howshall, whom Pleat switched to the full back spots when he came out of hospital. The ex-right back twice cleared off the line and Howshall chipped in with a couple of last ditch clearances as Romford with full-back Terry Tapping pushing forward down the line, set up a series of raids.

Behind the back four goalkeeper Brian Robinson turned in another sound performance – crowned by a marvellous save five minutes from time. He somehow pushed a header from Phil Manning across the goal and Jones completed the clearance. But Nuneaton had plenty of skill in midfield where Jimmy Goodfellow was a steadying influence and Dave Lewis supplied a typical non-stop display.

Nuneaton Boro' v Gravesend & Northfleet 08-04-1972

Borough: Robinson, Jones, Gill, Harris, Lewis, Howshall, Smith, Shepherd, Notley, Goodfellow, Baker. **Sub:** Phelan.

Gravesend: Hughes, Sitford, Crudace, Burrett, Brooks, Reed, Thurgood, Mansell, Nicholas, O'Sullivan, Challis. **Sub:** McKenna.

Borough welcomed Gravesend and Northfleet to Manor Park for a Southern League Premier Division game.

Borough raced into a two-goal lead against Premier Division bottom club Gravesend at Manor Park. Gerry Baker shot them

ahead after ten minutes and Barry Notley made it 2-0 soon after, but Nuneaton lost their sparkle. Tony Nicholas pulled one back for Gravesend before half-time and the second half was scrappy. Barrie Notley and Trevor Shepherd both passed fitness tests and Borough player-manager David Pleat was able to name an unchanged side for the third successive game.

Rain swept towards the Cock and Bear end driven by a strong wind, as Nuneaton tried to move forward. Harris let in Nicholas who beat Lewis and then had a shot charged down by Jones. Gravesend keeper Hughes was surprised when a long Harris centre reared off the greasy surface and forced him to finger-tip it over the top. But he was beaten from the corner. Shepherd swung it across, the ball glanced off a defender's head, hit the post and rebounded to Gerry Baker who drove it home with 10 minutes on the clock.

Gravesend were in trouble and just five minutes later Notley increased Borough's lead from a chance set-up by an inch-perfect pass by Baker. Lewis was only inches away from a spectacular goal when he ran 20 yards through the defence and just failed to connect with a cross from Shepherd.



A scrappy ending to a picture book goal. It was scored by Barrie Notley (sprawled on the edge of the six yard box. It was made by Gerry Baker – hidden by a defender.
Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune

Notley was beaten by Hughes in a race for Robinson's clearance, but at this stage it looked all too easy for the Manor Park side. But Nuneaton showed signs of complacency and were jolted eight minutes from the break when Nicholas put Gravesend into the game with a soft goal. A free kick from Sitford found him unmarked at the far post and he hit the ball high into the net.

Borough had the Gravesend defence in trouble soon after the break. Brooks miskicked to let in Baker who beat Burrett and played a ball out to Notley but the centre-forward was tackled by Sitford. Lewis had a shot blocked after a goalmouth scramble. Less than two minutes later only a brave save from Robinson prevented an equaliser by Nicholas after the Nuneaton defence had hesitated, thinking he was off-side.

Dartford v Nuneaton Borough 11-04-1972

Borough: Robinson, Jones, Gill, Goodall, Howshall, Smith, Lewis, Goodfellow, Harris, Baker, Notley. **Sub:** Shepherd.

Borough made the journey to Watling Street to take on Dartford in a Southern League Premier Division game.

Borough had a point snatched from their grasp by an 80th minute penalty at Dartford. It wrecked their five game unbeaten run and dimmed their hopes of a place in the top half of the table. But there was nothing about their



performance to suggest that they will slide back towards the bottom four. The penalty came during a last ditch bid by the Kent side to break down Borough's stubborn defence. Centre-forward John Mitchell moved on to a left wing cross and was felled by John Gill as he tried to turn in the box. Mitchell sprawled over Gill's outstretched leg and John Stevens calmly slotted home his seventh spot kick of the season.

Borough still almost salvaged a point in a grandstand finish – and Len Harris was foiled by the width of a post. He ran through the Dartford defence onto a perfect chip from Gerry Howshall and beat goalkeeper John Morton, only to see his shot rebound back to the keeper. That was five minutes from time and only two minutes later Barrie Notley and Gerry Baker each had shots blocked in a goalmouth scramble.

Player-manager David Pleat, obviously looking for a draw, recalled Dave Goodall to the defence, moved Alan Jones back out to right-back and pushed Len Harris forward into a midfield four with only Baker and Notley up front. They conquered the fears of the Dartford slope when they faced it in the first-half and showed glimpses of their new found form after the break.

But the midfield congestion and two strong defences cut goal chances down to a minimum. All the drama was contained in the final ten minutes when Nuneaton lost a game that Dartford didn't deserve to win.

Telford United v Nuneaton Borough 14-04-1972

Borough: Robinson, Harris, Jones, Gill, Howshall, Lewis, Goodfellow, Smith, Shepherd, Notley, Baker. Sub: Phelan (for Notley, 18).

Borough made the journey to the Buck's Head to play Telford United in a Southern League Premier Division game.

Jack Bentley, King of Southern League strikers, hit a majestic goal at Telford. He rose with power and grace to a right wing cross from full back Alan Harris and thundered a header past goalkeeper Brian Robinson.

There was nothing Borough could do. And the goal only a minute after the break, won the match. It was a jewel in an otherwise jaded game between two tired teams, Yet Bentley could have had a hat-trick.

He had a blockbuster blocked by John Gill and two more headers magnificently saved by Robinson.

Borough were in trouble in the 18th minute when Barrie Notley had to leave the field with groin trouble. From then on, they had nothing up front and could have been out of the game at half-time.

They had some narrow escapes and George Jagger missed what looked a certain goal when he shot wide from inside the six-yard box. Nuneaton had few glimpses of a goal, apart from a couple of efforts from outside the box and an appeal for a 71st minute penalty turned down.

They worked hard at the back, covered a lot of ground in midfield, but the front runners were given little scope. In the

end, it was left to Bentley to win the match – a just reward for the player who did everything worth talking about in a game that had an end of the season look about it.

Stan Aston A Wembley Winner

Stan Aston had, a few minutes earlier, climbed the 36 steps that every footballer dream of – up to the Royal Box at Wembley.

He stood sipping champagne in the steamy pandemonium of the winners' dressing room and talked about his greatest moment in football. Stafford Rangers had crushed Barnet 3-0 to win the Non-League Cup and the ex-Borough and Hinckley centre-half played a major part.

Constant interruptions; a radio interview; pictures in the bath; and a deafening din from his delirious team-mates, punctuated his train of thought.

"You can't better that," he said. "It was all I expected it to be and more."

Borough Retained List

Nuneaton Borough have released defenders Dave Goodall and Ernie Wilkinson, goalkeeper Reg Edwards and forward Peter Phelan. And player-manager David Pleat has set his sights on three replacements – to give the squad a more attacking look. He said: "I know the three I want, players who will give us more ideas about going forward."

The rest of the squad have been retained, although Pleat will discuss new terms with two players later this week.

Barnet v Nuneaton Borough 18-04-1972

Borough: Robinson, Jones, Gill, Lewis, Bircumshaw, Howshall, Smith, Shepherd, Baker, Goodfellow, Harris. Sub: Goodall.

Borough made the journey to Underhill to play Barnet in a Southern League Premier Division game.

Borough scored their first-ever win in the Southern League against Barnet. They scored the only goal of a poor match after 21 minutes to take both points. But with some blatant time-wasting Nuneaton's performance provided little to shout about. Most of the time wasting play occurred in the second-half and resulted in the booking of Gerry Howshall after 67 minutes.

Borough owed much to Brian Robinson for their victory. He brought off at least three brilliant saves in the second half when Barnet dictated most of the play. With the slope and wind in their favour in the first-half, Nuneaton had the major share of the game. They deserved their 21st minute goal when Gerry Baker's headed deflection from Trevor Shepherd's corner kick completely beat goalkeeper McClelland.

Before that Lewis volleyed just over the bar following a half

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clearance and McClelland did well to push a hard shot from Roger Smith round for a corner. Barnet had little to offer in replay and Nuneaton's slender lead at the interval was just about deserved.

Barnet pushed forward down the slope in the second half, but without success. Robinson made three particularly brilliant saves, twice at the expense of Eason and once from Embery. At the other end Nuneaton rarely looked like adding to their score during some quick breaks, although the Barnet defenders had to keep a sharp eye on Baker who was a constant menace.

Smith on the right was also lively for Nuneaton and Barnet left-back Jenkins name also went into the book for a tackle from behind on the right-winger. It was not an inspiring game and only Robinson's excellent anticipation and agility prevented Barnet from gaining a draw, which would have been a fairer result.

Nuneaton Borough v Bedford Town 19-04-1972

Borough: Meredith, Tedds, Ritchie, Lewis, Gibbs, Newbury, Timms, Woodhead, Twigg, Cart, Harris. Sub: Edwards.

Borough welcomed Bedford Town to Manor Park to play a Midland Floodlit Cup game.

Nuneaton moved into third spot in the table after beating Bedford in what was virtually a junior game. Borough fielded nine of their successful youth side with Dave Lewis and Len Harris as the only recognised first team men. Bedford, who have already intimated that they will not be taking part in the competition next year, also paraded a side of youngsters.

Both teams seemed a little apprehensive in the opening stages before Borough went in front after only 11 minutes. Woodhead drove a low cross into the goalmouth and Frank Twigg hooked it home after the ball had been deflected on to the crossbar. Play switched from end to end and Dave Meredith in the Borough goal produced a fine save to keep out a shot from Earl.

After the break Borough began to get on top and played some attractive football. One move ended with Timms hammering in a great right foot volley only for Morrow to produce the save of the match to push it over the bar.

However, the goal that Borough threatened came just 15 minutes after the re-start. Timms put a high ball into the penalty area and Woodhead turned sharply to drive it into the net.

Borough were well in command now and it came as no surprise when Woodhead increased their lead midway through the half following a poor clearance by Byrne.

Several of the Borough youngsters gave impressive performances, but none more so than Bob Tedds. This well-made full-back looked to be a real prospect and could well be a first team player in the future.

Nuneaton Borough v Telford United 22-04-1972

Borough: Robinson, Jones, Gill, Lewis, Bircumshaw, Howshall, Smith, Shepherd, Baker, Goodfellow, Harris. Sub: Notley.

Telford: Weir, Harris, Croft, Ray, Ross, Carr, Fudge, Coton, Bentley, Hart, Thompson. Sub: Owen.

Borough welcomed Telford United to Manor Park to play a Southern League Premier Division game.

Borough increased their chances of a mid-table spot with a comfortable win over Telford. They controlled a scrappy game and collected both points with goals from Dave Lewis after 29 minutes and Gerry Baker 15 minutes into the second half.

Robinson was twice in action within a matter of seconds. He punched out a free kick and then fisted the ball away from a corner as Bentley challenged. Telford moved forward, but a quick burst through the middle by Lewis, and a right foot shot had Weir scrambling across his line.

Borough built up a promising raid which ended when Lewis curled a centre to the far post, Shepherd missed it and Harris cleared. Baker hooked a shot over the top from a right wing cross as Nuneaton shook off Telford's early attacks and came back into the game. The best chance of the match so far went to Shepherd, who headed into Weir's arms from close in.

Good work by Smith, in a tight space out near the corner flag, and a corner by Lewis, set up the opening. Nuneaton continued to force the pace and Lewis headed them into a 29th minute lead from a corner. Shepherd swung the ball across the middle. Baker missed it and Lewis scored from inside the six-yard box.

Howshall hit a 30-yarder over the top in the first minute of the second half. But the blustery wind and bone-hard pitch continued to affect the flow of the game. Coton drove a shot high and wide as Telford looked for an equaliser, but Borough's back four was dominant and held the visitors in a strong grip. Baker increased Borough's lead in the 60th minute when he cracked in a stunning shot from 12 yards after a move which involved Gill, Lewis and Shepherd.



Goal number two – and the one that made sure of the points. Gerry Baker connects with a right foot drive from about 12 yards with Telford's defence powerless.
Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune

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Shepherd set up a chance for Baker in the 67th minute. He connected with a first time shot and hit the ball over. Baker then pulled the ball back to Smith from the corner flag, but Weir was out quickly to dive at the winger's feet and concede a corner which Telford cleared. Nuneaton were well on top and Telford had to defend as Borough controlled the closing stages.

Nuneaton Borough v Dartford 24-04-1972

Borough: Robinson, Bircumshaw, Gill, Jones, Howshall, Harris, Lewis, Goodfellow, Smith, Baker, Shepherd. **Sub:** Notley.

Borough welcomed Dartford to Manor Park to play a Southern League Premier Division game.

Gerry Baker was involved in a car accident on the way to the ground, but shrugged it off to torment the Kent side's defence. Yet he did not get the goal his efforts deserved and Nuneaton's chances of a half-way spot in the league table were slashed. As early as the fifth minute Baker had a header clutched on the line by goalkeeper Morton.

And as late as the 72nd minute he outstripped the Dartford defence and pulled the ball back from the line – only for Morton to save again. In between times Baker monopolised the action in the Dartford goalmouth. He was the one forward prepared to take matters into his own hands and run the ball at the defence – but he needed better support.

In the first half Nuneaton were frustrated by a well organised Kent side. Dartford had a lot of the play and Brian Robinson pulled off a spectacular fingertip save. Yet the second half belonged to Borough – and Baker.

And Nuneaton almost snatched a dramatic match winner in the dying seconds when Tony Bircumshaw had a thunderbolt of a free-kick pushed on to the crossbar. The one great moment of danger to the Borough defence came during this closing spell when a slip by John Gill let in Len Ripley. He lobbed the ball goalwards with Robinson off his line, only to see the ball go wide of the far post.

The goalmouth action made up for spells of scrappiness in midfield where Dartford outnumbered Borough and stifled a lot of their raids. Borough were again strong at the back. Their one slip was an individual error and Dartford were never able to throw enough players forward to put them under any real pressure.

Borough Ban Phelan

Peter Phelan, Borough's teenage striker, has been suspended indefinitely by the Manor Park club. Nineteen-year-old Phelan, signed from Derby County in March failed to turn up for last week's match at Barnet and did not report for training.

Manager David Pleat said: "He failed to report to the ground and didn't phone through. We have not received any medical certificates and he has been suspended indefinitely."

Phelan, who is on a free transfer when he contract ends on May 6, will lose two weeks wages.

Tamworth v Nuneaton Borough 26-04-1972

Tamworth: Richards, Green, Newton, Millard, Brown, Seedhouse, Morrow, Foster, Holmes, Hope, Hall. **Sub:** Thompson.

Borough: Edwards, Wilkinson (Ritchie), Jones, Gill, Howshall, Harris, Lewis, Goodfellow, Smith, Notley, Shepherd.

Borough made the journey to The Lamb to take on Tamworth in a Midland Floodlit Cup match.

Borough dented Tamworth's hopes of taking the Midland Floodlit Cup. A win would have made the trophy virtually safe, but now Telford can top the table if they beat Burton and score at least three goals in the final fixture.

With better finishing Borough could so easily have won although the West Midland Leaguers had the edge for much of the game. Trevor Shepherd was the chief culprit. He ballooned his shot over from point blank range after only six minutes when Roger Smith worked wonders to cross from the right. Two minutes from the break he failed with a header from close in and in the second half he hurried his shot after a good run by Lennie Harris.

Smith, easily Borough's best forward, crashed a shot against the crossbar after outstripping the home defence and Jimmy Goodfellow was only a fraction too high with a fierce volley. Despite these near misses, Nuneaton had their full share of anxiety at the back. And one man who will quickly want to forget the game is goalkeeper Reg Edwards. Sadly lacking match practice, he had the jitters throughout the 90 minutes and repeatedly failed to gather cleanly.

The keeper was at fault when Ray Holmes put Tamworth ahead in the 23rd minute. Edwards came from his line to meet a Morrow corner but was beaten to the ball by Holmes who sent in a bullet like header. The striker almost scored again later with a soft header which had Edwards in all sorts of trouble.

In the 40th minute Borough drew level. Dave Lewis was given space and time to drive the ball home after Borough had put on the pressure with two corners in quick succession. Nuneaton had to replace Ernie Wilkinson with youth team player Gordon Ritchie in the 33rd minute. Wilkinson went down in agony after kicking the ball awkwardly and was taken off to hospital for X-rays.

Nuneaton Borough v Barnet 01-05-1972

Borough: Robinson, Bircumshaw, Jones, Lewis, Howshall, Goodfellow, Harris, Smith, Shepherd, Notley, Baker. **Sub:** Gill.

Borough welcomed Barnet to Manor Park to play the final game of the 1971-72 Southern League Premier Division season.

Jimmy Goodfellow made sure Borough ended the season on a high note with a dramatic last minute goal. Fifty-five seconds remained when Nuneaton launched a final attack. The ball went from Baker to Lewis, back to Howshall, into the middle and was headed down by Trevor Shepherd for Goodfellow to crash home.

Nuneaton Borough 1970-1979 – Part 1



The goal crowned a second half in which Nuneaton, relaxed and confident, had threatened to outplay the North Londoners, but had conceded a shock goal. Trevor Shepherd put them in front after 59 minutes after Barnet goalkeeper Jack McClelland had failed to hold a 25-yard pile driver from Gerry Baker. The ball trickled out of his grasp and Shepherd darted in to force it over the line for his 26th goal of the season.

That was the signal for Borough to play their best football of the game – even though they lacked the finishing touch to their impressive midfield build-ups. But they were up against a Barnet side that packed well in defence and broke quickly with Les Eason always a threat. Even so, the Manor Park side were comfortable leaders – until Colin Powell hit them with a solo goal in the 72nd minute.

He picked up the ball out by the corner flag, rounded Tony Bircumshaw, cut across two more defenders and beat Brian Robinson with a shot high into the net. Borough struggled for a spell, but they picked up their game before Goodfellow's spectacular and well-deserved goal. They were much the better side in the second half after the sides had cancelled each other out before the break.

Borough had a chance as early as the first minute when Notley put the ball over the bar after a good run by Roger Smith. Dave Lewis ended the season where he began it – in the back four – and turned in another powerhouse display. Len Harris, surely the most improved play in the Southern League, was the architect behind most of their midfield play.

And Gerry Baker, who has recovered his sharpness in the past few weeks, turned in the sort of performance that promises more goals from him next year.

Hednesford Town v Nuneaton Borough 03-05-1972

Hednesford: Cullen, Smith, Redmond, Babb, Norton, Ashton, Rushworth, Pittaway, Percival, Wright, Wyatt. Sub: Jones.

Borough: Robinson, Tedds, Ritchie, Newbury, Jones, Bircumshaw, Goodfellow, Lewis, Shepherd, Twigg, Notley. Sub: Harris.

Borough travelled to Keys Park to play Hednesford Town in a Midland Floodlit Cup game.

Borough made victory look easy with a goal in each half which saw them take third position in the Midland Floodlit Cup table. They got off to a great start when Frank Twigg gently side-footed the ball past slow moving Hednesford goalkeeper Cullem after eight minutes.

The nearest Hednesford came to scoring was after player-manager Vic Norton burst through, but his cross into the box went begging. Quickly executed raids by Nuneaton always worried the Hednesford defence and Shepherd might have done better after going clear just before half-time.

But, with the second half just 10 minutes old, Nuneaton went further ahead. Notley was given the benefit of an offside decision to race through and round Cullen before hitting the ball into the empty net. The same player was

through again just after but Norton made a saving tackle for Hednesford.

In the 75th minute Nuneaton brought on Harris for full-back Tedds. Hednesford began to push forward to try and save the match, but left themselves open at the back. Notley again took advantage, but Norton was there once more to tackle and remove the danger. Despite all their pressure the nearest Hednesford came to scoring was when winger Rushworth hit the post in the last minute.

Southern League Premier Division 1971-72

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Chelmsford City	42	28	6	8	109	46	62
Hereford United	42	24	12	6	68	30	60
Dover	42	20	11	11	67	45	51
Barnet	42	21	7	14	80	57	49
Dartford	42	20	8	14	75	68	48
Weymouth	42	21	5	16	69	43	47
Yeovil Town	42	18	11	13	67	51	47
Hillingdon Borough	42	20	6	16	64	58	46
Margate	42	19	8	15	74	68	46
Wimbledon	42	19	7	16	75	64	45
Romford	42	16	13	13	54	49	45
Guildford City	42	20	5	17	71	65	45
Telford United	42	18	7	17	83	68	43
Nuneaton Borough	42	16	10	16	46	47	42
Bedford Town	42	16	9	17	59	66	41
Worcester City	42	17	7	18	46	57	41
Cambridge City	42	12	14	16	68	71	38
Folkestone	42	14	7	21	58	64	35
Poole Town	42	9	11	22	41	72	29
Bath City	42	11	4	27	45	86	26
Merthyr Tydfil	42	7	8	27	29	93	22
Gravesend & Northfleet	42	5	6	31	30	110	16

Brian Tops With Manor Park Fans



Brian Robinson joined Nuneaton Borough last season as the club's second choice goalkeeper and finished it tops with the Manor Park fans. They have voted him Nuneaton's "Player of the Year" in a poll organised by the Borough Social Club in conjunction with the Evening Tribune.

Brian was named the fans choice for the award on Saturday night at St George's Hall and said afterwards: "This has crowned a great season for me." He went on: "I came to the club as cover for Reg Edwards and was given my chance when he was unfortunately hurt at work.

"That was at Merthyr last August and from then on everything has gone right for me. I never missed a league game all season after that," added the 26-year-old. Runner-up to Brian in the poll was Roger Smith, who is to have a joint testimonial with Alan Jones next season.

Borough Offer To Pay To Stay Out Of Senior Cup

Nuneaton Borough chairman Alf Scattergood revealed that the club made a £200 offer to stay out of the Birmingham Senior Cup. The club's bid for exemption failed – but it has led to moves that could put the sagging competition back on its feet.

For the other teams in the Senior Cup discovered that the Midlands "Big Six" – Aston Villa, Birmingham, Coventry, Wolves, West Brom and Walsall – paid only £600 between them to unload the ties from their fixture lists.

"I was astonished," said the Borough chairman. "We were

under the impression that they paid £500-£600 each year to stay out. Villa, as a Third Division club paid only £37.50.

Since Borough's move the County FA has adopted a "get tough" policy with the League clubs and ordered them to play next season. And it has also relaxed its rigid "Our cup takes precedence" rule which bound clubs to conference dates. In future, they will be allowed to play their ties in mid-week to avoid messing up carefully prepared league programmes.

Bircumshaw Leaves Borough

Nuneaton Borough full-back Tony Bircumshaw has parted company with the Manor Park club – half way through a scheduled two-year stay. The Nottingham-based defender, who joined Borough last summer from Hartlepool, has had his contract cancelled by mutual consent.

Explained Borough player-manager David Pleat: "He was doing a lot of travelling and I don't think there was sufficient improvement in his play."

Franklin Joins Borough For £1,000



Nuneaton Borough have completed the signing of centre-forward Barry Franklin from Atherstone Town. The deal went through when Borough chairman Alf Scattergood and Adders' director Ray Sheasby met to finalise the details.

Borough have paid a four figure fee – believed to be around the £1,000 mark – for the 24-year-old striker who was leading goalscorer in the West Midlands League last season.

Loughborough United — 1st Qualifying Round

Borough made the journey to Midland League Loughborough United to play a 1st Qualifying Round FA Cup tie.

Loughborough: Pilgrim, Payne, Neal, Wileman, Ford, Garland, Hart, Sykes, Mitchell, Vann, Kalisack. Sub: Raynor.

Nuneaton: Robinson, Lewis, Bircumshaw, Howshall, Gill, Goodall, Shepherd, Smith, Cutler, Pleat, Walker. Sub: Notley.

Nuneaton Borough strolled to a comfortable win over to ensure an FA Cup meeting with the winners of the Long Eaton and Sutton clash.

Borough began their cup campaign in tremendous style, scoring in 63 seconds. Howshall picked up a loose ball in midfield, and fed Pleat on the right wing. The player-manager dummied the full-back and crossed for Cutler to head in from seven yards.

It gave Borough's 200-odd fans just the fillip they wanted. Loughborough came into the game and Pleat tidied up a situation on the edge of the Borough 18-yard line. Howshall and Pleat set up another dangerous raid in the 12th minute. Pleat pushed it on to Cutler and the number nine's persistence won a corner. From Pleat's cross Pilgrim could only palm away Gill's header and Neal completed the clearance. But a minute later, Shepherd increased Borough's lead, again from a Howshall-Pleat engineered move.

The ball came across and Shepherd beat Pilgrim with a left foot drive with the home defence flat-footed. Borough were in complete control at this stage.

United pushed forward more often as half-time approached. Nuneaton appeared to sit on their lead and easily held the Midland Leaguers. They had the Loughborough defence in a tangle with headers from Shepherd and Cutler before Wileman was forced to nod the ball over his own goal.

Pleat hooked the ball over after a Bircumshaw centre had been headed across from the near post by Cutler.

Less than a minute later Walker blazed hopelessly over with his left foot.

Pleat kicked a left-foot drive over the bar in the early seconds after the break. Shepherd won the ball and pushed it out to Pleat who cut inside before his shot was unleashed. Pilgrim saved Loughborough when the keeper stuck out his left foot after a low cross from Walker had rebounded off Ford. Three minutes later Cutler had the ball in the Loughborough net, but the whistle had gone for offside.

Cutler made it 3-0 in the 54th minute when he coolly converted a Shepherd cross while the home defence appealed for offside. That goal virtually settled the game.

Walker netted Borough's fourth goal in the 81st minute after Lewis and Pleat had set up the chance. Gill made it 5-0 three minutes later.

Long Eaton United — 2nd Qualifying Round

Borough welcomed Long Eaton United to Manor Park for a 2nd Qualifying Round FA Cup tie.

Borough: Robinson, Lewis, Bircumshaw, Howshall, Gill, Goodall, Shepherd Baker, Notley, Harris, Smith. Sub: Cutler.

Long Eaton: Mycroft, Newson, Hutchby, Newton, Elmore, Thompson, Brooks, Dove, Tindall, Marshall, Frame. Sub: Maddison.

Borough, chasing a place in the third qualifying round of the FA Cup took 46 minutes to shake off the hangover of

their shock midweek home defeat by Highgate. Throughout the first half they were frustrated by the packed defence of the Midland League outfit. But once Barrie Notley had given them the lead only seconds after half-time the result was never in doubt. And it was new boy Gerry Baker who added the second to book Borough's trip to Alfreton or Heanor in the next round.

Baker figured in an early Borough raid. He prompted the attack 35 yards out and moved forward to try a neat flick to the near post from Shepherd's cross. The effort went wide. Roger Smith deserved better luck with a diving header after he had moved into open space from Harris's pass after doing the midfield running himself. A last ditch tackle by Newson saved the day for United as Shepherd sprinted on to a return pass from Baker.

Seconds later Newson again rescued the Midland Leaguers when he took the sting out of Smith's shot enabling Mycroft to save comfortably.

Thompson was fortunate to get a second stab at a clearance in the 27th minute when he miskicked only yards from his goal following good work by Howshall, Smith and Baker. Borough fans were ready to acclaim a goal when a glancing header by Baker from a Bircumshaw free kick beat Mycroft and hit the inside of the far post. But Baker was given offside.

Nuneaton's first moment of anxiety



Gerry Baker nose-dives to the ground to clinch Nuneaton's win with an unorthodox header against Long Eaton United.

Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune



came when Brooks beat Lewis inside the penalty area only to see his angled shot pushed away by Robinson.

Gill moved up in a bid to add punch to the attack as Borough fought to break the deadlock, and he found space to get in a shot which was deflected wide.

It took Borough just 60 seconds after the break to grab the goal they so badly needed. Following a throw in on the left Bircumshaw thumped the ball into the middle and Notley running in unmarked tucked a glancing header into the net off the far post.

Notley and Lewis were chopped down as Nuneaton continued to press. The game quickly switched back to the same pattern with Borough in command and a Baker-Notley combination promised to produce a goal until a defender got in the way of Baker's shot.

It was no surprise when a second goal did come in the 65th minute. Shepherd pulled the ball back from the by-line, Notley let it run between his legs to fool the United defence and Baker went down low to head home.

Alfreton Town — 3rd Qualifying Round

Borough travelled to Alfreton to play a 3rd Qualifying Round FA Cup tie.

Alfreton: Yardy, P. Blackburn, Slater, Walker, Renshaw, Carter, Ford, Harrison, Griffiths, R. Blackburn, Parlett. Sub: Bell.

Borough: Robinson, Lewis, Smith, Howshall, Gill, Goodall, Shepherd, Baker, Notley, Pleat, Cutler. Sub: Shinton.

Borough booked their place in the final qualifying round of the FA Cup within half an hour at Alfreton. It was a quickfire hat-trick from Gerry Baker which floored the Derbyshire side. Baker took his tally to five in three games – and when Barry Notley added number four early in the second half, it underlined Nuneaton's all-round superiority and settled the issue.

John Gill shook off a leg injury to line up in the back four for Nuneaton. He

had Roger Smith alongside him in the absence of Tony Bircumshaw. More than 300 Borough fans made the trip.

Baker wasted a great chance of giving Borough the lead. Renshaw miskicked from a long, upfield punt by Robinson and Baker blazed wide.

Then, from a Pleat free-kick, Baker was close with a spectacular scissor-kick. Play switched to the Nuneaton goalmouth and the visitors were temporarily at sixes and sevens before the ball was eventually scrambled clear. Persistence by Baker earned the first corner of the match in the eighth minute, and from it Nuneaton went ahead. Following Pleat's cross, Notley hit a post and Baker rocketed the ball home from the rebound.

It was 2-0 in the 15th minute with Baker again the man on the mark. Ford and Slater fluffed an Alfreton clearance. Pleat took advantage to flight a pinpoint centre to the far post where Baker moved in to bullet in a header.

At this stage Nuneaton were in complete command, dominating midfield and forcing Alfreton into mistakes at the back.

Alfreton looked a shattered side in the 29th minute when Baker completed a hat-trick. Superb positional play gave him his chance and he ghosted in behind the defence to volley home another Pleat centre.

Alfreton should have reduced the deficit when Griffiths shot over with the goal at his mercy. Seconds later Robinson made a great save from Ron Blackburn following a flag kick. Just before half-time Lewis cleared off the line from a Renshaw header.

Vardy pulled off a great one-handed save to rob Baker of a fourth goal, but the goalkeeper could do nothing to keep out Notley's header in the 46th minute. Pleat, after being pulled down from behind, played a quick free kick to the near post and Notley was there with a sharp header to make it 4-0.

Alfreton, desperately trying to break

Nuneaton's strangle-hold on the game, brought on Bell in place of Parlett.

Tamworth — 4th Qualifying Round

Borough welcomed Tamworth to Manor Park to play a 4th Qualifying Round FA Cup tie.

Borough: Robinson, Bircumshaw, Smith, Howshall, Gill, Goodall, Pleat, Baker, Notley, Lewis, Cutler. Sub: Walker.

Tamworth: Finch, Whitehouse, Newton, Hall, Brown, Thompson, Morrow, Foster, Holman, Seedhouse, Hope. Sub: Ball.

Borough wiped away two years of FA misery with a convincing win over their arch-rivals. There were goals from Dave Lewis, Gerry Howshall and Barrie Notley in front of a 6,000-plus crowd. Lewis scored after 35 minutes. Howshall on the stroke of half-time and Notley with 14 minutes to go and Tony Bircumshaw missed a penalty in the 80th minute. That was before Bobby Thompson scored for Tamworth with five minutes to go.

Goodall's tackle halted Hope before Baker shot across the face of goal from a Notley back header. Morrow gave Nuneaton a few anxious moments. He was presented with the ball by Howshall, beat two defenders, moved into the 18 yard box but shot wide.

Nuneaton began to push forward and Finch made a good recovery after he had fumbled a long ball from Pleat with Baker moving in. In another Borough attack, Brown headed powerfully out for a corner when Baker pulled the ball back from the line. Tamworth hit back and Morrow miscued from a half chance before a strong tackle by Gill halted Foster. Robinson in the Borough goal was then forced to boot the ball clear when he could only palm down a Foster cross. Play switched quickly to the Tamworth penalty area and Finch, unsighted by Baker, needed two attempts to gather a Bircumshaw shot.

The West Midland Leaguers survived a 28th minute penalty appeal from Nuneaton but as the home side



These fans make no secret of where their loyalties lie as Borough score. The message is clear from the giant-sized rosette which sports the legend “I Hate Tamworth”.

Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune

had to drag down Baker to cut out the danger. Foster threatened Borough’s lead. He shook off a challenge from Goodall, dragged the ball past Gill and pulled it back from the line. But Bircumshaw was back to cover and give away a corner. Notley had another chance with a header after Tamworth had failed to clear a corner.

Tamworth were forced to defend as the minutes ticked away. Barrie Notley killed off Tamworth’s hopes of a comeback with the decisive third goal in the 76th minute, with a header from a Bircumshaw free kick.

Four minutes later Borough were awarded a penalty when Brown handled, only for Bircumshaw to shoot wide from the spot. Thompson pulled back a consolation goal for Tamworth in the 85th minute.

Torquay United — 1st Round Proper

Borough made the long journey to Devon to play Torquay United in the 1st Round Proper of the FA Cup.

Torquay: Connaughton, Twitchin, P. Sandercock, Lucas, Edwards, Hill, Skirton, Welsh, Tearse, Mitchinson, Stuckey. Sub: Hill.

Borough : Robinson, Bircumshaw, Smith, Howshall, Gill, Goodall, Cutler, Baker, Notley, Pleat, Lewis. Sub: Shepherd .

David Tearse, Torquay’s £15,000 buy from Leicester, ended Borough’s hopes of FA cash and glory at rainswept Plainmoor. His 18th minute goal was

appeared to be getting on top Tamworth broke away. Holmes ran 50 yards after leaving Gill sprawling, but Goodall saved the day with a last-ditch tackle.

Borough should have gone ahead in the 36th minute. Notley ran onto a back header from Thompson, won a challenge with Finch only to see his drive blocked on the line by Brown

Seconds later, however, the Borough fans went wild with delight when Lewis blasted his side in front. He superbly controlled a pass from Pleat ten yards out and swept it past Finch on the turn.

After Cutler had gone close following a good run, Borough went two up with a tremendous goal from Gerry Howshall on the stroke of half-time. He hammered home a free kick from 30 yards out which left Finch standing.

A spectacular save by Robinson foiled Tamworth in the 52nd minute. He clawed an Ian Hall header from under the bar after the number four had been left unmarked from Newton’s pass.

Borough broke away and Thompson



The beginning of the end for Tamworth as Dave Lewis sweeps the ball goalwards to put Borough ahead – and on their way into the First Round of the Cup.

Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune

enough to put the Third Division side through to the Second Round. But Nuneaton went down fighting. In a thrilling finish, Paul Cutler had a goal disallowed and another chance saved as Borough fought for a second chance.

Borough, cheered on by 2,000 fans, continued to push forward and a Bircumshaw free kick flashed across the face of the Torquay goalmouth as Notley just failed to connect.

Torquay, with the rain driving in their faces, moved forward. Gill tidied up in the Borough goalmouth before Cutler worked himself shooting space only to hit the ball behind. Lucas broke quickly for Torquay after Nuneaton had failed to make use of a free kick.

Torquay again threatened. Lucas gave Welsh a ball to chase, but the West Country side's top scorer was forced out by Bircumshaw. Then Torquay took the lead in the 18th minute through David Tearse. Sandercock sparked off the attack. Lucas found Welsh who dummied Goodall and pulled the ball back across the Borough goalmouth where Tearse side footed it home from the edge of the six-yard box.

Pleat's centre came off Edwards as Notley challenged and was cleared. Torquay quickly switched the ball into the Borough half and Robinson dealt with a powerful shot from Lucas after a Welsh back-heel.

Pleat raised a roar from the Borough fans with a 25-yarder which almost caught Connaughton by surprise. The keeper put it over the top. Nuneaton had recovered well from the goal, but had their hands full at the back against a much sharper Torquay frontline.

Lewis volleyed wide from long range but, as half time approached Torquay, with top scorer Alan Welsh their danger man, began to make the Nuneaton defence struggle. Welsh shot across the face of the goal, had another shot charged down, and hit a third which was slowed by the goalmouth mud, and cleared by Bircumshaw.

Nuneaton tried to hit back with an attacking spell before Torquay centre-half Edwards raced from the half-way line and sent in a shot which was taken low by Robinson.

Trevor Shepherd came on for Barrie Notley in the second half as the battle continued in the pouring rain. Robinson pushed a shot from Welsh around the post and then dropped the corner to create a scramble in the penalty area. The ball eventually went out to Stuckey, who hit it well wide.

Borough continued to give a good account of themselves and Shepherd should have equalised in the 50th minute. He headed a corner from Pleat over the top despite being positioned underneath the crossbar. Smith then beat Twitchin out on the left, cut inside, only to shoot straight at Connaughton.

There was a terrific scramble almost on the Nuneaton goal-line following a back pass from Howshall. Welsh and Tearse each had efforts blocked as the players fought for the ball before it was eventually cleared.

The game continued to swing from end to end and Nuneaton won two successive corners before they went agonisingly close to snatching an equaliser.

Pleat caught the home keeper, Connaughton, off his line with a chip into the goalmouth. Edwards headed it down and Baker, following up, hit into the side-netting.

Cutler had the ball in the Torquay net in the 77th minute following a scramble on the six yard line, only for the referee, to disallow the goal.



The goal that got away. Paul Cutler (half-hidden) forces the ball past Torquay keeper John Connaughton, with 13 minutes to go. Borough had five players in the penalty area – a measure of their attacking blast.

Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune



David Pleat, Trevor Shepherd and John Gill raise their arms in triumph to acclaim the "goal" while Cutler and two Torquay defenders are still sprawled in the mud.

Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune

Corby Town — 3rd Qualifying Round

Borough made the journey to Corby Town to play a 3rd Qualifying Round FA Trophy tie.

Corby: Tennant, Burns, Morrison, McGowan, Buck, Sherry, Holder, Harrald, Dawson, Etheridge, Walker. Sub: Jardine.

Borough: Robinson, Jones, Bircumshaw, Howshall, Gill, Goodall, Smith, Baker, Shepherd, Notley, Lewis. Sub: Pleat.

Barrie Notley and Trevor Shepherd put Borough into the first round of the Non-League Cup with goals against Corby at Occupation Road. Workmanlike Borough soaked up heavy pressure in the second half from the leaders of the Southern League's northern section.

Borough's solid team strength denied the Steelmen an equaliser. Confident work in defence by Jones and Bircumshaw cleared a McGowan free-kick as Borough settled. Robinson then cut out a Walker cross with a spectacular diving save as Dawson raced in to challenge.

Borough pushed forward more often and Notley headed them in to a 15th minute lead. He nodded in a Smith corner at the near post after Smith had set up the raid that won the flag-kick.

Smith appeared to handle the ball as he moved forward, but despite protests, the referee allowed him to go on. Two minutes later Notley headed over before Robinson saved from Walker.

There was an anxious moment for Nuneaton on the half hour when Dawson beat their defence to a right-wing centre. The ball headed towards the far post, Jones and Bircumshaw both left it and Holder almost cashed in. The defence was beaten again in the air a few minutes later when Corby centre-half Buick, climbed to meet a Holder free-kick, but headed over.

Nuneaton moved out quickly on an attack which ended when a low centre from Smith was cut out. The raid led to a spell of pressure from Nuneaton, who appeared to be playing well within

themselves. The half-time whistle ended a satisfactory first half for the Manor Park side,

Sherry, under pressure from Notley, was forced to give away a corner early in the second half. Smith's corner, an inswinger, had Tennant in trouble but he managed to push it over the top. The second corner was half-cleared to Pleat, on as sub for Baker, whose first time shot was held by the keeper.

Borough were under heavy pressure as Dawson, Walker and Holder had efforts blocked. Holder was tripped by Bircumshaw on the edge of the box but Corby wasted the free kick. The Steelmen maintained their pressure, and a right foot drive from Walker was deflected for a corner before Harrold hooked the ball over the top.

Pleat moved down the right wing, swung the ball into the Corby penalty area, only to see it cleared by Sherry. Corby continued to look dangerous. Robinson held a powerful drive from McGowan and Holder flashed a shot across the face of the Borough goal. Borough responded and Trevor Shepherd scored Nuneaton's second goal in injury time.

Telford United — 1st Round Proper

Borough welcomed Telford United to Manor Park to play a FA Trophy 1st Round Proper tie.

Borough: Robinson, Bircumshaw, Smith, Jones, Gill, Wilkinson, Lewis, Howshall, Shepherd, Baker, Notley. Sub: Harris.

Telford: Irvine, Harris, Croft, Ray, Coton, Carr, Fudge, Owen, Bentley, Hart, Jagger. Sub: Thompson.

Mickey Fudge crushed Borough's Non-League Cup hopes with a 73rd minute goal in an incident packed first round tie. Borough had fought back from behind and were looking for goals when Fudge struck.

Joey Owen put the Shropshire side in front after 13 minutes before Barrie Notley hit a dramatic equaliser in the dying seconds of the first half. But the hopes built up by Nuneaton's rally collapsed after Fudge's glancing header.

Lewis set up a shooting chance for Baker who volleyed wide before Borough faced a spell of pressure. But Nuneaton went close to scoring after just five minutes. A Notley header, from Smith's centre, struck Ray and was



Borough's equaliser, seconds before half-time. Gerry Baker and Barrie Notley, arms raised, celebrate the goal.

Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune

saved by Irvine. Seconds later, Notley laid the ball back to Howshall, who failed to connect properly from the edge of the box.

Telford went ahead in the 13th minute through Owen who started the move that led to the goal. Bentley came away from Gill and clipped a pass out to Fudge whose hard, low centre was hustled into the net by Owen.

Nuneaton tried to hit back and Howshall had a shot blocked by Caton before Telford again showed their goal threat. Fudge drove the ball into the net, only to be pulled up for off-side. Irvine blocked a shot from Shepherd with his legs and Howshall drove the rebound wide.

But Telford's speed on the break almost caught Nuneaton when Owen tested Robinson after the Shropshire side had moved quickly down the left flank. Baker floated over a corner which

reached Shepherd, who was wrong footed and hit the ball wide.

Fudge had his name taken for time wasting after a long delayed Telford free kick which was eventually taken short to Owen and saved by Robinson.

Nuneaton equalised with a goal in the dying seconds before half time through Notley. Smith's corner was nodded on by Shepherd and headed on to the underside of the crossbar by Notley.

Irvine tried to prevent it from crossing the line but the referee was on the spot and pointed immediately to the centre.

Borough launched a spell of pressure after Robinson had saved a Bentley header from a free-kick.

Smith ended a spectacular 35 yard burst which carried him past two tackles, with a shot that Irvine allowed to slip through his hands for a corner. Lewis cracked in a shot from 20 yards after a pin-point crossfield pass from

Baker as Nuneaton tried to force home their attacks.

Borough's pressure exposed some shakiness in the Telford defence, but the commanding figure of Graham Carr pulled them together. Despite Nuneaton's attacks, Telford still carried an enormous threat up front. But Smith, a constant threat to the Shropshire side with his runs from midfield, carved himself a chance and sent in a shot which Irvine palmed around the post.

Telford then took a shock lead, against the run of the play, with a glancing header from Fudge in the 73rd minute. Bentley pushed a diagonal pass across the Nuneaton defence to Hart, who chipped it into the middle for Fudge to glance it wide of Robinson.

That goal, after Borough's almost constant attacks, knocked the bottom out of the Manor Park side's hopes.



Nuneaton Borough 1971-72

Back: Paul Cutler, Alan Jones, Dave Lewis, John Gill, Stan Marshall (trainer), Barry Notley, Brian Robinson, Reg Edwards, Dave Goodall, Alan Shinton, Len Harris.

Front: Gerry Howshall, Gerry Baker, Trevor Shepherd, David Pleat (player-manager), Roger Smith, Tony Bircumshaw.

Nuneaton Borough 1970-1979 – Part 1



Southern League Premier Division: Fixtures, Results & Scorers- 1971-72

Nuneaton Scores First

Date	Opposition	Venue	Competition	Score	Scorers	Attendance
07.31	Rugby Town	A	JST	1-1	Cutler	
08.02	Coventry City XI	H	PSF	1-1	Cutler	2282
08.05	Leicester City Reserves	H	PSF	1-1	Cutler	908
08.09	Derby County XI	H	PSF	2-1	Notley, Gill	1871
08.14	Weymouth	A	L	1-2	Cutler	1474
08.16	Hereford United	H	L	0-1		3396
08.21	Chelmsford City	H	L	0-2		2540
08.23	Brierley Hill Alliance	H	BSC1	2-1	Notley (2)	1489
08.25	Hereford United	A	L	1-4	Goodall	5236
08.28	Merthyr Tydfil	A	L	1-0	Notley	1029
08.31	Poole Town	A	L	0-1		517
09.04	Yeovil Town	H	L	1-1	Cutler	1948
09.06	Poole Town	H	L	2-1	Cutler, Shepherd	2292
09.08	Atherstone Town	A	F	1-2		
09.11	Gravesend & Northfleet	A	L	1-1	Cutler	506
09.13	Merthyr Tydfil	H	L	5-1	Walker (2), Cutler, Shepherd, Pleat	2407
09.18	Loughborough United	A	FAC1Q	5-0	Cutler (2), Gill, Walker, Shepherd	900
09.20	Bedworth United	A	MFC	4-0	Notley (2), Shepherd (2)	2080
09.23	Ilkeston Town	A	SLC1-1L	1-0	Howshall	613
09.25	Margate	A	L	3-2	Howshall, Shepherd, Bircumshaw (p)	767
09.27	Hednesford Town	H	MFC	5-1	Shinton (2), Notley (2), Shepherd	
10.02	Highgate United	A	BSC2	2-2	Notley (2)	810
10.06	Highgate United	H	BSC2r	0-1		1730
10.09	Long Eaton United	H	FAC2Q	2-0	Notley, Baker	2611
10.16	Bath City	H	L	3-0	Shepherd (2), Baker	
10.18	Bedford Town	A	MFC	1-2	Pleat	647
10.23	Alfreton Town	A	FAC3Q	4-0	Baker (3), Notley	
10.25	Ilkeston Town	H	SLC1-2L	0-0		2336
10.30	Wimbledon	H	L	1-0	Notley	2995
11.01	Weymouth	H	L	0-1		3256
11.06	Tamworth	H	FAC4Q	3-1	Lewis, Howshall, Notley	
11.10	Burton Albion	A	MFC	1-3	Lewis	658
11.13	Dover	H	L	1-1	Cutler	2700
11.15	Bedworth United	H	MFC	3-0	Smith, Lewis, Shepherd	1881
11.20	Torquay United	A	FAC1	0-1		5807
11.22	Burton Albion	H	MFC	2-0	Shepherd (pen), Baker	838
11.24	Bedworth United	A	CC1	2-4	Baker, Shepherd	c500
11.27	Bedford Town	H	L	1-0	Shepherd	2057
11.29	Telford United	H	SLC2	1-0	Notley	1663
12.04	Corby Town	A	FAT3Q	2-0	Notley, Shepherd	948
12.07	Coventry City Reserves	A	PC	0-4		1032
12.11	Worcester City	H	L	2-2	Shepherd, Lewis	2100
12.14	Corby Town	A	MFC	2-0	Notley, Shaw	
12.18	Bath City	A	L	2-4	Notley, Baker	1063
12.20	Corby Town	H	MFC	1-2	Notley	1081
12.27	Cambridge City	H	L	2-0	Notley, Shepherd	2917
01.01	Cambridge City	A	L	2-2	Baker, Shepherd	1300
01.03	Stafford Rangers	H	MFC	1-1	Shepherd	1109
01.08	Margate	H	L	1-1	O.G.	1619
01.15	Yeovil Town	A	L	0-2		2081
01.17	Tamworth	H	MFC	7-0	Notley (3), Smith (2), Shepherd, Lewis	
01.22	Telford United	H	FAT1	1-2	Shepherd	1201

Nuneaton Borough 1970-1979 – Part 1



Southern League Premier Division: Fixtures, Results & Scorers- 1971-72

Nuneaton Scores First

Date	Opposition	Venue	Competition	Score	Scorers	Attendance
01.24	Telford United	A	MFC	1-2	Shepherd	1201
01.29	Chelmsford City	A	L	1-2	Baker	2148
02.05	Folkestone	H	L	2-0	Smith, O.G.	1502
02.08	Stafford Rangers	A	MFC	2-3	Lewis (2)	
02.19	Wimbledon	A	L	0-1		1150
02.24	Hereford United	H	SLC3	0-0		2637
02.26	Folkestone	A	L	1-4	Turpie	1250
03.04	Dover	A	L	0-0		1302
03.09	Hereford United	A	SLC3r	1-2	Lewis	c6000
03.11	Guildford City	H	L	0-0		810
03.13	Hillingdon Borough	A	L	0-2		536
03.16	Telford United	H	MFC	1-3	Shepherd	448
03.18	Bedford Town	A	L	0-3		1028
03.20	Guildford City	A	L	1-3	Harris	1617
03.25	Romford	H	L	1-0	Shepherd	1514
03.27	Hillingdon Borough	H	L	2-0	Shepherd, Baker	1214
04.01	Worcester City	A	L	1-0	Shepherd	878
04.03	Romford	A	L	0-0		1274
04.08	Gravesend & Northfleet	H	L	2-1	Notley, Baker	1235
04.11	Dartford	A	L	0-1		
04.14	Telford United	A	L	0-1		
04.18	Barnet	A	L	1-0	Baker	1094
04.19	Bedford Town	H	MFC	3-0	Woodhead (2), Twigg	
04.22	Telford United	H	L	2-0	Lewis, Baker	1428
04.24	Dartford	H	L	0-0		1148
04.26	Tamworth	A	MFC	1-1	Lewis	
05.01	Barnet	H	L	2-1	Shepherd, Goodfellow	1361
05.03	Hednesford Town	A	MFC	2-0	Notley, Twigg	164

KEY : L = Southern League Premier, FAC = FA Cup, FAT= FA Trophy, SLC= Southern League Cup, BSC= Birmingham Senior Cup, MFC = Midland Floodlit Cup, CC = Camkin Cup, PC = President's Cup, PSF = Pre Season Friendly, JST = Jack Scamp Trophy

Season 1972-73



Nuneaton Borough reported back for training last night and player-manager David Pleat chats to the players before the first session at Manor Park. "Everything went quite well," he said today. "We eased our way into things, but the pressure will be stepped up during the coming sessions." Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune

Bob Turpie Back With Borough

Bob Turpie, who spent a spell with Borough on loan from Peterborough United during last season, has re-signed for the Manor Park club. Turpie, who is 22, has been a target for a number of Southern League clubs during the close season, but decided to rejoin Borough.

Player-manager David Pleat said: "He usually plays on the left flank in the middle of the field and will give a certain amount of balance to the side. But he is also something of a utility player and played up front for Peterborough Reserves last season when he scored 12 goals."

Notley Can Go – For A Fee

It looks as though Barry Notley has played his last game for Nuneaton Borough after failing to report for training. There were reports that Notley, who is at present in Ireland, wishes to join his former club Cork Celtic.

David Pleat has written to Notley at his Derby address informing him that the club is prepared to release his registration. "If he wants to play in Ireland again we are quite prepared to release his registration, but we will want a small fee" said Pleat.

Edwards To Join Port Vale?

Reg Edwards, the teenage goalkeeper Nuneaton Borough discarded at the end of last season, is all set to join Port Vale. The youngster, once rated in the four figure bracket at Manor Park, has been offered a two month trial by the Third Division club. Edwards was an overnight success with Borough when he replaced Fred Crump the season before last.

Pleat Snaps Up Bridgett

Nuneaton Borough player-manager David Pleat rounded off a hat-trick of signings inside three days when he snapped up defender Ray Bridgett from Nottingham Forest.

And his Manor Park squad has now taken on depth and

balance with a month to go before the start of the season. Bridgett, at Forest since leaving school, is a natural left back. He made six appearances in the first team, including substitute games, in his ten years at the County Ground.

"They are obviously letting him go to make way for a younger player," says the Borough manager. "But they must have thought a lot of him to have kept him so long."

Bridgett, who is 25, is expected to take over the number three shirt from Gerry Howshall and release the ex-West Brom wing half for other duties. Howshall dropped back into the defence last February when Pleat reshuffled his back four and laid the foundations for their battle to clear relegation trouble.

Pleat Signs Amateur

Nuneaton Borough player-manager David Pleat has signed Tom Starkey – an amateur centre-forward with Luton Town. Starkey, a six-footer, is only 20 and made several appearances for Luton's Reserve side last season.

He figured consistently among the goalscorers and made a big impression when he grabbed a hat-trick in his first game against Milwall.

Born in Liverpool, Starkey is at present studying law at the Lanchester Polytechnic and the Borough team boss is highly delighted at his latest capture. "There have been a lot of League clubs after him and I am highly delighted that he has signed for us," Pleat said.

Pleat Interested In Peter Wassall

Nuneaton Borough are interested in Peter Wassall, the centre-forward who cost Hereford United £2,500 last season from Kidderminster. He was linked with Borough at the weekend and David Pleat said he had been in touch with Hereford.

Borough have also obtained the signature of David Swift, a defender from Peterborough United. He has joined Borough on an initial month's trial, but could earn a permanent place on the staff.

Nuneaton Borough v Rugby Town

29-07-1972

Borough: Robinson, Harris, Bridgett, Lewis, Gill, Goodfellow, Howshall, Starkey, Baker, Turpie, Smith.

Rugby: Jones, Cassidy, Edwards, Thomas, A'Barrow, Knox, Armstrong, Stewart, Keeley, Archibald, Lee.

Borough welcomed Rugby Town to Manor Park to play for the Jack Scamp Trophy.

Ray Bridgett won the pre-season competition for Borough with an explosive left-foot drive. He cracked in a rebound from the edge of the box in the 74th minute to give Nuneaton a win that could have been much more comfortable.

Borough, with three of their newcomers on view, always looked too good for Rugby – despite the fact that the Oakfield side scored first. That was in the 36th minute when transfer listed Mick Keeley, Rugby's best forward, set up the chance

for Adrian Stewart. Less than a minute later Gerry Baker equalised with a shot that deflected off Rugby centre-half A'Barrow and looped in off the underside of the crossbar.

Baker had a busy game, both Roger Smith and impressive newcomer Tom Starkey hit the woodwork and Rugby keeper Dave Jones pulled off a string of brave saves.

In all, it was a steady start from Nuneaton for their first step towards the opening of another season. They missed chances, but the final touch of Barry Franklin, away on holiday, could put that right.



Happy Borough skipper, Dave Lewis, accepts the Sir Jack Scamp Trophy from the former Government “troublesooter” – a scene the fans hope Lewis will repeat in the coming season. Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune

Borough Supporters' Association Booms

Nuneaton Borough Supporters' Association, part of the club's “new image,” has boomed during its first nine months. Since last September the Association has made a gift of £300 to the soccer club, paid for new guttering on the canal side stand and bought a new strip.

And treasurer Mr Ces Dawson reported at the annual meeting that the Association still has a healthy bank balance of £312.91. Dances, support for the club's amalgamated tote and the Manor Park Gala Day helped to swell the funds.

“We have other things in mind for next year, when we hope to raise £1,000,” said Association chairman Ted Wicks.

Borough To Play Borough

Nuneaton Borough fans have a 1st chance next month to pay homage to the team that made a town proud. September 20 is the date. The team? The 1966-67 side that carried the club into the Third Round of the FA Cup and to within one point of the Southern League title.

They will play the current side in an Alan Jones-Roger Smith testimonial match that will turn back the clock. Memories are short, but the 66-67 side are the “Unforgettables.” They broke

all records and etched their name in the club's hall of fame. No one who was there will ever forget the misty January night at Millmoor when Borough lost 1-0 to Rotherham, but captured the hearts of a capacity 23,000 crowd. It was a season of memories. Tony Richards broke the goalscoring record which still stands at 54 goals.

Bromsgrove Rovers v Nuneaton Borough 02-08-1972

Bromsgrove: Hooper, Stafford, Smith, Hopkin, Ball, Wood, Childs (Shipman), Partridge (Bell), Craddock, J. Dyer, J. L. Dyer.

Borough: Gilbert, Harris (Lewis), Bridgett (Jones), Hubbard, Swift (Pleat), Turpie, Howshall, Franklin, Shepherd, Goodfellow, Starkey.

Borough made the journey to the Victoria Ground to face Bromsgrove Rovers in a pre-season friendly.

Borough slipped to a disappointing 3-0 defeat to the Southern League Division 1 North side. Craddock, John Dyer and Bell notched the goals for the home side.

Nuneaton Borough v Leicester City XI 05-08-1972

Borough: Robinson, Harris, Bridgett, Lewis, Gill, Swift, Shepherd, Baker, Franklin, Goodfellow, Turpie.

Leicester: Jayes, M. Capewell, G. Capewell, Phillips, Friswell, Kilkelly, Tomlin, Waters, Watts, Jackson, Stringfellow.

Borough welcomed a Leicester City XI to Manor Park to play a pre-season friendly.

Camp Hill teenager Dave Tomlin stole the show from Nuneaton Borough's new signings with a thunderbolt goal. Tomlin, who rates highly in Jimmy Bloomfield's future plans, hit a tremendous shot with the outside of his right foot from 25 yards. The ball bent past Brian Robinson for a goal that would have crowned any game.

That was in the 85th minute and four minutes later Tomlin, with Spartan Thistle only 12 months ago, helped to set up Leicester's second goal, scored by centre-forward Derek Watts. But the 2-0 scoreline was cruel on Borough. They turned in their best pre-season performance and must have wiped out many of player-manager David Pleat's misgivings.



A right foot special from Trevor Shepherd beats Leicester goalkeeper Karl Jayes for what looks a certain goal – but it smacked against the crossbar and the Filbert Street side survived and went on to win 2-0.

Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune

Centre-forward Barry Franklin could easily have been the hero. He hit the crossbar and twice had shots blocked on the line. Nuneaton looked a more closely knit side. There was more purpose in their play, a vast improvement on the games against Rugby and Bromsgrove.

They were solid at the back after a couple of first-half scares and confident in midfield where Bob Turpie had a fine game. And there is the promise of more goals. It was only in the last five minutes that they faltered. Few sides could have survived Tomlin's goal.

Dave Lewis Club Skipper

Dave Lewis, who last season won a place in the hearts of the Borough fans for his all out effort, has been appointed club captain. The 23-year-old midfielder player was skipper towards the end of last season and has received a vote of confidence from player-manager David Pleat.

Nuneaton Borough v Notts County 07-08-1972

Borough: Robinson, Harris, Bridgett, Goodfellow, Gill, Lewis, Baker (Hubbard), Pleat (Starkey), Franklin, Smith, Turpie.

Borough welcomed Notts County to Manor Park to play a pre-season friendly game.

David Pleat returned to the Borough team with a display that inspired Borough to wrap up their pre-season plans in style. The player-manager, out since last January, tormented Notts County for an hour with his right flank runs. And while he was on the pitch, Nuneaton sparkled.

Barry Franklin netted both goals, one from the penalty spot, and County keeper Eric McManus prevented Nuneaton from doubling their score. Some sloppy play late in the game almost cost Borough their lead when County made a desperate bid to save the game, but the Manor Park side were worthy winners.

Dave Lewis returned to the back four to steady the defence, Bob Turpie was aggressive in midfield – and Franklin became a hit with the fans. And Pleat, although he went off in the 61st minute and is obviously short of match practice, could field his first-half line up against Worcester on Saturday.

Borough were in front after 77 seconds when Franklin powered a header past McManus after a Len Harris free-kick and good work by Gerry Baker. They lost their lead in the 23rd minute when John Gill sliced the ball past Brian Robinson for an own goal. But goal-hungry Franklin slammed a 55th minute penalty, given against County centre-half Terry Cooper, into the net to win the game.

Notts County Interested In Franklin

Notts County are showing an interest in Barry Franklin, the £1,500 centre-forward who is already a hit with the Manor Park fans. They were impressed with his two-goal display against them on Monday, and have already planned another look at him. In the two practice matches he has played at Manor Park, the 24-year-old striker has looked a bargain buy.

Nuneaton Borough v Worcester City 12-08-1972

Borough: Robinson, Harris, Bridgett, Goodfellow, Gill, Lewis, Shepherd, Baker, Franklin, Smith, Turpie. Sub: Pleat.

Worcester: Knight, Allen, Bassett, Lovett, McEwan, Watson, Jones, Inglis, Kelcher, Martin, Aggio. Sub: Lobban.

Borough welcomed Worcester City to Manor Park to play a Southern League Premier Division game.

Borough lifted the curtain on another Southern League season in a game full of soccer's instant drama. Gerry Baker scored a goal and limped off with a thigh injury. Bob Turpie, on loan from Peterborough last year, celebrated his return with a 77th minute goal. David Pleat, on for Baker, made his first league appearance for seven months.

And Borough launched their season with a win for the first time since 1966-67. Taking the score, it looks like a comfortable win for the home club, but the 2,943 shirt-sleeved crowd, the largest audience of the day in the Southern League, know that is not strictly true. There were times in the second half when star sprinkled Worcester looked as if they would get a draw.

They pushed players forward in a bid to cancel out Baker's 40th minute goal and had the Borough defence in all kinds of trouble. But they left themselves exposed at the back and Bob Turpie cashed in with a 77th minute goal. He collected a half clearance and squeezed a powerful left foot shot hard and low into the corner of the net. It was a precious goal because four minutes later Lionel Martin, who cost Worcester £2,500 from Aston Villa, made it 2-1 after Bobby Watson had crashed a free-kick against the crossbar.

Martin had earlier gone close and the game still hung in the balance as it moved into its closing minutes. Then, as the seconds ticked away, Roger Smith made a burst down the left hand side and his cross skimmed the face of the bar. The ball went to Trevor Shepherd, who squared it back for Franklin to gobble up the chance with an ice cool goal and put the game out of City's reach.



The goal that Borough fans had waited for – from £1,500 centre-forward Barry Franklin, who lashes the ball into the net from the edge of the six yard box with just two minutes to go. Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune

Nuneaton Borough v Wimbledon 14-08-1972

Borough: Robinson, Harris, Gill, Lewis, Bridgett, Goodfellow, Turpie, Smith, Shepherd, Franklin, Baker. **Sub:** Starkey.

Borough welcomed Wimbledon to Manor Park to play a Southern League Premier Division game.

Borough were denied a win by the brilliance of Wimbledon goalkeeper Dickie Guy. With seven minutes to go he flung himself across his goal to push out a shot by Ray Bridgett that looked a goal from the moment it left the full-back's boot. It was an incredible save – followed by a scramble as Gerry Baker and Roger Smith fought for the loose ball.

The Londoners' goalkeeper also pushed a shot from Bob Turpie over the top and did well to save from Barry Franklin, who produced a goalbound effort from nowhere in the first half. But they were the only goal efforts worth recording in a closely contested game that destroyed any illusions Borough's newcomers may have had about the fierceness of the competition in the Southern League.

Neither side gave anything away. They cancelled each other out in midfield where Wimbledon packed their ranks and pulled players back quicker than they could push them forward. Borough's defence, with John Gill and Dave Lewis in fine form, gave the Dons few glimpses of a goal chance.

It was a hard, bruising game, and Wimbledon player-manager Mike Everitt stood up from his trainer's pit just before half-time to signal a calm down message to his side. Nuneaton's best spells were early in the second half when they made an all out attempt for a goal and late in the game when they made a desperate bid to clinch a second win in a row.



Barry Franklin launches an airborne challenge on Wimbledon goalkeeper Dickie Guy, who stole the honours with a tremendous save in the closing minutes. Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune

Franklin again looked a bargain buy up front, despite the lack of goals. The fans who expected a bustling striker have discovered that he has skill in his own right.

Borough To Sell Notley

Borough may be able to recoup some of the money they paid for Barry Franklin if Barrie Notley joins Cork Celtic. The Manor Park club hold his registration and will ask for a small fee.

Dartford v Nuneaton Borough 19-08-1972

Dartford: Norton, Read, Stevens, Richardson, Burns, Judges, Bartlett, Light, Mitchell, Payne, Halliday. **Sub:** Brown.

Borough: Robinson, Howshall, Bridgett, Harris, Gill, Lewis, Shepherd, Baker, Franklin, Smith, Turpie. **Sub:** Starkey.

Borough travelled to the Watling Street home of Dartford to play a Southern League Premier Division match.

Borough tarnished their shining start to the season with a below par performance at Dartford. They struggled to make an impression on a solid, workmanlike, but unspectacular Kent side and slid to defeat. Too many players disappointed. They lacked the fire and zest they showed against Worcester and Wimbledon and never really got to grips with their game.

The goal that damaged their hopes came just six minutes from the break after they had faced Dartford down the Watling Street slope. Darts centre-forward John Mitchell climbed high to knock back a corner for Barry Richardson whose header went through a ruck of players and beat Gerry Howshall at the near post. Had they held out until the break they might have been able to travel back with a point.



Dartford goalkeeper John Morton wins an airborne battle with Barry Franklin during a second half Borough attack. Photo: Joe Gibson

But they went further behind in the 60th minute when a free-kick from Danny Light came off Len Harris and rebounded to Mitchell, who rifled it home. Tom Starkey, on as substitute for Roger Smith, then raised their hopes with a goal from his first kick. Goalkeeper John Morton got his hands to a piledriver from Trevor Shepherd and Starkey followed up to score.

A few minutes later Starkey grazed a post with a header, but they were the only times Nuneaton made a real impression on the Dartford defence. Barry Franklin, dwarfed by burly Les Burns, was held in a tight grip by the giant-sized defenders.

And apart from odd flashes of the understanding he has built up with Gerry Baker, Borough had little variation up front. Generally it was a poor performance from the majority of the team.

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Telford United v Nuneaton Borough 21-08-1972

Borough: Robinson, Howshall, Gill, Swift, Bridgett, Turpie, Lewis, Goodfellow, Shepherd, Franklin, Starkey. **Sub:** Smith.

Borough made the journey to the Buck's Head to face Telford United in a Southern League Cup first round first leg tie.

Borough withstood a second half attacking barrage that would have blitzed most sides and managed to escape with just a single goal deficit going into the second leg. Brian Robinson's bravery and one superb save from the goalkeeper when he cut out a lethal Joey Owen cross kept them in the competition. Shots were blocked as Telford threatened to tear Nuneaton apart and desperate defence turned the Borough goal area into a battleground.

Before the second half assault, Mickey Fudge had given the home side the lead in the 28th minute. Centre-forward Jack Bentley lost David Swift and nodded a through ball for Fudge to ram the ball past Robinson. Two minutes later Bentley headed against the crossbar, but for much of the match he was well handled by teenager Swift.

Borough then emerged shaken but unscathed from Telford's attacking blast – and snatched a shock goal out of the blue. Dave Lewis won the ball from Coton and lashed it goalwards. Bob Turpie was in like a flash at the far post to head it past Bobby Irvine for a 77th minute goal that could prove precious in the long run.

Six minutes later Telford regained the lead when Bentley rose majestically to head an Alan Harris corner towards the net and Fudge forced it home, despite a gallant bid by Turpie to keep it out.

Turpie's goal apart, Borough had only a handful of shots throughout the match and had little to offer up front. Barry Franklin needs support, a player with height and power to win the ball in the area and create the openings. He also needs better service, balls along the ground where he can use his speed and skill to turn defenders.

Nuneaton Borough v Evesham United 24-08-1972

Borough: Robinson, Tedds, Howshall, Lewis, Hubbard, Swift, Smith, Starkey, Franklin, Pleat, Baker. **Sub:** Harris.

Borough welcomed Evesham to Manor Park for a Birmingham Senior Cup first round tie.

Trevor Hubbard played his second match for Borough, six years after he broke his leg 13 minutes into his debut versus Bedford Town. A Gerry Baker match winner in the closing minutes highlighted a grim cup tie. Baker netted two minutes from time from the best move of the match to deny the well-organised Worcestershire amateurs a replay.

Trevor Hubbard and Gerry Howshall laid the foundations for the goal before Tom Starkey laid off a superb pass for Baker to crack home. But the Midland Combination amateurs gave

Nuneaton a scare. They took the lead in the 23rd minute and more than held their own. Their goal came from a quickly taken free-kick after Nuneaton player-manager had been pulled up for a foul.

The referee was still talking to him when Barrie Mole dropped the ball at the far post and centre-forward Joe Bridgewater was allowed to score a simple goal. Borough had to wait until the 63rd minute for their equaliser – a 40 minute gap which made the fans more and more impatient. Barry Franklin scored it with a header from a Baker cross which deflected into the net off Evesham centre-half Clive Langstone.

Just before half-time Franklin had hit the crossbar with a header from another Baker centre, but only after they had equalised did Nuneaton apply any sort of pressure. Trevor Hubbard turned in a steady display at centre-half alongside hard working Dave Lewis and Bedworth youngster Bob Tedds had a promising game at right-back. But Borough struggled for much of the game and it was left to Baker to spare their blushes and give them a place in the second round.

Nuneaton Borough v Cambridge City 26-08-1972

Borough: Robinson, Howshall, Bridgett, Lewis, Gill, Swift, Smith, Baker, Franklin, Goodfellow, Turpie. **Sub:** Shepherd.

Cambridge: Peacock, Way, Keenan, Slack, James, McNeil, Jones, Hunter, Bailham, Marshall, Comny. **Sub:** Murray.

Borough welcomed Cambridge City to Manor Park for a Southern League Premier Division game.

Cliff Jones, the Tottenham legend, destroyed Borough with two goals out of the past. He cancelled out a Barry Franklin goal with six minutes to go. And he notched the winner seconds later with a spectacular flying header – the sort of goal that once set White Hart Lane alight.

The goals were no more than Cambridge deserved. They outfought, outran and outplayed a sad Nuneaton side for long periods. Borough went in front through Franklin after just 13 minutes and then clung desperately to their lead. For more than an hour they were run ragged by slick City who conquered midfield and held all of the aces.

Nuneaton had little to offer apart from hard work up front by Franklin and a non-stop display by Dave Lewis which failed to inspire his side.

Only stubborn and at times desperate defensive play kept the game alive for them so long – before Jones gave Cambridge their richly deserved win.

Nuneaton Borough v Telford United 28-08-1972

Borough: Robinson, Harris, Swift, Lewis, Howshall, Goodfellow (Starkey), Turpie, Smith, Shepherd, Franklin, Baker.

Borough welcomed Telford United to Manor Park to play a Southern League Cup first round second leg tie.

Trailing by one goal from the first leg, they gave their patient

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fans just 15 fleeting minutes of hope. They carried the game to Telford in a bid to wipe out the deficit and Barry Franklin was just inches away from a 13th minute goal. But then Jack Bentley shot the Shropshire outfit ahead from their first attack in the 22nd minute – and the Manor Park side fell apart.

Borough were made to look second raters as Telford, superior in every department went on to cruise into the second round. Borough went from bad to worse and were a sad, sorry and well beaten side at the end. Paul Coton flicked the ball over Brian Robinson's head for Telford's second goal on the half-hour to stretch the aggregate score to 1-4. And, two minutes into the second half, teenage defender David Swift presented the visitors with a gift goal. His back pass fell short, and Bentley seized on it with a shot that was just going wide, but Joey Owen ran in at the far post to slide it into an empty net.

Borough's struggles became embarrassing as Telford, slicker and better organised, emphasised their superiority. And they presented player-manager David Pleat with another cartload of problems with the season less than three weeks' old.

Pleat: We Will Fight

David Pleat, his early season hopes damaged by three defeats in four games, last night declared: "We shall fight our way back." He is determined to stand alone in his bid to restore the side's confidence: "While I am in charge," he said. "I shall not be affected by interference from anyone.

"We are in a bad patch, but we will keep going. We are sick at the way things have gone and the players feel it more than anyone, but we shall pull through."

Successive defeats against Cambridge City in the league and Telford United in the Southern League Cup dealt hammer blows to the team's early season promise. And on Saturday they face their stiffest task so far – against Kidderminster Harriers at Manor Park in the preliminary round of the FA Cup. This game will now become critical. It will affect the rest of the season. Victory would help to wipe out some of the pre-match depression that has settled over the club.

But defeat would present the players with the tremendous job of winning back the confidence of the fans, who already show signs of disillusionment. Monday night's defeat against Telford played a big part when the Shropshire side walloped Nuneaton 3-0 to move into the second round of the Southern League Cup with a 5-1 aggregate scoreline.

Pleat described the 3-0 reverse as a "cruel" result. "We lacked penetration and made a couple of errors in defence, but, in my opinion, it was an improved performance," he said.

Yet Nuneaton will continue to struggle unless they find more support up front for centre-forward Barry Franklin – more height, weight and power to take the load off the striker. And they cannot afford to be careless in defence against Kidderminster, who come to Manor Park for Saturday's Cup tie as leaders of the Southern League first division north.

Wimbledon v Nuneaton Borough

05-09-1972

Borough: Robinson, Swift, Gill, Lewis, Bridgett, Harris, Turpie, Smith, Shepherd, Franklin, Baker (Starkey).

Borough made the journey to Plough Lane to take on Wimbledon in a Southern League Premier Division match.

Borough shook off a penalty and a power failure to earn a richly deserved point. They staged one of their best away performances for months, despite a gruelling cup tie only 24 hours earlier. And the club, on its knees two days ago, is heading back into better times after two displays packed with courage and all-out effort.

The penalty followed moments of confusion in the Borough goalmouth before Farnborough referee Mr Dennis Norman emerged to consult a linesman and pointed to the spot. Barry Silkman converted the kick, given according to Mr Norman afterwards, for "handling against a defender."

That was in the 24th minute, but Nuneaton were back on level terms on the stroke of half-time when Barry Franklin added the finishing touch to a shot from Len Harris. Franklin deserved the goal with his best performance for the club, full of bravery, skill and determination.

Only seconds before Bob Turpie, who starred in midfield, shook his head in disbelief when Dons' goalkeeper, Dickie Guy, somehow managed to scoop his close range header off the line for a brilliant save. Borough's courage and effort had shaken the Londoners in the first-half and they never looked like losing their grip after the break. Play deteriorated and two players were booked, Wimbledon centre-forward Andy Larkin and Borough full-back Ray Bridgett.

Then, after 73 minutes, with Nuneaton in a comfortable position, the ground was plunged in darkness by a floodlights failure. Power was restored after a five minute interval and the remaining stages went ahead without further incident.

Both sides went close in the time added for the floodlights failure, but the scoreline stayed the same and Nuneaton travelled home triumphant with a point and a moral victory.

Nuneaton Borough v Weymouth

09-09-1972

Borough: Robinson, Howshall, Bridgett, Harris, Gill, Smith, Baker, Shepherd, Franklin, Lewis, Turpie. **Sub:** Starkey.

Weymouth: Clarke, Rounsevell, C. Williams, Barry, Hobson, Miller, Adams, R. Williams, Pound, Brown, Beer. **Sub:** Courteney.

Borough welcomed Weymouth to Manor Park to play a Southern League Premier Division match.

Borough battled grimly to force a point, but almost snatched two. The Manor Park side must pack more imagination into their attacking play. And they are desperately short of a target man to spearhead the attack with Barry Franklin. "It's always hard when you have to crack a packed defence, but we have got to work at getting round the back," said Pleat.

Match after match Borough's front men are dwarfed and nine out of 10 high balls knocked into the middle are gifts to the opposition. Franklin never stopped running, although he was given little scope in his unenviable role. But in the second half he showed signs that he is learning fast. He deserved the 60th minute equaliser he slammed in from the penalty spot after Terras' defender Ralph Miller had handled under pressure.

And 10 minutes later it was a superbly measured pass from the ex-Atherstone man which provided Trevor Shepherd with the chance to cover himself with glory. But after running clear Shepherd delayed his shot too long and goalkeeper John Clarke smothered the ball.

Weymouth came to Nuneaton as league leaders and took just 70 seconds to go ahead. A lucky bounce allowed Rod Adams to slip round Dave Lewis wide on the left. The winger left John Gill sprawling and hit a low cross which gave Bob Brown a simple task to finish off.

For half-an-hour confident Weymouth looked a polished side and Borough's defence had the jitters. Lewis was not at his best, Gill committed himself too easily and Brian Robinson had to make a saving dive to cover uncertainty by Gill and Ray Bridgett. But full credit to the home side for the way they pegged away with the same determination that paid dividends at Kidderminster and Wimbledon.



The goal that wasn't. Trevor Shepherd (right) celebrates as Roger Smith's low drive is diverted into the net off a defender. But the cheers soon died when Shepherd was given offside.

Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune

Weymouth were slowly pushed back and after the penalty had to hang on. The 1,853 crowd suddenly gave the encouragement they needed. Bob Turpie, after a quiet first half, buzzed effectively from midfield and no-one put in more effort than Len Harris, who has silenced many of his critics this season with sheer guts and drive.

Notley Rejoins Borough

Centre-forward Barrie Notley, who left Borough at the end of last season, has re-signed for the Manor Park club. The 20-year-old striker scored 24 goals in his first season, but left to return to Ireland.

"The Irish clubs couldn't agree on the fee we wanted," said David Pleat. "And I have signed him on contract until the end of the season."

Notley Saga Continues

The Barrie Notley saga took another twist yesterday with the shock news that he will not be rejoining Nuneaton Borough. Manager David Pleat revealed that the move was off – just seven days after it was reported that Notley had re-signed for the club.

"We have gone out of our way to help Barrie, but he hasn't given the club a fair chance," said Pleat. "He failed to settle into the job we found him and is again unhappy at being away from Ireland." Notley's intended move to an Irish club was called off after drawn out negotiations when no agreement could be reached on the fee Nuneaton wanted.

Borough agreed in principal to re-sign the blond striker, but it is believed he quit his new job after only one day.

Barnet v Nuneaton Borough

19-09-1972

Borough: Robinson, Howshall, Bridgett, Harris, Gill, Smith, Starkey, Baker (Jones), Franklin, Lewis, Turpie.

Borough made the journey to Underhill to play Barnet in a Southern League Premier Division game.

Borough got the Southern League premier division point they were looking for with a 60th minute Gerry Baker equaliser from a Roger Smith corner. But if Barnet had accepted one or two more obvious chances apart from the one Alan Davies scored after 28 minutes, Borough would have been hard pressed to force a draw. At the same time Nuneaton can say with justification that the goal they conceded was the result of a horrible piece of luck. Maybe a draw was about right.

Certainly, Nuneaton's sheer persistence was more than their opponents could properly cope with. At the back Gill and Bridgett kept a tight rein on Embery and Powell respectively, though Powell missed two golden opportunities, one as early as the third minute and another soon after the interval when goalkeeper Robinson came off his line to block the shot.

Barnet went ahead when Howshall's clearance rebounded unluckily off Gill into the path of Davies, but Franklin might have got a quick equaliser when Baker put him through. In attack Starkey was lively enough to keep Barnet on their toes but the equaliser came unexpectedly from a corner precisely on the hour when Baker, by the near post, glided it in, although goalkeeper Cuffey got his fingers to the ball.

Barnet immediately replaced the injured Eason with Ward and with 13 minutes to go Nuneaton brought on their substitute, when a limping Gerry Baker was replaced by Alan Jones. Baker had already done his job and in the minutes that remained his colleagues saw to it that Barnet did not sneak in front a second time.

Former Manager Cold Shouldered

Dudley Kernick has not been invited to Manor Park for tonight's Alan Jones-Roger Smith testimonial match. And the testimonial fund committee revealed that no invitation was

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sent because of instructions received from the club's board of directors. "I was given instructions that Dudley Kernick could not be invited into the social club or the vice-presidents' bar," said committee secretary Jim Hilston.

"An oversight of not inviting Mr Kernick would not have occurred without a positive directive from a responsible member of the board."

Mr Alf Scattergood, chairman of the board, denied that any such directive was given.

Nuneaton Borough v Borough 1967 20-09-1972

Borough: Robinson (Haynes), Stephens, Bridgett (Harris), Shepherd, Gill, Lewis, Pleat, Smith, Franklin, Starkey, Turpie.

Borough 1967: Crump, Jones, Wilson (Kavanagh), Davis, Watts (Curtis), Allen, Ashe, Richards, Crawley, Jacques, Hails.

Borough welcomed Borough 1967, to Manor Park to play Roger Smith and Alan Jones' testimonial match.

The clocks were turned back in a night of nostalgia. Players who put Nuneaton on the football map with FA Cup glory – and formed one of the finest Borough sides ever – returned in honour of the club's long-serving twosome. Only Roger Thompson and Paul Cutler were missing from the old brigade who received a tremendous ovation.

And once the game was underway it seemed like only yesterday that the same players with the same characteristics were delighting the fans. Tommy Crawley, linking up again with his former spearhead partner Tony Richards, earned the biggest cheer of the night with a typical header from a Malcolm Allen cross to equalise for the stalwarts.

Barry Franklin had given Borough the lead after 22 minutes and it was not until the 68th minute that they went ahead again with a Bob Starkey header. Franklin added a third 10 minutes later before another Manor Park favourite, Tony Jacques, struck seconds later with a tremendous volley to pull a goal back.

Fred Crump gave a fine performance in goal, "iron man" Colin Davis looked as solid as ever alongside veteran Johnny Watts and tiny Norman Ashe was still the darling of the crowd. Alan Jones, the only surviving member of the 1966-67 side, played with his former colleagues – against Roger Smith.

Nuneaton Borough v Fokestone 23-09-1972

Borough: Robinson, Howshall, Gill, Lewis, Bridgett, Harris, Turpie, Goodfellow, Franklin, Starkey, Baker. **Sub:** Jones.

Folkestone: Bowlie, Bentley, Shovelar, Weston, Pearce, Grey, Chambers, Sharp, Diggins, East, Bibby. **Sub:** King.

Borough welcomed Folkestone to Manor Park for a Southern League Premier Division game.

Barry Franklin, the man with a price tag to justify, pounced twice in the second half to kill off Folkestone and extend Nuneaton's unbeaten run to seven games.

Franklin's first goal, in the 65th minute, was an example of his ability in the box. He fooled the visitors' defence in a packed area as he took a pass from Gerry Baker, and swivelled smartly to rifle a left-foot shot past Keith Bowlie. He struck again seven minutes later. Tom Starkey headed down Ray Bridgett's free-kick and Franklin hooked it in when there seemed no more than a half chance.

Before the end he nearly became the first Nuneaton player to hit a Southern League hat-trick for three years, with a 25 yarder which had Bowlie at full stretch. After shaky starts in the previous two games, Borough badly wanted an early goal – and Gerry Baker got it in the seventh minute. Gerry Howshall, Starkey and Jimmy Goodfellow set up the goal with a raid on the right. From the resulting cross Baker outsmarted the visitors' defence to place a header over Bowlie which left the keeper stranded off his line.

There was never any threat of Borough being upset by a poor Folkestone outfit, destined for a season of struggles. Folkestone lacked the punch in attack to worry John Gill and Dave Lewis. Left-back Ray Bridgett gave another solid performance, always keen to move forward in support. But on the other flank Howshall was not at his best. His distribution lost its usual accuracy and manager Pleat replaced him with Alan Jones 18 minutes from time. It was Jones' first appearance since his suspension.

The man who stole most of the attention in the first-half was Cambridge referee David Hutchinson. He booked four players in 20 minutes. Bridgett and Turpie were penalised for tackles from behind. Folkestone's Barry Diggins was cautioned for dissent and David Bibby's name was added to the list for a barge on Howshall.

Nuneaton Borough v Atherstone Town 26-09-1972

Borough: Robinson, Jones, Swift, Gill, Smith, Harris, Turpie, Shepherd (Goodfellow), Franklin, Starkey, Baker.

Atherstone: Withers, Oxford, Quinney, Preston, Russell, Mackay, Kavanagh, Flannagan, Harper, Masefield (Hambridge), Mellor.

Borough welcomed Atherstone Town to Manor Park to play a Midland Floodlit Cup game.

Atherstone squeezed two goals into a five minute spell to chalk up a convincing prestige win over below par Borough. They dented Nuneaton's pride with a display which showed why they are chasing promotion from the Southern League first division (north).

Bobby Mackay stunned Borough with a 23rd minute hammer blow from a 30-yard free-kick. While the Nuneaton defence watched Gerry Oxford, Mackay suddenly cracked the ball over their five man wall. It thudded against the underside of the crossbar and cannoned down over the line. Five minutes later they struck again. John Flannagan beat Len Harris to a throw-in, raced to the line and pulled the ball back for Bobby Mellor to score. Mellor shot first time and a huge gap appeared in the heart of the Nuneaton defence as the ball sailed into the net.



Flanagan, playing wide on the left of the middle three, was the star. He supplied all of the skill in a game that did not materialise into the fiercely fought local derby everyone expected, although there were three bookings. Smith, Harris and Mackay were cautioned, but they were isolated incidents.

After the break, Adders fell back to defend their two-goal lead as Nuneaton tried to force their way back into the game. But the Manor Park side did not create one single clear cut chance against Mick Preston and his massed band of defenders. Consequently the game deteriorated. Preston, declared fit just before kick-off time, was magnificent at the heart of the Adders' back four and Barry Franklin was blotted out by his former team-mates.

No-one can deny the Sheepy Road side the glory. They were the better all round side and the 3-0 scoreline fully reflected the amount of effort and skill they put into their game.

Yeovil Town v Nuneaton Borough 30-09-1972

Yeovil: Clark, Irwin, Smith, Bertram, Cotton, Myers, Housley, Weller, Brown, Thompson, Clancy. **Sub:** Herritty.

Borough: Robinson, Harris, Swift, Lewis, Gill, Jones, Smith, Shepherd, Franklin, Starkey, Turpie. **Sub:** Goodfellow.

Borough travelled to The Huish to take on Yeovil Town in a Southern League Premier Division game.

Brave Borough carved a magnificent point out of a rock hard performance. They refused to accept the odds stacked against them, chiselled away at the Somerset side's confidence, and built a monument to their own character and courage. It was a point that will stand out when the final league tables are drawn up next May.

No side has taken a point at The Huish this season. Only one side has scored there against Yeovil, unbeaten since the first match of the season. And no team has gone there with such a slim chance. Hit by injuries and against the best footballing side in the Southern League, they were set for defeat. But they stubbornly refused to hang their heads and no-one summed up the spirit of the side more than skipper Dave Lewis, Borough's captain courageous.

Clearly not fit from his ankle injury, he drove his side from midfield with the one hundred per cent brand of determination that always stamps his play. Yet he could have snatched a dramatic win from their best efforts at goal, two headers and a first time shot which went wide with goalkeeper Tony Clark struggling to get back to his line.

Roger Smith, given only a 50-50 chance of playing the night before, was another who deserves a special mention. But the star of the side was goalkeeper Brian Robinson, who turned in a superb, near faultless display. Robinson showed the kind of form that won the acclaim of the Yeovil crowd and broke the hearts of their team.

He was an inspiration as Nuneaton's last line of defence and a constant source of frustration to the Somerset side, who

threw everything at Borough in the first 20 minutes. Borough survived that period vital to all away sides, and the longer the game went on the more obvious it became that they would not break through, despite some good openings.

It would have been easy for Borough to throw in the towel. They had a ready made excuse with their injury problems, The Huish slope and the long journey. Instead they staged a grandstand finish which rocked the home side in the last ten minutes and were still battling away at the end. Courage and pride are rare commodities in soccer today, but Borough had plenty of both.

Borough Put In Seven Days For Mellor

Nuneaton Borough have given Atherstone Town seven days notice of approach for their amateur centre-forward Bobby Mellor. But the move has caused a storm of controversy at Sheepy Road, where Adders' chairman, Reg Read, has accused Nuneaton of destroying their "good neighbour" relations. He said: "This would appear to be a further extension of the kind of action which ought not to occur between near neighbours who should be open in their dealings towards one another."

Borough player manager David Pleat said: "We have done nothing wrong and have conducted the approach perfectly fairly. We cannot approach the player until the seventh day and in the meantime Atherstone can offer him professional terms if they want."

Borough Sign Utility Forward

Nuneaton Borough have signed utility forward Alan Mansley from Notts County on a months' loan. "We have nothing to lose," explained player-manager David Pleat, "and if he does well we could be in a position to release a couple of players."

A short, stocky 24-year-old, Mansley can operate as a front runner or in midfield, the position he occupied with County.

Nuneaton Borough v Cheltenham Town 07-10-1972

Borough: Haynes, Stephens, Jones, Gill, Bridgett, Howshall, Lewis, Pleat, Hubbard, Franklin, Mansley.

Borough welcomed Cheltenham Town to Manor Park for a Midland Floodlit Cup game.

Borough rebuilt their hopes of a place in the Floodlit Cup semi-finals with a comfortable win over Cheltenham. But they left it late with two goals in the last seven minutes after the Robins had hit back from a penalty. The weather, the first-half was played in a downpour, dampened Borough's aims of all out attack and the game was scrappy for long spells.

And new signing Alan Mansley had few chances to shine. But what he did, he did well in his first game for the Manor Park club. He supplied the cross for Barry Franklin to head Borough's first goal five minutes before half-time, the centre-forward's ninth of the season.



Both sides kept the game open in the second half, but the fans had to wait until the 73rd minute for the next goal – Cheltenham’s penalty leveller. It was a harsh decision against Alan Jones for a tackle on Robins’ forward Bill Bailey. And full-back Roger Thorndale netted from the spot – while Nuneaton keeper Paul Haynes was half blind. The keeper protested he had something in his eye, but the referee ignored his pleas.

That goal sparked the game into life. Ten minutes later Dave Lewis restored Borough’s lead with a chance laid on by David Pleat. And Trevor Hubbard hit the third three minutes from time when he rammed in the rebound after Franklin had hit the woodwork with a header.

Stephens Called Up

Experience Gerry Baker and youngster Kirk Stephens have been added to the Nuneaton Borough squad for tomorrow’s trip to Poole Town.

Baker has recovered from the injury which kept him out for almost three weeks and teenager Stephens makes the trip, four days after signing professional forms for Borough.

Poole Town v Nuneaton Borough 14-10-1972

Poole Town: Buck, Eyden, Singleton, Bazeley, Pegram, Priscott, Puttnam, Burns, Callaway, Hill, Ames. **Sub:** Griffiths.

Borough: Robinson, Harris, Bridgett, Smith, Gill, Jones, Baker, Starkey, Franklin, Lewis, Turpie. **Sub:** Goodfellow.

Borough made the journey to play Poole Town in a Southern League Premier Division fixture.

For 45 minutes everything went right for Borough. They went at the Dorset side, opened up the game, and raced into a 2-0 lead with goals from Gerry Baker and Barry Franklin. Then they conceded a penalty in first-half injury time, against big John Gill for pushing. And everything went wrong.

It gave Poole, who looked condemned to defeat, a reprieve, destroyed Borough’s confidence, and changed the face of the game. Ex-Weymouth winger Ray Ames hammered in the spot-kick which opened the door to an astonishing turnabout.

Borough’s hopes dimmed even more four minutes after the break when Derek Burns cracked in the home side’s leveller with a first-time shot following a corner. Fourteen minutes after that Poole were in front when John Hill was given yards of space to turn and hit a rising shot from 25 yards into the net. And in the 72nd minute the Dorset side’s new £750 centre-forward Colin Callaway, making his home debut after being signed from Western Leaguers Welton Rovers, rounded off the revival with a spectacular effort.

He picked up a long clearance 40 yards from goal, shrugged off Alan Jones, beat Ray Bridgett, dragged the ball across Brian Robinson as he came out, and steered it into the net. That was the end of the goalscoring, but more drama followed three minutes later when Poole missed their second penalty of the game.

Ames hammered it against the base of an upright after Turpie had brought down Callaway. Still Borough could have saved the game. Franklin had a shot pushed on to the crossbar by the goalkeeper and both Tom Starkey and Jimmy Goodfellow missed the rebound. Then Starkey almost caught the goalkeeper napping with an overhead kick six minutes from the end.

But Nuneaton had been dragged down by the first half penalty and destroyed by Poole’s remarkable second-half blast. Had the Manor Park side gone in at half-time with their two goal lead intact it would have been a different story. They were never outplayed and it wasn’t a case of the defence crumbling under pressure.

Poole were put back into the game by the penalty and the next two shots they hit went in – it was as simple as that. But it was a sickening defeat for David Pleat’s side who could have done their league table spot a power of good against a team destined to be among the strugglers again.

Chelmsford City v Nuneaton Borough 16-10-1972

Borough: Robinson, Stephens, Jones, Gill, Bridgett, Harris, Turpie, Goodfellow, Starkey, Franklin, Baker. **Sub:** Shepherd.

Borough made the journey to New Writtle Street to play Chelmsford City in a Southern League Premier Division game.

Borough cramped Chelmsford’s championship style, only to lose out to a cruel goal. The game was 27 minutes old when goalkeeper Brian Robinson threw the ball straight out to City’s Eddie Dilsworth. Dilsworth shot as Ray Bridgett moved in to repair the damage and the ball deflected off the full-back and looped into the net.

Those few tragic seconds robbed Nuneaton of what would have been a magnificent point against the title holders and league leaders. For the rest of the game they curbed City’s fluent and inventive soccer, re-discovered the defensive determination they lost at Poole and staged a fighting finish in a bid to save the game. And although they seldom looked like scoring their performance was packed with the brand of courage that should have earned them a share in the spoils.

Robinson was busy, but efficient behind his back four where Alan Jones and John Gill were tremendous. And no-one did more than youngster Kirk Stephens, pitched in at right back against the side all defences fear. The 17-year-old’s coolness, he plays with astonishing poise for his tender years and experience, again stamped him as an outstanding prospect.

But it was all round team effort, despite deficiencies up front, that ran the champions closer than any team has done this season. Chelmsford had the flair which lifted the title last term and has carried them along a 15 match unbeaten run. Yet Nuneaton matched them for long periods, held them at the back, denied them control in midfield and earned the praise of the 3,000 crowd.

Borough’s first effort was as early as the eleventh minute when



Franklin set up a shooting chance for Tom Starkey, whose shot was pushed over the top by goalkeeper Taylor. In the 77th minute the goalkeeper had to go down quickly to smother a Franklin shot which followed a Stephens cross. And, six minutes from time, Franklin hammered a free kick through the Chelmsford defence from the edge of the box, only to see Taylor fling himself full length to push the ball out for a corner.

But Dilsworth's deflected goal still separated the teams at the end for a result which would have taken on a different meaning had Borough held on to their lead at Poole.

Bedworth United v Nuneaton Borough 17-10-1972

Bedworth: Clamp, Busby, Parker, Knox, Whitehead, Anderson, Healey, Hall, Mason, Warrington, Karcinski. **Sub:** Kavanagh.

Borough: Haynes, Stephens, Turpie, Hubbard, Swift, Jones, Goodfellow, Shepherd, Franklin, Starkey, Mansley. **Sub:** Bridgett.

Borough travelled to The Oval to take on Bedworth United in a Midland Floodlit Cup game.

Two errors by pint-sized United goalkeeper Martin Clamp presented Nuneaton with 13 Midland Floodlit Cup points. The one-time Coventry City starlet boobed in the 5th and 10th minutes to hand Borough a two-goal lead and make the derby a no-contest before it had hardly begun. But, like waking from a nightmare, Clamp redeemed himself by pulling off three great saves – including one from a penalty – before Barry Franklin scored again in the 85th minute.

Yet, Bedworth still argue that a strange decision by the referee denied them the boost of an early goal. It happened in the third minute when the referee awarded a goal-kick after United striker John Mason had cleverly shot home what appeared to be a direct free-kick. The free-kick was clearly awarded against Borough's second choice goalkeeper Paul Haynes for handling outside his area.

But, on the evidence of Mason's goal being disallowed, it seems that the match official gave an indirect free-kick. Relieved, Borough made full use of the let-off and, aided by the unfortunate Clamp, they had the game sewn up after 10 minutes. Clamp's first mistake came when he allowed a 40-yard cross from Trevor Shepherd to sail over his head to the waiting Barry Franklin who merely followed the ball home.

And then, the goalkeeper conceded soft goal number two in helping a harmless looking Tom Starkey drive into the net. Bedworth gallantly fought back for a time and Mason and Warrington both should have scored after Alan Mansley had missed a sitter for Borough.

In the second half though, Borough showed no effects from their hectic match programme and they finished the fresher side. Franklin ought to have increased their lead in the 69th minute from the penalty spot, after Shepherd had been hacked down. But the striker's shot did not carry enough power and Clamp pushed the ball on to the crossbar before saving the rebound.

Pleat Again Troubled By Injury

David Pleat is again being affected by the back trouble which put him in hospital earlier in the year. It leaves a question mark of the Borough player-manager's playing career. He has had a nagging pain in his back for some weeks, but it has worsened in the past few days and he admits that he is struggling.

Pleat has played only four times for the Manor Park side this season. His last appearance was against Cheltenham. "I had no trouble at all and began to enjoy the game in the last ten minutes and I felt all right the next morning," he said. "But two days later it started up again."

Stephens League Material

David Pleat rates full-back discovery Kirk Stephens as future league material, after his impressive debut at Chelmsford. The 17-year-old defender took over the number two role against the Southern League champions as if he had been playing there for years.

"We now know what he can do," said Pleat. "And he did it against the best team in the league."

Ken Peal New Vice-Chairman

Ken Peal, director in charge of finance at Manor Park, has been appointed vice-chairman of Nuneaton Borough Football Club. The appointment, announced today, fills a post that has been vacant for nearly two years – since Alf Scattergood took over as head of the board.

Mr Peal, director of a Kenilworth hotel and a former bank manager, has been company secretary and treasurer at Manor Park since shortly after he joined the club.

Nuneaton Borough v Bedworth United 23-10-1972

Borough: Haynes, Stephens, Gill, Jones, Bridgett, Lewis, Goodfellow, Starkey, Shepherd, Franklin, Baker. **Sub:** Harris.

Bedworth: Burton, Kavanagh, Anderson, Swift, Dixon, Healey, Hall, Deakin, Bunt, Eades, Karacinski. **Sub:** Whitehead.

Borough welcomed Bedworth United to Manor Park to play a Midland Floodlit Cup tie.

Borough staged a four goal first-half spectacular and then went off the boil. They tore Bedworth apart with an attacking blitz and some devastating play. In one four minute spell they hit two goals, missed a clear cut chance and had two shots superbly saved by teenage goalkeeper Colin Burton. Bedworth reeled like a punch drunk heavyweight waiting for the final knockout blow.

But in the second half Nuneaton allowed their struggling neighbours to get back off the floor and the goal flow was stemmed. Borough left their killer instinct in the dressing room at half-time and United forged a respectable scoreline out of a near humiliation.

Nuneaton's attacking barrage was sparked off by a Tom



Starkey goal after just six minutes, an unchallenged header from a Goodfellow corner. That was the signal for the Manor Park side to turn it on. And United were soon in desperate trouble. Gerry Baker buzzed down the left wing with Ray Bridgett in support to give Bedworth's young full-back Alistair Kavanagh a nightmare time and Jimmy Goodfellow unearthed his smooth, creative skills in midfield.

Trevor Shepherd stabbed in the second goal after 19 minutes and four minutes later grabbed the third before Barry Franklin set up and scored the fourth almost on half-time. Baker hit the bar early in the second half, but Nuneaton's attacks faded after the first-half bonanza.

Bedworth marshalled their forces and Karacinski should have scored when he shot over after being chased for 40 yards by Franklin, who had made him a gift of the ball. But there was never any chance of United attacking Borough's lead. They had nothing up front, despite some hard running by youngster Nigel Bunt.

David Swift, on loan to Bedworth from Borough, scored with a header nine minutes from the end to give them their first point in the competition. Borough's win took them to the top of their section in the Floodlit Cup, above Atherstone, who have a game in hand, and boosted their bid for a place in the semi-finals.

Dover v Nuneaton Borough 28-10-1972

Borough: Robinson, Stephens, Jones, Gill, Turpie, Lewis, Harris, Goodfellow, Starkey, Franklin, Baker. Sub: Shepherd.

Borough made the journey to The Crabble to take on Dover in a Southern League Premier Division match.

Borough were pushed to the brink of the bottom four by a sloppy goal. And they now have a lot to do to pull themselves up the table, despite their games in hand. They lost to a 39th minute goal which was a combination of bad marking and bad luck. Goalkeeper Brian Robinson punched a free-kick out to the edge of the box where midfield man Keith Robinson – unmarked – hit it first time. It clipped Len Harris and dropped sharply into the far corner of the net.

From that moment their fate was sealed. Yet for long periods they were much the better side, particularly in the first-half. They were never frightened to attack, always willing to take the game to the Kent side. But their attacking style only served to underline their number one problem, one that has been with them all season. They badly need a target man up front, a big, strong forward to add height and power to the forward line.

At present Barry Franklin has to conduct a lonely battle down the middle. But for how long can he be expected to fight, forage and finish? Dover, a workmanlike side, had ex-Chelmsford forward Tony Moy as their target. Whenever they were in trouble they could always hit long balls out of defence. Borough had to work their way out of their own box

with five and six man moves. Otherwise, the ball would soon be back in the danger zone. It was cruel to see a side provide most of the skill and much of the flowing football and finish up empty handed.

Jimmy Goodfellow raised a flutter of hope six minutes from time with a header into the side netting from a long Kirk Stephens free-kick. But it was more of a last ditch gesture of defiance than the result of long, hard pressure on the Dover defence, although had it gone in it would have been just reward for Borough's enterprise.

Kettering Town v Nuneaton Borough 06-11-1972

Borough: Robinson, Stephens, Gill, Jones, Bridgett, Lewis, Harris, Smith, Shepherd, Franklin, Starkey. Sub: Goodfellow.

Borough made the journey to Rockingham Road to take on Kettering Town in a Southern League Premier Division game.

Defiant Borough won a magnificent point last night, which lifted them out of the bottom four – and denied the Poppies a top of the table spot. The Manor Park side emerged with a draw from a fast and furious game – and with hope for their vital cup ties at Margate and Telford.

They took everything the Northamptonshire side threw at them early on, soaked up the pressure and finally broke Kettering's heart. Again it was their rock hard defence which carried them through. And again goalkeeper Brian Robinson and middle of the back four defenders Alan Jones and John Gill stole the honours.

The Poppies had new signing Roy Clayton, £7,000 worth of centre forward from Oxford United making his debut. They were one win away from the top of the table and in front of their biggest crowd of the season. But Nuneaton refused to take a back seat. In stead they stole the show with all out effort when the chips were down. Once Borough had weathered the first 20 minutes, when the Poppies pushed players forward in search of a goal, they gradually wore down the home side's attacks.

Alan Pawley, the winger Kettering rate in the £10,000 class threatened damage early on when he ran the ball at the Borough defence. Yet Nuneaton kept their heads and the bevy of managers in the stands, which included Noel Cantwell from Peterborough, saw Kettering become more and more frustrated as the game wore on.

Borough's early anxiety grew into the belief that they could not be beaten. They took Kettering's best attacks and gobbled up the danger. There are still many things wrong with the Manor Park side. Again they seldom looked like getting a goal apart from a couple of scrambles.

Borough are still a much better side under pressure than they are going forward and with players like Len Harris and Dave Lewis always willing to drop back to help them form a formidable defensive barrier, they are a match for many sides defensively speaking.



Alan Pawley could have won the match eight minutes from the end when he blasted wide after a right wing attack created space in the Borough box, but it would have been rough justice if he had scored.

If Borough want to move up the table they must find the attacking flair to match their defensive displays. Such tactics are great away from home, but goals are the only thing that will bring the crowds back to Manor Park.

Nuneaton Boro' v Sutton Coldfield Town 13-11-1972

Borough: Robinson, Smith, Jones, Gill, Howshall, Lewis, Harris, Starkey, Shepherd, Baker, Turpie. **Sub:** Franklin.

Borough welcomed Sutton Coldfield Town to Manor Park to play a Birmingham Senior Cup second round tie.

Borough were made to fight by the Midland Combination amateurs, who pulled back a goal in the 73rd minute and gave the Manor Park side some anxious moments in the last 15 minutes. Borough should have been in front in the first-half hour, yet they had to wait until the stroke of half-time for the breakthrough.

It was a goal worth waiting for. Len Harris won the ball and played it forward to Trevor Shepherd who slipped past Sutton midfield man Dave Clements. Shepherd dashed forward and pushed a pass inside to Gerry Baker, who rifled the ball into the net. Harris, in great form in midfield, also had a hand in the second goal – 13 minutes into the second half. He found Tom Starkey on the edge of the box and the youngster's shot was pushed out by goalkeeper Alan Dulleston – but only as far as Baker, who cracked it back into the net.

Borough's lead should have been wider. Dave Lewis hit one tremendous volley onto the crossbar and they kept Dulleston busy. Yet Sutton defended well and their 73rd minute goal changed the face of a fast, entertaining game between two sides who were always eager to attack. Brian Robinson could not hold a power drive from Clements and Eddie Hewitt followed up to score.

Sutton then launched a bid to save the tie. And showed why the Midland Combination is such a tremendous source of talent. Clements and Brian Denning starred in midfield and Alan Hawkins, at number seven, was always a menace. They had Nuneaton rattled in the closing minutes, but the defence, with Gill and Jones once again in dominant form, held out.

Telford FA Cup Game Brings Back Memories

Borough's FA Cup tie at Telford has brought back memories for one man who is still a goalscoring legend at Manor Park. Ken Plant holds the Borough record with 126 goals and was one of the outstanding players the town has produced.

He played for Bury and Colchester in the Football League, had two spells with Borough and hung up his boots eight years ago after three seasons at Belper. But this week his mind went back to a grey, windy November day in 1949 when

Nuneaton played Wellington (now Telford) at the Buck's Head in the final qualifying round of the Cup. It was the first time they had met in the competition. Borough won 4-3 – and Plant scored two of the goals.

In those days he was still making an impression in the first team after two years of second team football. He remembers it well, particularly his first goal which put Borough in front after 19 minutes: "The ball came to me 18-20 yards out. I hit it perfectly. From the moment I connected I knew it was a goal. I didn't even bother to watch it go in."

That goal stunned Wellington: "They thought we were a Sunday School side, and they treated us as such until we scored that goal," he said.

Borough's fans, 2,000 of them in the record 8,240 crowd, went wild but there were more thrills to come – and six more goals as the game swayed back and forth. Wellington equalised, Billy Bond put Nuneaton back in front again, Wellington hit back again. And then Harry Gilmour scored a goal for the Manor Park side that is still talked about by the fans who were there.

Here is how Ken Plant describes it: "We were awarded a free-kick and Billy Bond bent down to place the ball while Wellington tried to group their defence. Suddenly, almost before Bond had taken his hands off the ball, Harry Gilmour cracked it into the net. They protested, but the goal stood."

Plant scored another for Nuneaton to make the score 4-2 before Kirkham pulled one back for the home side, who then missed an open goal in the dying seconds. But Borough went into the First Round for the first time in their history, when they beat King's Lynn 2-1 – a game still hailed as the best seen at Manor Park – defeated Mossley 3-0 after a 0-0 draw, and went out 3-0 in the Third Round at Exeter.

Nuneaton Borough v Waterlooville 25-11-1972

Borough: Robinson, Stephens, Gill, Jones, Howshall, Lewis, Harris, Starkey, Franklin, Baker, Turpie. **Sub:** Shepherd.

Waterlooville: Damerell, Wright, Slaymaker, Phillips, Kill, Avery, Dyer, Hare, Allen, Pointer, Jack. **Sub:** Cheverton.

Borough welcomed Waterlooville to Manor Park to play a Southern League Premier Division game.

Borough dropped a precious point to a side they should have beaten out of sight before half-time. A seventh minute Bob Turpie goal sparked off an attacking blitz which had the Hampshire side's defence in all kinds of trouble. Nuneaton pushed forward at will, had two shots cleared off the line, forced goalmouth scrambles, and threatened to tear their opponents apart. Never before in this topsy turvy season has a Borough side been so much in command of a game.

But the picture changed dramatically after the break. Borough lost their grip and Waterlooville bounced back to take a point. Nuneaton's attacking took its toll. Frustrated by their inability to add to Turpie's goal, they lost their

confidence. And their richly embroidered first-half attacks became tattered in the second-half of an incredible game.

It was like watching two Borough sides. One was confident, skilful, in complete command and striding to victory. The other anxious, neurotic, almost broken and struggling to save a point. Waterlooville equalised with 16 minutes to go when Barry Dyer sprinted along the left-wing, beat Kirk Stephens and fired in a fierce cross shot past Brian Robinson.



Waterlooville goalkeeper Keith Damerell sprawls on the turf as a Barry Franklin shot rebounds off his body to Bob Turpie for Borough's seventh minute goal.

Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune

Robinson, his left ankle heavily strapped from a first-half injury, prevented another Waterlooville goal a few minutes later. He left his line to narrow the angle and clawed out a shot from Waterlooville top scorer Barry Jack, who was clear on the edge of the box. A goal then would have been rough justice after the attacking feast Borough had staged for their fans before the break.

It looked as if David Pleat's side, at home in the Southern League for the first time in nine weeks, would write their own "welcome back" sign in goals. Yet it was not to be. Waterlooville, whose premier division future is in jeopardy following a move to ban Football League nursery sides, raised doubts about their staying power. But they were let off the hook and allowed to escape with their ninth draw of the season in an unbelievable game Borough will want to forget.

Bedford Town v Nuneaton Borough 27-11-1972

Borough: Haynes, Stephens, Gill, Jones, Howshall (Goodfellow), Lewis, Harris, Turpie, Starkey, Franklin, Baker.

Borough made the journey to The Eyrie to face Bedford Town in a Southern League Premier Division game.

Impressive Borough reduced fifth in the table Bedford to a shambles with a sparkling performance. And they again proved that they are a better side away from home, especially when the odds are against them. Borough outfought, outran, out-thought – and often outplayed the Eagles, who were unbeaten in six Southern League games. And teenage goalkeeper Paul Haynes, in for injured goalkeeper Brian Robinson, came through the stiffest test of his career with flying colours.

He shook off a tragic goal and made some tremendous saves behind a Nuneaton defence which gave him the kind of protection few teams can provide. In the early stages

Nuneaton pulled players back to smother Bedford's attacks. But they hit them with swift, positive, counter-punches which made them cast anxious glances over their shoulders. It was from such a counter attack that Nuneaton went ahead in the 26th minute through Gerry Baker. A long, high, right wing cross from Dave Lewis came off the head of Bedford centre-half Neil Townsend as he raced back and dropped into Baker's path.

He carried it forward and planted his shot past Alan Alexander as the goalkeeper left his line. Haynes made a tremendous save from Cooley before Bedford equalised in the 38th minute with a goal they did not deserve. Cooley hit a first-time shot which was going wide, but it struck John Gill's head and looped towards the Borough goal. Haynes, off his line and sent the wrong way, jack-knifed backwards and made a brilliant attempt to save – only to see the ball roll out of his hands and into the net. It was a tragic moment for the Hinckley Gunners' player – but from that moment Nuneaton knew they had a goalkeeper. And it began to show. Their confidence in him increased and only nine minutes into the second half Barry Franklin restored their lead.

Jimmy Goodfellow, on for injured Gerry Howshall took a throw-in, Bob Turpie laid it back, and Franklin cracked a first-time shot which hit Alexander and went in. There was only one side in the picture and they again split the Bedford defence ten minutes from time to put the issue beyond doubt. Franklin glanced a Starkey throw into Goodfellow's path and he ran the ball past Alexander, through what was now the wreckage of a Bedford defence. Borough could have increased their lead in the closing stages.



Alan Jones Equals Appearance Record

Alan Jones equals a record on Saturday that many people thought would stand for all time. The Non-League Cup tie against Barnet will be his 459th first team match for Nuneaton Borough in a career which has spanned ten eventful years. Only one other player – Malcolm Allen – has reached

that figure and Jones still has youth on his side.

He could go on to set a target which will never be beaten, but he is already assured of a special place in Borough's record books.

Jones has been described as "a manager's dream," the "ideal Southern League player" and "the perfect professional." All the descriptions fit. And they come from men who know – the four managers he has served under at Manor Park.



Nuneaton Borough v Guildford City 09-12-1972

Borough: Robinson, Howshall, Gill, Bridgett, Jones, Starkey, Baker, Lewis, Franklin, Harris, Turpie. **Sub:** Smith.

Guildford: Brooks, Peters, Westburgh, Kerr, Harris, Wilkes, Smith, Watts, Burge, Tyler, Burns. **Sub:** Malley.

Borough welcomed Guildford City to Manor Park to play a Southern League Premier Division fixture.

Gerry Baker searched back through the pages of his soccer scrapbook with a goal out of the past. He collected a rebound, raced wide of Guildford defenders Wilkes and Westburgh and lobbed the ball over the head of Brooks from 20 yards.

It was a goal stamped with class and the 13th this season. It pulled lethargic Nuneaton up by their bootlaces after they had run into problems. Again the team with one of the best away records in the league failed to impress in front of their own crowd. They had to wait until the 82nd minute before Bob Turpie grabbed the winner. But the win increased their bid for a place in the top half of the table.

Borough's normally solid defence looked uncertain against the impressive visitors' attack. Lanky Les Burns caused Gerry Howshall a load of trouble with his searching runs along the left flank. Burns headed Guildford in front from the edge of the six yard box after a 19th minute free-kick.

Turpie equalised when Gill flicked on a Tom Starkey free-kick, but Tony Burge restored City's lead two minutes from the break when Jones failed to cut out a square pass from Alan Tyler. It was no more than Nuneaton deserved. Out of touch Starkey was replaced by Roger Smith at half-time – and his persistence played a major part in the match winner.

He beat Burge to a 50-50 ball, hammered it into the middle and unselfish Barry Franklin stood aside to allow Turpie to lash a left foot piledriver into the net. Just before the end Franklin was inches away from a great goal when he slid the ball wide of the far post from a Baker cross after Dave Lewis had made the running. It was one of the few times Guildford's suspect defence had been exposed, but Borough just about deserved the points.

Burton Albion v Nuneaton Borough 16-12-1972

Burton: Allsopp, Goodwin, Norman, Stewart, Hickton, Beresford, Mottershead, Brown, Naylor, Wright, Smith. **Sub:** Mole.

Borough: Robinson, Stephens, Bridgett, Howshall, Jones, Lewis, Starkey, Shepherd, Franklin, Harris, Turpie. **Sub:** Goodfellow.

Borough made the journey to Eton Park to take on Burton Albion in a Southern League Premier Division game.

Borough stretched their unbeaten league run to five games. They were much too good for the struggling home side, and opened up a three goal lead inside the first 51 minutes and coasted home. There was nothing Burton could do. Never in the same class as Nuneaton, they were simply brushed aside.

Borough have now collected eight points out of the last

ten and are all set to break into the top half of the Premier Division table. The win was as emphatic as the scoreline suggests. It could have been wider, but for some erratic finishing in the second half.

Borough were on their way to victory from as early as the fifth minute when Tom Starkey squeezed a header into the net from a Ray Bridgett cross. And they went on to confirm their all round superiority over an Albion side that must be a fair bet to finish in the bottom four.

Centre-forward Barry Franklin returned to top form with two smart goals. He increased the lead just before half-time with a shot off the underside of the bar, set up by Turpie and Trevor Shepherd. Nine minutes later his persistence earned him his second when he forced the ball into the net after Allsopp had parried his first shot.

From that moment the result was nothing more than a formality. Nuneaton were so much on top that they won at a canter. The Manor Park side provided all of the aggression and skill, much of it from Gerry Howshall, who starred in the middle of the park. He again proved he is a better midfield player than he is a full back. Given more scope to display his skills, he turned in a powerhouse performance.

Consistent Bob Turpie was always a threat to the Albion defence on the left flank with his willingness to take on his full-back. And Dave Lewis plugged the gap left by John Gill's suspension with a solid performance alongside Alan Jones. These two broke the hearts of the Albion strikers, particularly Jones, who hardly put a foot wrong.

It was all too easy – but it demonstrated how far Borough have come since they solved their early season problems. Once again they are as good as any side in the Southern League and could make a real impression in the second half of the season.

Yeovil Town v Nuneaton Borough 22-12-1972

Borough: Robinson, Stephens, Lewis, Jones, Bridgett, Harris, Howshall, Starkey, Franklin, Shepherd, Turpie. **Sub:** Baker.

Borough welcomed Yeovil Town to Manor Park to play a Southern League Premier Division game.

Bob Turpie gave Borough the lead in the 36th minute with a near post glancing header from a Trevor Shepherd corner. It was an exact replica of the one he scored against Barnet at Banbury last Monday – but the lead lasted for a few fleeting seconds. Straight from the re-start centre-forward John Brown cashed in on a stunned Nuneaton defence to slip the ball under Brian Robinson for Yeovil's equaliser.

And that's how the game ended. A disappointing result for the Manor Park side, who desperately wanted to please their fans. All the early promise faded and the clash developed into a drab deadlock for the near 2,000 crowd. Again Borough failed to show their away form in front of their own crowd. But they were up against one of the best sides in the Southern League.

Nuneaton Borough 1970-1979 – Part 1



The point put Yeovil back on top of the premier division. They edged Dover into second place on goal average.

Both sides struggled to find their rhythm. There was little constructive football and a lot of negative play. They cancelled each other out in midfield, plugged the penalty areas at the first sign of danger – and laboured up front. Much of the match was scrappy, but Borough's point lifted them to the half-way mark in the table after their long hard haul from near the relegation zone.

Yeovil made the early running. And in speedy left winger John Clancy they had a potential match winner, but he faded as the game wore on. Terry Bertram blasted a shot over the top from the edge of the penalty box and Ken Thompson was only inches away from Cliff Myers' free-kick. But Nuneaton balanced up the game with some aggressive play and Franklin set up a shooting chance for Lewis, the only time Yeovil goalkeeper Tony Clarke was tested.

Yeovil full-back Dave Spencer was booked for a 49th minute tackle which felled Turpie and Borough full-back Ray Bridgett went off after an hour with a leg injury. Nuneaton re-shuffled their line-up and Turpie went to left-back and Gerry Baker returned at outside-left.

Baker set up a 75th minute chance for Franklin, who hit the ball wide. But by that time the sides had settled for a point.

Hillingdon Borough v Nuneaton Borough 26-12-1972

Hillingdon: Lowe, Ryan, Archer, Titterton, Roach, Higginson, Neilson, Peachey, Reeve, Bishop, Harris. **Sub:** Moore.

Borough: Robinson, Stephens, Smith, Howshall, Jones, Lewis, Shepherd, Franklin, Baker, Harris, Turpie. **Sub:** Swift.

Borough made the journey to Hillingdon to play a Southern League Premier Division game.

Grim determination won Borough a point on Boxing Day, but it wasn't a pretty picture to watch as two teams in the lower half of the table staged a grim struggle. Nuneaton marked tightly at the back and kept a grip on midfield and most of the time produced an answer to every Hillingdon move.

Consequently the game developed into a midfield squabble with referee Mr Harrington leaning over backwards in his efforts to carry on the Christmas spirit and not book anyone. Harris did get the ball in the Nuneaton net soon after the interval but a split second before he made his final shot the referee had blown for a free-kick on the edge of the area.

Otherwise Stephens, Smith, Jones and Lewis kept the Hillingdon attack quiet. Howshall mixed aggression and skill in midfield but it was goalkeeper Robinson who really decided the issue. When his back line was beaten Robinson displayed brilliance and bravery to keep Hillingdon at bay.

Hillingdon had most of the few chances that were going, but they seldom got the better of Robinson. In one period of heavy Hillingdon pressure just before half-time Robinson did well to dive to the foot of a post to take a header from

Neilson. Nuneaton's best chance fell to Shepherd. He missed badly from close range in the 26th minute and also put in Nuneaton's best shot of the second half.

Nuneaton Borough v Dartford

02-01-1973

Borough: Robinson, Stephens, Lewis, Jones, Smith, Howshall, Harris, Starkey, Baker, Franklin, Turpie. **Sub:** Shepherd.

Borough welcomed Dartford to Manor Park to play a Southern League Premier Division match.

Borough stumbled into 1973 with an unhappy display against solid defensive Dartford. They failed to cash in on their first-half possession, lost their unbeaten run – and again let down the fans. But it took a tragic 86th minute penalty to settle a game which Borough should have won before half-time.

Full-back Kirk Stephens handled a shot from Dartford's Alan Payne on the line and John Stevens rifled in the spot kick. Stephens was laid out by the power of Payne's shot and left the field in a daze. It was a cruel blow for the youngster who had turned in a fine performance. But Borough created their own problems against the struggling Kent outfit.

Before the break they found space on the wings and freedom in midfield and the Darts funnelled back against the pressure. Yet they failed to create a single clear-cut chance in the first hour and let the visitors off the hook. The first warning that Dartford might snatch a smash-and-grab win came just after half-time when goalkeeper Brian Robinson was forced to make a brave save when Len Ripley broke clear.

By that time, Borough, frustrated by their inability to find a way through the heart of the Dartford defence, looked a worried, anxious side. They lost their composure and stopped believing in themselves as the Darts hit back. Even so, they should have started the New Year on a happier note.

Baker and Franklin both had chances to win the game and Alan Jones had a header touched on to the bar by goalkeeper John Morton. All Nuneaton's problems lay up front. The longer the game went on the harder they struggled for openings and eventually it developed into a dull, negative game.

They can complain that the penalty was harsh and point to their first-half superiority. But in the end, they had only themselves to blame for a result which dealt a harsh blow to their hopes of a place in the top six.

Folkestone v Nuneaton Borough

06-01-1973

Folkestone: Bowley, Wooldridge, Crook, Dawson, Weston, Treadwell, Lazarus, Shovelar, Sharp, Whittington, Harfield. **Sub:** Chambers.

Borough: Robinson, Stephens, Swift, Howshall, Jones, Lewis, Starkey, Shepherd, Franklin, Harris, Turpie. **Sub:** Goodfellow.

Borough travelled to Kent to take on Folkestone in a Southern League Premier Division game.

Borough reached the half-way mark in the season with a smash-and-grab win. They survived a second-half pounding

Nuneaton Borough 1970-1979 – Part 1



from the strugglers and lived dangerously for almost an hour. Folkestone twice hit the bar and piled on tremendous pressure in a non-stop search for an equaliser. Nuneaton denied them a point they deserved in the hardest fight they had had this season – but they paid a heavy price.

Skipper Dave Lewis, who never concedes defeat, broke his nose in the closing minutes. Goalkeeper Brian Robinson, magnificent in everything he did, collected a painful arm injury and Borough travelled back with question marks hanging over both midfield men. Gerry Howshall was booked for the third time and Len Harris had to have an ice pack on an injured thigh.

Courage, character and determination – helped by some erratic finishing from Folkestone – earned them their eleventh away point of the season. A remarkable record considering they have yet to provide consistent success for their home fans. Folkestone, bolstered by three newcomers, hauled themselves back into the running after much travelled Mark Lazarus scored a 32nd minute goal. He ran in on the blind side to notch a spectacular goal after new signing Eric Whittington, from Crawley, had nodded a free-kick across the goal.

Before that Borough had eased themselves into a 2-0 lead. An own goal by Folkestone full-back Dave Crook gave them a gift-wrapped start in the 10th minute. And Barry Franklin snatched an opportunist effort 15 minutes later after Len Harris had hit the base of a post from 20 yards.

Some of Borough's second half football was simple and constructive, but 90 per cent of it was purely defensive as Folkestone pushed players forward. Micky Shovelar, twice denied a goal by the woodwork, and another new signing, Alan Harfield, from Luton, were the players who inspired Folkestone's rally.

Franklin and Gerry Howshall could have scored towards the end as Folkestone, worn out by their own efforts, tired. Borough were glad to hear the final whistle, but the win means they have not been beaten away from home since they lost 1-0 at Dover at the end of October.

Atherstone Town v Nuneaton Borough 09-01-1973

Atherstone: Withers, Kavanagh, Russell, Smith, Preston, Mackay, Harper, Masfield, Holmes, John Flannagan, Mellor. **Sub:** Jim Flannagan.

Borough: Robinson, Swift, Howshall, Smith, Jones, Lewis, Starkey, Shepherd, Franklin, Goodfellow, Turpie. **Sub:** Hubbard.

Borough travelled to Sheepy Road to face Atherstone Town in a Midland Floodlit Cup game.

Ray Holmes headed Atherstone into the semi-finals of the Midland Floodlit Cup with a 69th minute goal. With the teams locked at 1-1, John Flannagan went past David Swift and hit a perfect centre across the Borough goalmouth for Holmes to score at the far post. But Nuneaton can have no grumbles about the result, for the game was never as close as the scoreline might suggest.

Barry Franklin gave Borough a 20th minute lead with a fine shot from the edge of the box, but apart from the goal Colin Withers hardly had a save to make. Borough's lead lasted for only seven minutes. Robinson, under pressure from Stewart Masfield, only cleared a right wing corner to the edge of the box and Bobby Mackay volleyed a superb equaliser.

But the Borough keeper more than made amends with a string of fine saves that kept his side in the game. One save, shortly before the end, when he dived full length to his left to hold a Masfield header was brilliant. This was a fully deserved win for Adders and gave them the double over Nuneaton in the competition.

Borough are now faced with the task of going to Cheltenham for their last game where they must win and score three goals if they are to qualify. But on the evidence of last night's display they will have to use a vastly different approach if they are to succeed.

Ramsgate v Nuneaton Borough

13-01-1973

Ramsgate: Huddart, Taylor, Lloyd, Burton, Priestley, Flanagan, Godfrey, Swain, Cassidy, Grey, Fusco. **Sub:** Stanley.

Borough: Robinson, Stephens, Swift, Howshall, Jones, Lewis, Starkey, Shepherd, Franklin, Goodfellow, Smith. **Sub:** Ritchie.

Borough travelled to Kent to face Ramsgate in a Southern League Premier Division match.

David Pleat's plunderers raided the south coast for two more points. Narrow victors at Margate and Folkestone, makeshift Borough added the Rams to their list of travelling triumphs. Trevor Shepherd settled the match with a 75th minute shot in off both posts – the highlight of a mediocre clash.

It was a grim struggle in an Arctic wind. The crowd was halved by the magnet of the Margate v Spurs cup tie five miles away. Ramsgate were poor, despite their 2-2 draw at Yeovil the previous week. Borough, weakened by injuries and suspensions, were again down to 12 available players – with teenager Gordon Ritchie as substitute. A call at Margate General Hospital on the way home added to their problems. It was to collect Gerry Howshall, injured 13 minutes before half-time. He had a badly twisted ankle and has no more than a slender chance of playing against Wimbledon.

Ritchie went on and did a creditable job in midfield as Borough improved towards the end of the game. They pulled Roger Smith back alongside Ritchie and Jimmy Goodfellow to tighten up a middle of the park department which lacked bite. What they badly needed was someone to win the ball. But neither side struck up any real rhythm and much of the play was aimless and negative.

Fortunately Borough have a back four which ranks among the best in the Southern League. A solid foundation Ramsgate could not shake. Dave Lewis was a pillar of strength. Alan Jones and Dave Swift gave nothing away – and teenager Kirk Stephens stood out. Another immaculate

display from the right-back again stamped him as a youngster with a bright future.

The home side looked better going forward than they did at the back. Borough were opposite. Solid in defence, but unable to probe Ramsgate's obvious defensive weaknesses. Consequently there was stalemate until Shepherd grabbed his match winner, set up by Stephens and Barry Franklin.

Franklin could have increased the scoreline. He missed one good chance and had a point blank range header brilliantly stopped by Huddart. Taking everything into account, it was a good win for Borough – their 13th point away from home. But manager Pleat faces a week of anxiety before the meeting with Wimbledon.

Len Willetts - Borough Fan



Nuneaton was under a blanket of fog. Cold, damp and miserable. Few people would have bothered to go to a football match. But Len Willetts had his coat on at five minutes to three, ready to make his way to Manor Park.

He had done the same for more than 50 years and didn't see why he should allow the weather to change his ritual. But Len needn't have bothered. He could have had a warm, comfortable view of the game – from his bedroom window.

His house in Beaumont Place overlooks the football ground. And has a better view, perhaps, than he could get from the muddy, windswept terraces. Yet he always buys a Nuneaton Borough season ticket and can be found in the same spot at all of the home games. Not too far from his bedroom window.

"It sometimes makes me mad," says his wife Beatrice. "Once when he had flu we had to move his bed under the window so he wouldn't miss the match. He could see all the games from there." Mr Willet, a 65-year-old retired tool inspector who worked at Clarksons for 21 years reckons he has seen a record number of games at Manor Park.

"I go because I like the atmosphere. There's no atmosphere on your own. You can't criticise or discuss the game. I also meet a lot of friends I have made over the years."

Weymouth v Nuneaton Borough

27-01-1973

Weymouth: Clarke, Rounsevell, Williams, Gater, Hobson, Brown, Barry, Bimson, Skirton, Adams, Beer. **Sub:** Courtney.

Borough: Robinson, Stephens, Bridgett, Lewis, Gill, Jones, Starkey, Baker, Franklin, Goodfellow, Turpie. **Sub:** Smith

Borough travelled to The Rec to take on Weymouth in a Southern League Premier Division game.

Alan Beer, Weymouth's £10,000 priced bundle of scoring talent, ended Borough's six match unbeaten away run with a cheeky 75th minute goal. He diverted a half-hit shot from Derek Bimson through his legs and over the line with his back to the goal. Kirk Stephens made a valiant effort to stop it, but the ball was already in the net. Clear headedness, quick thinking and confidence earned impish Beer the goal.

It was his 23rd since he joined the Terras last summer from Swansea – on a free transfer. And it presented Nuneaton with an impossible task. They had fought for more than an hour to wipe out a fourth minute goal from Weymouth player-manager Graham Williams. He fired a free kick hard and low through Borough's defensive wall from the edge of the box. A bad goal for any defence to concede.

Gerry Baker scored five minutes after Beer's effort to put the Manor Park side back in with a fighting chance. But by that time it was too late. Weymouth weathered Borough's final flourish and collected both points. One each would have been fair. For, apart from a jittery first 20 minutes, Nuneaton were always as good as the championship challenging Dorset side. They carried the game to Weymouth on the wings to avoid a corridor of clinging mud down the middle of the pitch.

Their skilful soccer in the heavy conditions created chances. Baker and Barry Franklin had two each but failed to put them away. Both worked hard up front. They needed earlier passes to give them a chance against a solid Weymouth defence which was more rugged than skilful.

The match-winning glory deservedly went to Beer, whose speed and skill made him the best forward on the park. And at least his goal was a triumph for skill when too many of his team mates preferred brute force.

Borough Financial Crisis

Nuneaton Borough, once the best supported club in non-league football, are facing another financial crisis. The club is losing money each week and the directors have been called to a special meeting to work out ways of halting the slide.

Their last hope of extra cash, an extended run in the Non-League Cup, ended with last Saturday's cruel defeat by Wimbledon. "The position is very serious," warned chairman Alf Scattergood last night. "We have to find ways of reducing our overheads."

Drastic cuts in running costs may be the board's solution to prevent the balance sheet from sinking deeper into the red.

Borough Thrash Out Financial Problems

Nuneaton Borough's directors thrashed out the club's cash problems at a three and a half hour meeting last night and announced: "There is no need for panic." They will go ahead with the plans they have already made and review the position at the end of the season. These include re-forming the reserve side and extensions to the successful Manor Park Social Club.

The seven man board decided on a bold approach after putting the club's balance sheet under a financial microscope. Said chairman Alf Scattergood: "We analysed every aspect of our financial position and decided there was no need for panic."

Nuneaton Borough v Poole Town 29-01-1973

Borough: Robinson, Stephens, Gill, Jones, Bridgett, Lewis, Harris, Starkey, Franklin, Baker (Goodfellow 78), Turpie.

Borough welcomed Poole Town to Manor Park to play a Southern League Premier Division game.

Nuneaton Borough invited their fans to a banquet – and forgot to provide the main course. They whetted the crowd's appetite with a start that threatened to destroy Poole, scored after 18 minutes – and then went off the boil. Crude Poole, who had three players booked in a free-kick riddled game, should have been devoured. Instead Borough laboured. They made hard work of what should have been an easy task.

Barry Franklin scored the first goal. He headed in a corner from Harris, despite a vain attempt by Poole full-back John Hill to save on the line. Poole, the side with the worst defensive record in the premier division, had been set up for the kill.



Goal number 23 of the season for Borough centre-forward Barry Franklin, as he rises to head home a Len Harris corner.

Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune

Goalkeeper Alan Buck had pulled off two brilliant saves in the first ten minutes, one from a deflection and the other from a spectacular Turpie header. And when Franklin made the break-through, a goal feast was on the cards. It did not materialise. Bob Turpie added another goal, set up by adventurous full-back Ray Bridgett in the 55th minute, but much of the match was mediocre.

Brutal tackles from behind crept into the game and earned bookings for Poole defenders Colin Eyden and Roger Bazeley

and substitute Ray Ames. They chopped down Gerry Baker, Dave Lewis and Bob Turpie. Others were let off with warnings from a lenient referee.

Borough created most of their own problems with complicated attacks and brave saves by Buck, two of them from Franklin, kept the score down. But the Manor Park side could, and should, have won 5-0, against a team that displayed all that is bad about present day Southern League soccer.

Cheltenham Town v Nuneaton Borough 31-01-1973

Borough: Robinson, Stephens, Gill, Lewis, Bridgett, Harris, Goodfellow, Smith (Shepherd 57), Franklin, Baker, Turpie.

Borough made the journey to Whaddon Road to play Cheltenham Town in the Midland Floodlit Cup.

Three goals in six minutes at the start of the second half knocked bewildered Borough out of the Floodlit Cup. They needed to win and score two goals to book themselves a place in the semi-finals. A task which, on paper, was well within them. In actual fact they were never in with a chance. Strong running, determined Cheltenham ran them ragged.

The struggling Southern League first division north side must have been amazed at the ease with which they won. Jittery in defence, weak in midfield and with no fire up front, Borough struggled to string three passes together. It was no surprise when Cheltenham took a tenth minute lead. Striker Dave Lewis steered a shot past Brian Robinson after winger Richard Wilkes had shaken off Kirk Stephens.

Borough showed signs of a recovery towards half-time, but then came the second half goal blast that completely destroyed the visitors. Centre-forward Dylan Evans increased Cheltenham's lead with a powerful cross shot four minutes after the break. Wilkes made it 3-0 after Ray Bridgett, one Borough player who at least emerged with some credit, had played a back pass into the path of Lewis.

And Bill Bailey thundered in a tremendous shot from 25 yards in the 55th minute to set the seal on Cheltenham's win. The game dragged on for more than half an hour as no-hopers Nuneaton chased shadows.

Nuneaton Borough v Ramsgate 03-02-1973

Borough: Robinson, Stephens, Swift, Lewis, Gill, Jones, Baker, Shepherd, Franklin, Harris, Turpie. Sub: Bridgett.

Ramsgate: Huddart, Taylor, Lloyd, Burton, Priestley, Fusco, Godfrey, Swain, Cassidy, Cutler, Flannigan. Sub: Stanley.

Borough welcomed Ramsgate to Manor Park to play a Southern League Premier Division game.

Borough's lack on penetration was deeply underlined when they failed to beat Ramsgate in a scrappy game. They were on top territorially but seldom looked capable of breaking a solid visitors defence. True, they had chances to have wrapped up both points but very few of these resulted from inspired moves.

Time and again attacks broke down against the packed defensive formation of the Kent side and Borough often seemed devoid of ideas up front. Their approach work tended to be laborious and slow and far too often the ball was played square across the front of the penalty area. The attack was never positive enough in and around the box and the flank men constantly wasted good positions with poor crosses.

Barry Franklin shot high over when well placed in the first half and he had a couple of good efforts well saved by Huddart. But in general he lacked support and had a lean time against Priestley and Burton. Bob Turpie, Trevor Shepherd and Gerry Baker all had clear cut shooting positions, but their efforts were lacking in power and direction. In fact it was the Kent side who had the better chances with Paul Cutler creating panic in the Nuneaton rearguard.



Borough defend in depth to clear a Ramsgate attack.

Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune

The former Manor Park favourite had a fine game and with any amount of luck could well have finished the match with a hat-trick. Brian Robinson produced a fine one-handed save to deny him a goal midway through the first-half and just before the interval he had a shot fly inches wide of a post.

Alan Jones saved a certain goal when he cleared off the line from Cutler with Robinson beaten and then the Borough keeper clawed a header out from under the bar. But the man who caused Borough most trouble was the much-travelled Bill Cassidy at centre-forward.

Tamworth v Nuneaton Borough 05-02-1973

Tamworth: Richards, Reardon, Large, Mason, Newton, Deakin, Pugh, Morrow, White, Seedhouse, Stokes. **Sub:** Sears.

Borough: Robinson, Smith, Bridgett, Lewis, Gill, Jones, Starkey, Goodfellow, Franklin, Harris, Turpie. **Sub:** Shepherd.

Borough travelled to Tamworth to play a Birmingham Senior Cup third round tie.

A goal by Tom Starkey, seven minutes from the end, earned Borough a replay in this Birmingham Senior Cup third round tie. Tamworth failed to clear a cross from the left and Jimmy Goodfellow turned the ball back into the middle for Starkey to score from close range.

This ended a period of frustration for Nuneaton who had been striving for nearly an hour to get on level terms. They fell behind midway through the first-half when Barry Franklin was caught in possession near the corner flag and Stokes pulled the ball back across goal for Pugh to beat Robinson with a shot that went in off a post.

Shortly after Borough could have been on their way out when Gill allowed Tommy Morrow to get clear but the Tamworth striker pulled his shot wide as Robinson came out. Borough turned on the pressure after the interval against a young Tamworth side who made them fight every inch of the way.

Bob Turpie headed over from under the bar and Franklin hooked his shot wide of the far post after finding space in the box. It was a typical game between two sides with a certain amount of “feeling” creeping into the play. And Borough could well count the cost later in the season for they had four men booked during the second half.

Len Harris had his name taken along with Tamworth full-back Reardon after a clash off the ball. Then Alan Jones and Roger Smith were both cautioned for something they said. Then, shortly before the end Franklin joined them in the book after he followed through to kick Tamworth keeper Mick Richards, who after lengthy treatment had to go to hospital.

During the final minutes Nuneaton threw everything forward in an effort to snatch the winner but stand-in keeper Large was only beaten the once by Starkey.

Fans Urge Club To Buy Manor Park

Nuneaton Borough’s fans – who make the team one of the best supported outside the Football League – are urging the board of directors to buy Manor Park. The fans voted in favour of the board approaching Nuneaton Borough Council to ask them if the ground is up for sale. And if it is – an independent fund should be set up to raise money for the purchase.

This was the climax to a heated and sometimes rowdy “Sports Forum,” held at the Borough Social Club on Saturday night. The purpose of the forum was for the fans to fire any questions from the floor – at the board of directors and manager David Pleat.

“It’s up to the fans of Nuneaton Borough – as the general public – to make their voices heard over obtaining the ground,” said chairman Alf Scattergood.

Nuneaton Borough v Kettering Town 10-02-1973

Borough: Robinson, Smith, Bridgett, Lewis, Gill, A. Jones, Starkey, Harris, Franklin, Goodfellow, Turpie. **Sub:** Hubbard.

Kettering: Mackleworth, Ashby, Goodall, Atkinson, Pock, Kernan, Harrington, Clayton, Jones, Webster, Pawley. **Sub:** Burdett.

Borough welcomed Kettering Town to Manor Park to play a Southern League Premier Division game.

Skipper Dave Lewis was the inspiration and example behind a tremendous second-half fightback that gave Borough a point



against high-riding Kettering. He had a superb game and his never-say-die spirit was rewarded with two second half goals that rocked the visitors back on their heels.

With an hour gone Kettering were 2-0 ahead. They had dominated the game from the start and were cruising home. But Nuneaton transformed the picture in a matter of minutes as they applied sustained pressure to the Poppies defence for the first time in the game. Franklin was unlucky when a fine volley hit full back Ashby on the line and bounced clear, but with 66 minutes gone Lewis put them back in contention.

Turpie swung a corner into the goalmouth and keeper Mackleworth only palmed the ball out and Lewis flung himself forward to head the ball into the corner of the net. This was the signal for an all-out attack and suddenly there were signs of anxiety in the previously solid Kettering defence. Both Turpie and Starkey started to get room on the flanks and Mackleworth's goal had a series of narrow escapes.

The pressure finally told after 78 minutes when Lewis snatched his second goal. He stole up on the blind side to crash a header against a post. The ball was only partially cleared and as it came back the Borough skipper forced a header into the net. What a shock this was for championship contenders Kettering. They had raced into a two goal lead in the first 25 minutes and could have been further in front at the interval.

Roy Clayton, their expensive signing from Oxford United, gave them the lead after only nine minutes, then set up a second for Colin Harrington. Left winger John Pawley had two glorious chances to increase the lead but he hit a post with one and completely fluffed the other. But at that stage it didn't seem to matter as the talented Kettering side were creating enough problems for the over-worked Borough defence.

At the end Borough could have snatched their most sensational win for years. After the equaliser it was all Borough and Kettering were hanging on grimly in the final hectic minutes. They have player-manager Ron Atkinson to thank that they finally emerged with a point for he showed all the coolness of his vast experience when he whipped the ball away from Franklin in the dying seconds.

Gerry Baker Sacked By Borough

Gerry Baker, Nuneaton Borough's most experienced forward, has been sacked for a breach of club discipline. The ex-Manchester City, Ipswich and Coventry striker has had his contract cancelled by the Manor Park club.

Baker, who had scored 14 goals for Borough said today: "The incident happened four months ago and I had forgotten about it." He added: "I am sick about it, but I was left with no alternative."

The sacking has cast a shadow over the footballing future of the 32-year-old Scot. "I enjoyed playing for Nuneaton Borough," he said. I liked the crowd and got on well with the players. I am not interested in playing for another club."

Rugby Town v Nuneaton Borough

12-02-1973

Borough made the journey to Oakfield to play Rugby Town in a friendly match.

Borough hit Rugby with four goals in the first half hour – and then had to settle for a draw. The Manor Park side swept into the lead with some of their best football of the season. Tom Starkey hit two superb goals and laid on chances for Trevor Hubbard and Trevor Shepherd to score as Rugby reeled under the blast.

But they relaxed in the second half and the home side forced their way back to a 4-4 draw in a game full of entertaining football. "Our form in the first 25 minutes was as good as anything we have produced this season," said Borough player-manager David Pleat.

Pleat played for 20 minutes, but still struggled against the back injury which keeps him out of the Southern League side. Key midfield man Len Harris and top scorer Barry Franklin missed the game with injuries that Pleat hopes will clear up before Saturday's game at Romford.

Pleat: Don't Argue With Referees

David Pleat this week stepped up his "Don't Argue With Referees" campaign by handing out more fines to his squad. And the Borough player-manager is determined to continue to hit the players in their pockets until the situation improves.

Alan Jones, Roger Smith, Len Harris and Bob Turpie have so far had their wage packets affected by Pleat's disciplinary clamp down.

Romford v Nuneaton Borough

17-02-1973

Borough: Robinson, Smith, Gill, Jones, Bridgett, Lewis, Goodfellow, Turpie, Starkey, Hubbard, Franklin. Sub: Shepherd.

Borough made the journey to Brooklands to play Romford in a Southern League Premier Division game.

Trevor Hubbard turned an eight-year-old nightmare into a dream come true. And he can now forget the moment in December 1964, when his career lay in ruins in the icy mud of a Manor Park goalmouth. He was just 17, ready to make his mark with his home town club when tragedy struck and he was carried off with a broken leg. Since then he has cherished the hope that he would get a second chance.

On Saturday his years of waiting ended when he made a story book return, straight from the pages of Boys' Own. He scored after just seven minutes to put Borough in front and on the way to their 15th away point of the season. The goal made the years of waiting worthwhile, a magical moment for the amateur centre-forward who played for Stockingford AA in the Coventry Alliance last week.

His goal overshadowed much of the match, a lot of which was scrappy and middle of the table class. The seventh minute moment is now in his scrapbook of memories. "I challenged

their number five and he tried to play it back but made a hash of it. I saw their goalkeeper come out, took a couple of strides and hit it. It was a fantastic moment when it went in.”

He admitted he was nervous before the start. Hubbard, who signed amateur forms for Borough at the start of this season, was given his chance because of Gerry Baker’s departure and Borough’s need for a big, strong player up front. His challenges took a lot of weight off Barry Franklin in the middle in a hard working Nuneaton side. They packed more effort and determination into their play than lethargic Romford and again proved they are one of the best away sides in the premier division.

Romford performed as if they have settled for a middle of the table spot, although they gave Borough some problems after George Andrew equalised Hubbard’s goal in the 26th minute. But Bob Turpie, pulled back into midfield after the opening stages to give Borough a more solid, all round look headed a spectacular winner in the 63rd minute. He dived at the near post to head a Jimmy Goodfellow corner in off the post as Romford’s defence stood still.

Nuneaton Borough v Tamworth 19-02-1973

Borough: Haynes, Smith, Gill, Jones, Bridgett, Lewis, Goodfellow, Starkey, Shepherd, Hubbard, Turpie. **Sub:** Harris.

Borough welcomed Tamworth to Manor Park for a Birmingham Senior Cup third round replay.

The narrow 2-1 win was no reflection of the game, as Tamworth were forced to defend for 75 per cent of the match. They pulled players back into the penalty box in a bid to blot out Borough’s scoring power. It worked – although the Manor Park side were just as guilty of missing chances as they were of failing to find a way through.

It took a stunning goal from skipper Dave Lewis in the 25th minute to break the deadlock. He hit a first time shot from 30 yards after Billy Millard had headed out a Trevor Shepherd cross. Shepherd missed a chance, Turpie was halted by Dave Reardon and then Shepherd almost burst through as Nuneaton threatened to run riot. And Roger Smith hit the underside of the bar with the shot of the match in the 35th minute – a 30 yarder of frightening power.

Tamworth’s defence had to work overtime as the one way traffic continued, but Borough had to wait until the 74th minute for their second goal. Dave Lewis was fouled by Tamworth centre-half Gary Brown a few feet inside the box and Shepherd scored from the penalty spot. Brown was booked for arguing with the referee as the players walked back to the centre circle.

Tamworth tried a more adventurous approach in the second half, but there was still only one side in it. The Kettlebrook side’s goal came six minutes from the end when Brown converted the second penalty of the game after Lewis had fouled Morrow. But by that time Tamworth were well beaten.

Borough Bid For John Flannagan

Nuneaton Borough, who already have three former Atherstone players on their books, are again casting their eyes in the direction of Sheepy Road. They have made a bid for John Flannagan, the skilful midfield architect behind much of the Adders’ success.

Borough have also signed 20-year-old goalkeeper Mike Allsopp from Burton Albion on a month’s trial.

Nuneaton Borough v Telford United 24-02-1973

Borough: Allsopp, Smith, Bridgett, Lewis, Gill, Jones, Starkey, Harris, Hubbard, Shepherd, Turpie. **Sub:** Goodfellow.

Telford: Irvine, Harris, Croft, Ray, Fairhurst, Ross, Draycott, Owen, Thompson, Fudge, Jagger. **Sub:** Harris.

Borough welcomed Telford United to Manor Park to play a Southern League Premier Division game.

Borough dropped another home point – their eleventh of the season – in a grim, goalless struggle. Much of it was so drab that it was hard to believe the same two clubs had staged a five goal Cup classic at the Buck’s Head twelve weeks earlier.

There was never any danger of it living up to that standard. Instead it was dull and uninteresting. Riddled with complacent, sloppy play which lacked bite and imagination. Ninety minutes has seldom passed by at Manor Park with so little positive action. The game suffered in midfield where both sides lacked authority and at times there was no excuse for the casualness and complacency.



Alan Jones moves up in support of the Borough attack and both he and Trevor Shepherd put in a challenge in a bid to force a breakthrough.

Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune

It promised goals, but slowly died a death and the only two incidents that stood out were fine saves from stand in goalkeeper Mike Allsopp. The on-loan goalkeeper pushed a shot from Johnny Ray over the top and clawed another from Telford centre-forward Bobby Thompson out for a corner.

Telford goalkeeper Bobby Irvine did not need to be as acrobatic. He was rarely put under real pressure by Nuneaton's struggling forwards. Borough had a few chances, both sides did, but there was never enough bite and aggression up front for them to cash in. Perhaps it was because the teams know each other so well. They meet more often than any other clubs in the Premier Division.

Or it could be that both sides were without their top strikers. Barry Franklin was out with flu and Telford missed big Jack Bentley, on the injured list with knee trouble. There were chances that these two might have put away. Without them, the front lines appeared to just go through the motions.

Nuneaton Borough v Chelmsford City 26-02-1973

Borough: Robinson, Stephens, Gill, Jones, Smith, Lewis, Harris, Starkey, Franklin, Shepherd, Turpie. Sub: Bridgett.

Borough welcomed Chelmsford City to Manor Park for a Southern League Premier Division encounter.

Borough found themselves on the wrong side of the wafer thin line that separates the sides in the top half of the league. They turned in one of their best displays of the season against reigning champions Chelmsford, made them struggle – yet lost. It was a cruel defeat for the home side, who could have been 3-0 up before City hauled themselves back into the game.



Trevor Shepherd scores from close range for Borough's 23rd minute goal.
Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune

Borough were the better side, but could not turn their chances into goals. They weathered City's early raids, matched them for skill and flair, won most of the challenges and forced them into mistakes. And no-one tried harder than centre-forward Barry Franklin, back after a bout of flu. He had shots charged down, deflected wide – and one headed off the line by winger Brian Hall, seven minutes from time as Chelmsford pulled players back to preserve their lead.

Players like Franklin, skipper Dave Lewis and battling Alan Jones did not deserve to be on the losing side. Nuneaton

went ahead in the 23rd minute when Trevor Shepherd cashed in, after goalkeeper Laurie Taylor had parried a Franklin drive. A minute later Taylor clutched a header from Franklin on the line as Borough threatened to unleash all of the frustration that has built up from their disappointing home results.

Chelmsford's defence looked far from happy as Franklin and Shepherd threatened the heart of their defence. But then a tragic error from goalkeeper Brian Robinson, ten minutes before half-time, put the champions back in the game. He hit a goal-kick straight to centre-forward Roy Woolcott, who shook off a challenge from John Gill and laid the ball out to Frank Petersen on the right. Petersen switched the ball out to the left wing and Bernie Lewis took it in his stride to crack in a shot which went off Len Harris on the line and into the roof of the net. Dave Lewis just failed to connect with a full length diving header on the stroke of half-time before City had a Woolcott goal disallowed for pushing, four minutes after the break.

Both sides continued to attack each other. Then, with 15 minutes left, Robinson failed to cut out an Eddie Dilworth corner and Woolcott squeezed a header in off the woodwork for City's winner. Hall rescued Chelmsford with his goal-line clearance from Franklin and Shepherd had a glimpse of a chance as the minutes ebbed away. But Borough could not get the goal they deserved and Chelmsford left Manor Park still favourites for the title.

Keeley To Return To Manor Park?

Mick Keeley, the player Borough discovered and then discarded could be on his way back to Manor Park. He fits player-manager David Pleat's description of the forward he wants to make the side more accomplished up front. And he is one of a number of talented Rugby Town players who could become available if they fold at the end of the season.

Pleat makes no secret of his admiration for the Rugby Town forward, who began his semi-professional career with Nuneaton. The Borough team boss feels his side is just two or three players short of being a top premier division club.

Telford United v Nuneaton Borough 03-03-1973

Telford: Irvine, Harris, Croft, Ray, Fairhurst, Ross, Fudge, Owen, Bentley, Thompson, Draycott. Sub: Jagger.

Borough: Robinson, Smith, Swift, Lewis, Gill, Jones, Starkey, Shepherd, Franklin, Harris, Turpie. Sub: Hubbard.

Borough made the journey to the Buck's Head to play a Southern League Premier Division game.

Borough overcame a few fleeting minutes of uncertainty and self-doubt to take a point at the Bucks Head on Saturday. They had cruised into the lead, held it with comfort and were the better side – when the Telford jinx struck again. Two goals inside 90 seconds put the Shropshire side in front and turned the game upside down.

Telford, the side Borough find almost impossible to beat, had again put the Manor Park side on the rack. David Pleat's side

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were stunned. They could have crumbled, but they overcame their psychological problems and pulled themselves back into the game. Bob Turpie equalised with his second goal of the afternoon, a tremendous left foot drive from a free kick, taken short to him by Dave Lewis from 25 yards out.

Turpie had headed Nuneaton into the lead with a superbly taken goal from the edge of the six yard box. Two minutes earlier he had been penalised for pushing goalkeeper Bobby Irvine and a Barry Franklin goal had been wiped out. Turpie's goal looked enough to beat struggling Telford, but all of their good work was undone by Telford's stunning two-goal spell. First Mickey Fudge and then Ken Draycott scored and memories of last November's Cup defeat flooded back.

Lewis and Harris were always too good for Johnny Ray and Bobby Thompson in midfield. And Turpie and Starkey provided service on the flanks for Franklin and Trevor Shepherd, who is now beginning to show more of his skills. Borough's defence was solid – both Telford goals had an element of luck about them – but much of the match was average.

Both sides are secure in the league table and have little to aim at between now and the end of April. But the point carried Borough one step closer to a club record – their highest number of away points since they joined the Southern League.

Worcester City v Nuneaton Borough 05-03-1973

Borough: Robinson, Smith, Gill, Jones, Swift, Harris, Lewis, Starkey, Franklin, Shepherd, Turpie. Sub: Stephens.

Borough made the journey to St George's Lane to face Worcester City in a Southern League Premier Division game.

Borough proved again that they have most of the qualities to be a top six Southern League side. They painted a picture of magnificent courage and all out effort on a canvas of clinging mud. And they more than matched fourth in the table Worcester for skill and attacking power in an entertaining game. It was as good as any performance they have put up away from home this season. But the vital ingredient was missing – finishing power.

Worcester took the points with the winning goal in the 71st minute when brave Barry Kelcher nodded a free-kick across the goal for big John Inglis to head home. The two big men looked likely to score, even when Nuneaton were on top and playing well. Either one of them would have made a tremendous difference to the Borough side, which has come a long way since Pleat took over.

Borough had their chances and Bob Turpie, who played with an injured knee, twice went desperately close. He landed a shot on top of the crossbar after half an hour and had what looked a certain goal deflected wide less than two minutes before City grabbed the winner. Turpie was again Nuneaton's most dangerous forward, but he was twice lucky to escape with warnings from the referee. He could have been sent off

when he threw mud at a linesman after a decision had gone against him and was then lectured for a wild tackle.

Trevor Shepherd had a chance when a Len Harris throw in put him clear, only to see his shot hit the side netting. But as soon as the Worcester goal went in all of Borough's bravery and effort was wiped out in a single stroke. Len Harris and David Lewis were again magnificent for Nuneaton in midfield and Alan Jones and John Gill fought a running battle to check Kelcher and Inglis. And Roger Smith was in great form at right back in his best display since he returned to the side.

Behind them, goalkeeper Brian Robinson was back to his best and the whole of the side ran themselves into the mud in a bid to preserve their point a game away record.

Nuneaton Borough v Romford

10-03-1973

Borough: Robinson, Smith, Swift, Goodfellow, Gill, Jones, Starkey, Shepherd, Franklin, Harris, Turpie. Sub: Stephens.

Romford: Smith, Parmenter, Tapping, Obeney, Robinson, Bickles, Sanders, Bailey, Chandler, Amato, King. Sub: Howe.

Borough welcomed Romford to Manor Park to play a Southern League Premier Division game.

Borough swept into the lead after just 20 seconds, promised a harvest of goals – and then struggled to stay in front. They subjected their fans to the long wait – while they struggled to live up to their sensational start. The fans waited while Romford pulled themselves off the floor and back into the game. While Borough struggled to cash in on Manor Park's fastest goal of the season.

And David Pleat's side tossed away chances which should have sunk the Essex side without trace. But the shock goal Len Harris scored from the first move of the match still separated the two sides at the finish. When Harris struck – after a Roger Smith shot had been charged out by the Romford defence – Borough could have opened the flood gates.



Romford goalkeeper Andy Smith flings himself full length to snatch the ball away from Bob Turpie's boot in a Borough attack.

Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune

Poor finishing has been the major reason behind Borough's



tragic and unimpressive home record in a season when they have collected 15 points away. And on Saturday the chief culprit was centre-forward Barry Franklin, struggling to find the sharpness that shot him to the top of the club's goalscoring charts. He could have had a hat-trick. He shot wide of an empty net after a Trevor Shepherd shot had been pushed out by goalkeeper Andy Smith.

He blasted one shot over the top from point blank range after Bob Turpie had pulled the ball back from the line – and he hit the woodwork after a slip by Romford centre-half Peter Robinson. There were others, but Franklin's were the most clear cut openings in a lively match. Borough missed the drive and bite of injured skipper Dave Lewis in the middle of the park where they struggled to win the ball. But the midfield men's work was not made easy by some of the casual, sloppy play that was served up by the front runners.

Romford were far more mobile and varied. Fortunately for Borough they were just as bad in front of the net. And Nuneaton can thank their lucky stars that their defence is among the best in the Southern League. If the forward line was half as effective as the back four Borough would be at the top of the league.

Veteran winger Roy Sanders looked a potential match winner for Romford. He set up some glorious chances for striker Robin Chandler which the centre-forward blasted over – and he hit the angle himself with a second half header.

The result turned out right in the end, even if Borough flattered to deceive and they gathered two more points in their bid for a respectable spot in the top half of the table.

Geoff Coleman For Borough Reserves Job?

Former Lockheed manager Geoff Coleman is being tipped to take over Nuneaton Borough's reserve side next season. The Manor Park club will make an announcement early next week, but Coleman is favourite for the second-in-command spot under David Pleat.

Borough Wipe £5,000 Off Debt

Nuneaton Borough Football Club has wiped almost £5,000 off its debts in the past two years and is on the road to financial recovery. Figures released at their annual meeting show that the club, who although still in the red, has made great progress. The deficit stands at around £5,000, after a profit of £149 for the year which ended on May 31, 1972. Since then, the position has continued to improve.

"We have held our position and slightly reduced the figure," said club chairman Mr Alf Scattergood. Borough showed an operating loss of £10,333 in 1971-72. This was offset by fundraising and other assets which brought in £10,482, including another donation of £3,500 from the social club.

And the chairman predicted that the football club would be solvent in another two years. He said: "We have kept down administration costs and tightened up on every penny.

Nuneaton Borough v Bedworth United 15-03-1973

Borough: Allsopp, Smith, Gill, Jones, Swift, Harris, Starkey, Franklin, Shepherd, Turpie. **Sub:** Ritchie.

Bedworth: Burton, Hall, Whitehead, Burckitt, Busby, Hambridge, Healey, Horne, Eades, Karacinski, Dixon. **Sub:** Davies.

Borough welcomed Bedworth United to Manor Park to play a President's Cup tie.

Len Harris and Roger Smith rescued a drab game from total obscurity with two glorious goals. Both were taken with coolness and determination – to win a game in which there was little of either. Harris shot Borough into the lead after 32 minutes. He hit the ball hard and low from the edge of the box after Bob Turpie had beaten Viv Hall and pulled it back.

And Smith settled the game 20 minutes later when he controlled a half-clearance, wriggled his way through an advancing Bedworth defence and then coolly beat goalkeeper Colin Burton. But the performance of both teams questioned the wisdom of playing a friendly near the end of a crowded season.

It was a casual, carefree hour and a half. Uninteresting and pointless. Just a practice game. Bedworth had chances to have brought the game into life – striker David Eades missed two. But they faded after a bright start to the second half and the game died on its feet. The 600-plus crowd had difficulty raising enthusiasm for the match – and so did the teams.

Margate v Nuneaton Borough 17-03-1973

Margate: Brodie, Clewlow, Summers, Sawyer, Breach, Nuston, Baber, Clayton, Barry, Brown, Walker. **Sub:** Perry.

Borough: Robinson, Stephens, Bridgett, Howshall, Gill, Jones, Starkey, Smith, Franklin, Harris, Turpie. **Sub:** Shepherd.

Borough made the journey to Hartsdown Park to play Margate in a Southern League Premier Division fixture.

Borough carried themselves to the threshold of a new club away record, yet were honest enough to admit that they didn't play well. A hard, bumpy pitch, typically end of the season, made things difficult for both sides to play skilful soccer. The game was a personal triumph for Brian Robinson; centre-forward Barry Franklin put himself back on the premier division goal trail; and Len Harris completed a remarkable week.

Midfield man Harris scored the winner against Romford a week last Saturday, netted against Bedworth in the President's Cup and hit the decisive second goal on Saturday. But hard work, effort and determination when things were going badly, laid the foundations for Nuneaton's sixth away win in the Southern League this season. It was close. Borough weathered a frantic 20 minutes at the end and Robinson earned himself man of the match honours with a series of magnificent saves.

He finger-tipped a header from Eddie Clayton on to the

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crossbar and pushed a Bruce Walker piledriver around the post just before half-time. And he twice thwarted Margate substitute Perry when he looked certain to score – once after full-back Ray Summers had thundered a shot against the bar. The goal which beat him and led to the nerve wracking finish came from Walker's explosive left foot. The former Borough player hit a shot from 25 yards out on the wing which twisted into the top corner of the net.

There was an element of luck about the way it went in. Margate's final flourish came after Borough had gone 2-0 up. Franklin scored in the 34th minute after Tom Starkey had glanced a Roger Smith corner towards the line. And Harris chalked up his goal with a perfectly struck right foot drive from 25 yards out after Gerry Howshall hammered a free-kick against the Margate wall. Borough should have wrapped up the match at that stage as frustrated Margate were foiled time and again by Robinson and a battling back four.

Instead they became edgy and anxious – and almost tossed it away as the Kent outfit's first flourish threatened an equaliser. But they survived to equal the club's Southern League away record with three trips left before the end of the season.

Borough Buy Back Keeley

Mick Keeley, discarded by Nuneaton Borough three years ago, will re-sign for the Manor Park club at the weekend for a "substantial" fee. He plays his last game for Rugby Town tomorrow and will be in the Borough side against Margate at Manor Park on Monday night. Final details have yet to be wrapped up, but a spokesman for the Oakfield club said: "We have received a substantial offer from Nuneaton which is almost certain to be accepted."

Nuneaton Borough v Margate 19-03-1973

Borough: Robinson, Stephens, Gill, Jones, Bridgett, Lewis, Harris, Smith, Franklin, Keeley, Turpie. **Sub:** Shepherd.

Borough welcomed Margate to Manor Park to play a Southern League Premier Division game.

Mick Keeley added his skill, pace and courage to a Borough side that brought Manor Park back to life. The biggest Southern League crowd since last August turned up to hail his return to the club after three years. And he responded with a hand in the two goals that won the match and pushed Nuneaton into eighth place in the Premier Division table.

The whole atmosphere of the game was transformed when Bob Turpie and Alan Jones struck in a 90 seconds spell at the start of the second half. Before then, Margate had gone ahead with a Bruce Walker blockbuster and had threatened to ruin Keeley's return. But the quick fire goals clinched a match that was often hard – but always entertaining.

Keeley, greeted by a "Welcome Back Mick" banner draped behind the Cock and Bear goal, sparked off the move which led to Bob Turpie's equaliser in the 46th minute. He switched

a pass out to Roger Smith, back to his skilful best on the right flank, and Turpie headed Smith's centre past a helpless Chick Brodie. And he was involved in the challenge on Margate defender Dave Houston which led to the second goal from the next attack. Turpie ran the ball at the Kent side's defence to win a corner and Jones climbed above Houston and Keeley to connect with a powerful header from Smith's flag kick.

Borough struggled for more than half an hour. They displayed tremendous individual skills, but lacked Margate's penetration and goal threat. Margate played long balls up to their front runners and laid them back for their midfield players to support and threaten the Nuneaton rearguard.

Walker's goal followed a long free-kick from Eddie Clayton. It dropped just short of Brian Robinson, was laid back by Pat Ferry – and Walker rifled it into a yard of space with one of his explosive left foot specials. Borough, on the other hand, were far more complicated. Too elaborate at times – like playing passes into a telephone kiosk with three people waiting to make a call. But the two goal blast changed all that and Margate's problems increased when centre-half Steve Breach went off injured and they had to re-shuffle their side.

Barry Franklin scooped a shot over the top after Smith had chested the ball into his path, Keeley showed his speed and skill with a shot on the turn that stung Brodie's fingers – and Franklin hit the bar after another chance created by Keeley. There were signs that the Keeley-Franklin duo will develop into an exciting partnership. Both have skill, pace and above all, courage to go in where it hurts.



A message that says it all: "Welcome Back Mick" from the young fans behind the Cock and Bear end goal. Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune

Nuneaton Borough v Dover 24-03-1973

Borough: Robinson, Swift, Bridgett, Lewis, Gill, Jones, Starkey, Franklin, Keeley, Harris, Turpie. **Sub:** Shepherd.

Dover: Gadsby, Tranter, Hall, Curtis, Carragher, Carter, Johnson, Robinson, Machettie, Stevenson, Moy. **Sub:** Moss.

Borough welcomed Dover to Manor Park to play a Southern League Premier Division game.

Borough produced more evidence to support their claims for a place among the top six teams in the Southern League. They dismissed championship chasing Dover with two goals



early in the second half to clinch their fourth premier division win in a row. And, with seven games left, they could finish in their highest spot since the glory days of 1966-67. Player-manager David Pleat has laid solid, skilful foundations and they have at last conquered their fears of playing at Manor Park. Borough wrapped up the points with another second half goal burst – two in two minutes just after the break.

Big John Gill forced home the first in the 51st minute after a mistake by Dover goalkeeper Dave Gadsby. The centre-half turned the ball over the line with his chest, despite claims from the Kent club that he handled. And Bob Turpie settled the match with a magnificent headed goal eight minutes later. Tom Starkey started the move, Mick Keeley centred – and Turpie powered the ball into the net from an unmarked position ten yards out.

The goals were in keeping with a game which was untidy in the first half, but improved after the interval. A strong, blustery wind ruined the first half hour and made both teams struggle. But it eased after the break when Nuneaton always looked the better side. Dover, relying on quick breaks, looked dangerous early on. They were never frightened to push players forward. But a Nuneaton back four that gave nothing away and an offside trap worked to perfection blotted them out in front of goal.

Brian Robinson hardly had a shot of note to save in the whole of the game. John Gill and Alan Jones provided the main stumbling blocks for the Kent side and Dave Swift and Ray Bridgett were always on top of their game in the full back spots. Dave Lewis and Len Harris more than held their own against Dover's midfield three and Borough had skill up front.

Mick Keeley had a good second half, particularly during one purple patch when Nuneaton took complete command. Borough could have gone ahead in the closing stages of the first-half. They twice went desperately close and Barry Franklin had a magnificent shot on the turn pushed over the top by Gadsby.

Lockheed v Nuneaton Borough 27-03-1973

Borough: Robinson, Swift, Gill, Jones, Bridgett, Lewis, Harris, Starkey, Franklin, Shepherd, Turpie. **Sub:** Smith.

Borough travelled to The Windmill ground to take on Lockheed in a Birmingham Senior Cup fourth round tie.

Borough tumbled out of the Birmingham Senior Cup with a display that made a mockery of their Southern League form. They were outfought and outrun by aggressive Lockheed and fortunate to escape a real thrashing. The Brakes, fired by the enthusiasm of new manager Jimmy Knox, ran them ragged for most of the match.

Borough went from bad to worse after being shaken by a fourth minute goal. Sheer persistence and determination gave the home side control as Borough went to pieces and struggled to string passes together. Any link between

the Nuneaton side that has pulled itself into eighth place in the Premier Division and last night's display was purely coincidental. Borough had no-one to match the fighting spirit of Lockheed captain Keith Shrimpton, the determination of defenders Tony Bowden and Ernie Wilkinson, the skills of Mickey Boot – and the power in the air up front of burly Graham Jessop and lanky Barry Whitlock. Jessop and Whitlock had the Borough back four in all kinds of trouble as Lockheed played a stream of long balls up to their front runners.

The Brakes were in front before Nuneaton had time to settle down. Boot chipped a free-kick forward to Whitlock. His back header hit the post and Jessop slammed in the rebound. And the home side were 2-0 up in the 23rd minute – from another Jessop-Whitlock move. Jessop headed on a free-kick, Dave Swift and Alan Jones were involved in a mix-up and Whitlock ran on to score. He looked as if he had lost the chance as he dragged the ball across the goalmouth, but kept his head to beat Brian Robinson.

Borough tried to recover, but they failed to create a clear-cut chance in the whole of the game. Their one goalmouth effort came from Len Harris who hit a tremendous drive which laid out Bowden. Bowden and Wilkinson won everything in the air for Lockheed and Nuneaton-born Dennis Taylor showed coolness and skill at left back. Even when Lockheed faded in the last half-hour, Nuneaton could not cash in.

Three Borough Players In Showpiece Squad

Three Nuneaton Borough players have been chosen for the Birmingham County FA's showpiece game against the Scottish FA at Manor Park on April 8. The three – skipper Dave Lewis, top scorer Barry Franklin and amateur winger Tom Starkey are included in a 14-strong squad.

Waterlooville v Nuneaton Borough 31-03-1973

Waterlooville: Figgins, Stones, Hare, Phillips, Kill, Avery, Cook, Moffat, Sykes, Manns, Allen. **Sub:** Jack.

Borough: Robinson, Smith, Bridgett, Lewis, Swift, Jones, Starkey, Franklin, Keeley, Harris, Turpie. **Sub:** Stephens.

Borough made the journey to Waterlooville to play a Southern League Premier Division fixture.

Borough achieved their best away points record ever, when they beat Waterlooville 2-1, moving them up to seventh in the league table. And David Pleat's aim of a place in the top six is well within their grasp. They were always a better side than the bottom of the table club, but despite being two goals up with 60 minutes gone, they became complacent and almost threw the match away. Brave goalkeeping by Brian Robinson covered up their defensive errors to prevent a Waterlooville equaliser in the final 20 minutes. The home side exposed flaws in a shaky offside trap and Robinson made point blank saves from Avery, Allen and Cook.

Avery managed to score five minutes from time with a header

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from beyond the far post which hit an upright and rebounded to Robinson but was over the line. Both Borough goals came from Mick Keeley, who made an enormous contribution. The most skilful player on the park, he could easily have had a hat-trick, during Nuneaton's period of complete domination. Bob Turpie and Ray Bridgett set up the first after only eight minutes and Roger Smith's courage and persistence carved out the second 15 minutes after half time.



Keeley in action again. This time he heads a free-kick inches over the bar in the first-half of a game Borough dominated for 70 minutes and then almost let slip. Photo: Joe Gibson/Nuneaton Evening Tribune

He took a pass from Bridgett, forced home full-backs Hare and Stones into indecision, and Keeley added the final touch to his cross from almost on the line. Smith had moved up on to the right wing after a first half injury to Tom Starkey forced a re-shuffle. Starkey crashed into an iron boundary rail three feet from the touchline and went off with bruised ribs. Kirk Stephens went on at right-back and Smith moved forward to display the kind of versatility that makes him such a valuable member of the squad.

Keeley was the outstanding player, but youngster Dave Swift, at centre-half in place of flu victim John Gill, did well under difficult circumstances. But Borough always had more all round skill than struggling Waterlooville, whose tackling, could have led them into deep trouble with a stronger referee. To their credit, Borough refused to allow themselves to be intimidated despite a lack of protection from the referee.

Nuneaton Borough v Luton Town 02-04-1973

Borough welcomed Luton Town to Manor Park to play a friendly match.

Rugby Town striker Adrian Stewart made a guest appearance for Borough and set them on the road to victory against a strong Luton line-up. Stewart, watched by a number of clubs, scored in the first-half from a Barry Franklin cross. Borough maintained their lead in an open, entertaining game until the Second Division side levelled with a second-half penalty. Derek Hales converted the spot kick from his second attempt after Brian Robinson reached the first. But Borough won the match with a solo effort from Barry Franklin who raced clear and slipped the ball past goalkeeper Willie Carrick.

Nuneaton Borough v Burton Albion 07-04-1973

Borough: Robinson, Stephens, Bridgett, Lewis, Gill, Jones, Starkey, Franklin, Keeley, Harris, Turpie. Sub: Smith.

Burton: Bradwell, Goodwin, Mole, Smith, Annable, Hickton, Milton, Brown, Naylor, Beresford, Cowlshaw. Sub: Whitehouse.

Borough welcomed Burton Albion to Manor Park for a Southern League Premier Division match.

Borough increased their claims for a place in the top six and pushed Burton deeper into relegation trouble. But they struggled after a bright start to a game which had all of the action crammed into the first 20 minutes. Borough sparkled as they raced into a two goal lead and threatened to eclipse the Eton Park outfit.

Barry Franklin shot Borough ahead after seven minutes and Alan Jones made it 2-0 in the 20th minute. Burton tottered on the brink of disaster as Nuneaton promised to unbottle all of the frustrations they have suffered at home this season. But the promised goal glut never came. Borough lost their way and disguised their intentions as Albion were let off the hook.

And with Burton incapable of making any real impression on a strong Nuneaton defence the match spluttered and died. Borough, sharp and skilful in the opening spell, became vague and disjointed and Burton were let off the hook. Stalemate in midfield led to a dearth of chances up front, although the Manor Park side had two goals disallowed.



Alan Jones powers a header past Burton centre-half Phil Annable for Borough's second goal in the 20th minute from a superbly planned corner. Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune

Franklin's goal followed a Bob Turpie cross and a Mick Keeley pass after Borough had set up a chance in the opening seconds. And Jones, soon to make club history with his 500th appearance, headed a picture book second. Burton's defence

Nuneaton Borough 1970-1979 – Part 1



was pulled to the near post from a Turpie corner and Jones ran in behind them to power a header into the net. Just before half-time Brian Robinson denied Burton a goal with a magnificent save.

Borough had a Tom Starkey goal disallowed when Keeley pushed goalkeeper Richard Bradwell and John Gill headed wide from a Harris free-kick. Seconds from the end Borough almost had a third goal when Bradwell was badly positioned for a long Starkey cross and had to push the ball over the top.

Guildford City v Nuneaton Borough 14-04-1973

Guildford: Brooks, Peters, Westburgh, Watts, Harris, Glazier, Clements, Malloy, Burge, Tyler, Dobson. **Sub:** Smith.

Borough: Robinson, Stephens, Howshall, Lewis, Gill, Jones, Smith, Franklin, Keeley, Harris, Turpie. **Sub:** Swift.

Borough made the journey to Guildford City to play a Southern League Premier Division game.

Chatham referee Jim Craigie blew for 55 free kicks as Borough and Guildford elbowed, pushed and jostled their way through a stop-go game. But his whistle was silenced two minutes from time – he swallowed it. It went down his throat when he couldn't get out of the way as a bunch of players fought for the ball. Prompt action by players from both sides and Borough trainer Stan Marshall enabled him to continue.

David Pleat's happy wanderers travelled home with another away win – their 22nd point from 20 trips. Their seventh Southern League win in a row was achieved by goals from Barry Franklin and Mick Keeley from the handful of chances they created. Franklin scored after a 60th minute John Gill free kick – a goal out of the blue following a period of intense Guildford pressure at the start of the second half.

City could have scored three times and Nuneaton were in deep trouble before Franklin suddenly snapped up the chance and turned the game. Keeley's goal, laid on by Bob Turpie in the 76th minute, wrapped up the points, although Guildford defender Tom Malley scored from the penalty spot three minutes from the end.



Guildford's defence is in all kinds of trouble as Mick Keeley (extreme right) fires in Borough's second goal – his third in five Southern League games.

Photo: Joe Gibson/Nuneaton Evening Tribune

The spot kick was given against Gill for pushing, but it came too late to give City a chance of saving the game. Guildford full-back Peter Westburgh was booked for a high tackle on Keeley and Borough midfield man Len Harris had his name

taken when he kicked the ball away. But Mr Craigie could have used his book much earlier to stamp out the niggling tackles which crept into the game.

Full back Kirk Stephens had a fine game for the Manor Park side. Dave Lewis worked tirelessly in midfield, Keeley showed his skills up front – and Alan Jones was tremendous in the back four. And Borough are now on the brink of the top six, only seven points behind top of the table Kettering.

Nuneaton Borough v Barnet

16-04-1973

Borough: Robinson, Stephens, Gill, Jones, Bridgett, Lewis, Harris, Smith, Franklin, Keeley, Turpie. **Sub:** Starkey.

Borough welcomed Barnet to Manor Park for a Southern League Premier Division game.

Borough wrote another sad chapter to the story of their season at Manor Park – a season strewn with setbacks at home. They dominated much of the match, should have beaten Barnet, yet planted a full stop on their seven match run of success. A gift goal and a second-half smash and grab raid gave the North Londoners their win. Nuneaton failed in their bid for an early breakthrough and could not convert their second-half attacks into goals.

The Barnet goal led a charmed life and keeper Jack McClelland pulled off the save of the match to push a Mick Keeley header over the top in the 58th minute. Yet Nuneaton created a rod for their own back with a constant stream of long balls into the Barnet defence. And their frustration turned to despair as the minutes ticked away. The longer it went the more obvious it became that the Manor Park side would not score.



Mick Keeley lunges and misses from six yards – one of the many chances that went begging in Borough's defeat against Barnet.

Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune

McClelland saved what looked a certain goal from Keeley in the 13th minute after a five man move had split the Barnet defence. Three minutes later the ex-Arsenal goalkeeper took the ball off Barry Franklin's head after more skilful work from Keeley. But Barnet went in front in the 18th minute when Ricky George cashed in on a mistake by Alan Jones. The normally sound Borough defender lost the ball a few yards from his own net and George whipped it past Robinson.

Barnet then had two miraculous escapes as a shot from Dave Lewis was booted off the line and a Jones header hit Ben Embery on the chest with their defence in a daze. The goal had knocked a lot of the confidence out of Nuneaton's play and they began to struggle. But they launched a spell of



fierce pressure at the start of the second half as Barnet pulled players back to preserve their lead.

Keeley was just a bootlace away from the ball when the slightest touch would have brought a goal and then McClelland was in trouble again as a shot spun off full-back Jimmy Lye. But Barnet twice showed their speed on counter attacks – and it was from such a break that they notched their second goal in the 78th minute. The ball was swept out to left winger Dave Bibby and his cross found its way through to George who shook off a challenge from Jones just inside the box. His first shot hit Robinson, but he followed up to score from the rebound – and the points were in the bag.

Pleat To Hang Up Boots

Borough player-manager David Pleat will hang up his boots at the end of the season. He has accepted that his playing career which began as a teenager at Nottingham Forest is at an end. “I think I have accepted the fact that I won’t play again,” he said.

Cambridge City v Nuneaton Borough 20-04-1973

Borough: Robinson, Stephens, Gill, Jones, Bridgett, Harris, Lewis, Smith, Starkey, Keeley, Turpie. Sub: Howshall.

Borough made the journey to Milton Road to face Cambridge City in a Southern League Premier Division match.

Borough ended their magnificent away season on an unhappy note. They rarely showed the form which brought them 22 points from their Premier Division travels. And they conceded two goals early in the second half after they had fought back from behind. Yet the Manor Park side had chances to have won a shabby match which had an end-of-the-season feel to it.

Cambridge went in front after five minutes through midfield man Martin Murray when a free-kick split the Borough defence. He hit the crossbar, but followed up to score after the rebound had been headed back into the middle. Mick Keeley then had two chances which should have put Nuneaton in front. He was left clear when City’s offside trap fell down, but goalkeeper Keith Barker pulled off a fine save from a weak shot.

Keeley then shot over from point blank range after Roger Smith had headed a Starkey cross to his feet from beyond the far post. A Bob Turpie header hit an upright on the half hour during a spell in which Borough looked the better side. But the game sagged for long periods and most of the worthwhile action was sandwiched into a 15 minute spell at the start of the second half. Borough were on level terms just 75 seconds after the break when Turpie was brought down by his ex-Peterborough team mate Ollie Comny.

City protested but Starkey netted from the spot with a perfectly placed shot. It should have been the signal for Borough pressure – yet they struggled and hit their worst patch of the match. Kirk Stephens cleared off the line before Cambridge regained their lead in the 52nd minute.

Stan Marshall crossed to Murray, whose hard driven shot was kicked away by Alan Jones – but Braintree linesman Mr Peter North flagged that it had crossed the line. Seven minutes later Borough, strangely unsure and unsteady at times, conceded the goal that settled the match. Marshall squared a pass to Eddie Bailham, who ran on and cracked an unstoppable shot past Brian Robinson.

Nuneaton Borough v Bedford Town 21-04-1973

Borough: Robinson, Stephens, Bridgett, Lewis, Gill, Jones, Smith, Starkey, Keeley, Howshall, Turpie. Sub: Shepherd.

Bedford: Alexander, Skinn, Folds, Smith, Townsend, Cooley, Parratt, Scurr, Adams, Rodney, Silous. Sub: Sorbie.

Borough welcomed Bedford Town to Manor Park to play a Southern League Premier Division game.

Borough demonstrated their lack of penetration in a goalless Easter Saturday bore against Bedford. They failed to break down a solid Eagles’ defence which dominated in the air.

Bob Turpie had a header pushed over the bar by goalkeeper Alan Alexander and Mick Keeley glanced the ball against an upright. But clear-cut chances were few and far between for Bedford’s young side, it included four players from their youth team, who could have snatched a win. Teenager Laurie Smith shot wide with the Nuneaton defence in trouble and experienced Norman Cooley went close from a good position.

Borough Apply For League Status

Nuneaton Borough have applied for Football League status – for only the third time in their history. But manager David Pleat admitted: “We realise we may not get a vote.”

The plan behind the application is to include Borough’s name among the other non-league hopefuls. To make it clear that the club is just as ambitious as the Yeovils, Ketterings and Chelmsfords, who are aiming for the Fourth Division.

Nuneaton Borough v Hillingdon Borough 23-04-1973

Borough: Robinson, Stephens, Lewis, Jones, Ritchie, Howshall, Harris, Smith (Franklin), Bridgett, Keeley, Turpie.

Borough welcomed Hillingdon Borough to Manor Park for a Southern League Premier Division game.

Borough rounded off their season with a display that cost them their 18th home point. They turned in a poor display under terrible conditions with a hotch potch of a side. And, after seven wins in a row they completed a frustrating premier division campaign with only one point from their last eight.

Borough’s problems began before the game when manager David Pleat was forced into a last minute re-shuffle. They were without centre-half John Gill. Dave Lewis dropped back, youngster Gordon Ritchie came in at number three – and full-back Ray Bridgett became an emergency striker. Bridgett had a chance in the opening minutes, but returned to the defence when Barry Franklin replaced Roger Smith at half-time.



Borough lacked penetration and ideas as both sides skidded and slithered on a paddy field of a pitch. And their problems deepened four minutes after the break when Eddie Reeve shot Hillingdon ahead. He volleyed the ball past Brian Robinson after the defence had only half cleared a John Peachey corner. The goal made a complete hash of their hopes for a bright end to the season and Reeve could have scored again when he hit the bar with a header.

Hillingdon keeper Mick Lowe made good saves from Dave Lewis and Gerry Howshall as Borough fought to save the game. But the Manor Park side created few clear cut chances. They lacked power in the air up front – something manager Pleat has to remedy in his close season search for players.

Hillingdon looked more likely to score again than concede a goal as the season dragged to a close. A season in which Borough struggled, promised great things – and struggled once again.

Pleat Signs Adrian Stewart

Borough manager David Pleat has completed the signing of forward Adrian Stewart from Rugby Town – the first move in his plans for next season. Stewart, an amateur at Oakfield, has signed professional forms for the Manor Park side. He replaces Trevor Shepherd, who has been released.

Gill Transfer Request Agreed

Nuneaton Borough centre-half John Gill has had his transfer request granted by the Manor Park club. He will go on the open to offers list with a small fee on his head, around £100.

Gill, the club's most experienced player, asked for his release because of travelling difficulties. He lives at Wednesbury, Staffordshire, and will look for a club in the Birmingham area, possibly in the West Midlands League.

Nuneaton Borough v Barnsley 00-05-1973

Borough welcomed Barnsley to Manor Park to play a friendly match.

Mick Keeley and Adrian Stewart, who formed a 40 goal partnership at Rugby Town, are back in business. They notched Nuneaton Borough's goals in an entertaining game. And they showed that the double spearhead that worked so well at Oakfield could turn up trumps for Nuneaton. Stewart, who has signed professional forms, put Borough in front after 12 minutes. He side-footed the ball home from close range after full-back Ray Bridgett had done the spadework with one of his characteristic attacking runs.

And Keeley, already a favourite with the Nuneaton fans, hit a tremendous goal two minutes into the second half. Alan Hopkinson equalised for Barnsley on the half-hour and Alistair Millar cancelled out Keeley's goal in the 50th minute.

His shot crept into the net past unsighted goalkeeper Mike Allsopp after a cross has been half cleared. The goals apart, Keeley and Stewart displayed much of the understanding

they have built up as a striking duo. And with Borough tight at the back where Dave Lewis stood out in a solid back four, the game showed that manager David Pleat has built wisely and well.

But he will have to improve the midfield department during the close season if Nuneaton are to make a serious challenge for honours next term. Len Harris did well, but transfer listed Gerry Howshall and youngster Tom Starkey lack the discipline and ball winning bite to form a balanced middle of the park trio.

Borough might have won in the last half hour when Barry Franklin showed that he will demand recognition alongside Keeley and Stewart in a front line that should bring the goals back to Manor Park. Full-back Alan Vaughan, another signing from Rugby Town, played for 30 minutes instead of youngster Kirk Stephens, who again showed his tremendous potential with another almost immaculate display.

Nuneaton Borough v East Stirling 18-05-1973

Borough: Robinson, Stephens, Lewis, Jones, Bridgett, Starkey (Goodfellow), Howshall, Harris, Keeley (Smith), Franklin, Turpie.

Borough welcomed East Stirling to Manor Park for a Anglo Scottish friendly match.

Two goals from Barry Franklin, one a penalty and a superb Bob Turpie header gave Borough a win in an entertaining match. Franklin put Nuneaton ahead after 21 minutes when he headed home a right wing cross from Tom Starkey. Bob Turpie increased the lead when he beat the Scottish club's defence to a centre from the impressive Kirk Stephens.

East Stirling hit back early in the second half and substitute Johnny Berry side footed the ball into the net after winger Paddy Murphy had pulled it back from the line. But Borough maintained their grip on the game and Franklin made sure of victory with an 87th minute penalty after Roger Smith had been sandwiched by two defenders and brought down.

Almost on time Gerry Howshall drove a shot wide after good work by Smith – the final gesture by the Nuneaton side who now have seven weeks lay-off before they resume training in early July. Jimmy Goodfellow went on for the last half hour for a farewell appearance before he joins Lockheed. Adrian Stewart was unavailable.

Borough In Proposed National League

Nuneaton Borough are among 22 clubs named in a proposed national league for non-league clubs announced today. Both the Southern League and Northern Premier League management committees have accepted the idea and it will now go before the clubs.

The plan, designed by a joint committee from the Northern and Southern Leagues, is for a top tier of 22 clubs, 15 from the Southern League and seven from the Northern League to play in a Premier Division.

Alan Is The Fans' Choice



Alan Jones, Nuneaton Borough's "Player of the Year" and "Clubman of the Year" gets a hug from his biggest fan - his wife Ann.

Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune

Alan Jones, just six games away from his 500th appearance for Nuneaton Borough, is tops with the Manor Park fans. Last night he collected the coveted "Player of the Year" award and the Howard Kerry "Clubman of the Year" trophy – the first player to win both. And not a single fan in a packed Co-op Sports Club concert room disagreed with the choice.

Jones topped the Evening Tribune poll with 26.6 per cent of the fans' vote, a clear winner from skipper Dave Lewis and goalkeeper Brian Robinson.

It was a tribute to 11 years' magnificent service by the tough tackling defender, who has just ended a joint testimonial with Roger Smith. Afterwards, with typical modesty, he said: "It's fantastic – but I thought Dave Lewis would win."

Atherstone Town In 'Super League' Protest

Atherstone Town, worried about their future if plans for a National League at semi-professional level are accepted, will fight their case in London on June 2. They are among a number of clubs expected to voice a protest when the "Super League" plan is put to the Southern League annual meeting.

And they will receive support from Nuneaton Borough, who are assured of a place in the top flight if the plan goes ahead.

The suggestion already agreed by the Southern League and Northern Premier League management committee, has been hailed as the "biggest step forward in the history of non-league soccer."

Borough Sign John Flannagan

John Flannagan, Atherstone Town's skilful midfield player, has joined Nuneaton Borough in a swap-plus cash deal involving Roger Smith. The move was today described by Borough manager David Pleat as "satisfactory to both clubs." Flannagan joined Adders last summer and was one of the stars of their promotion season, scoring 18 goals.

Smith, who has had a joint testimonial this season with Alan Jones, was signed for Borough by Dudley Kernick in 1967.

Borough Sign Tamworth Skipper

Nuneaton Borough have completed the signing of Tamworth skipper and full-back Bob Newton – their second transfer move inside 48 hours. Newton's capture follows the John Flannagan-Roger Smith swap plus cash deal. And it moves manager David Pleat one step nearer completion of his plans for next season.

Newton, who is 28, had Southern League Premier Division experience with Telford United before joining Tamworth five years ago.

Southern League Premier Division 1972-73

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Kettering Town	42	20	17	5	74	44	57
Yeovil Town	42	21	14	7	67	31	56
Dover	42	23	9	10	61	38	55
Chelmsford City	42	23	7	12	75	43	53
Worcester City	42	20	13	9	68	47	53
Weymouth	42	20	12	10	72	51	52
Margate	42	17	15	10	80	60	49
Bedford Town	42	16	15	11	43	36	47
Nuneaton Borough	42	16	14	12	51	41	46
Telford United	42	12	20	10	57	47	44
Cambridge City	42	14	15	13	64	53	43
Wimbledon	42	14	14	14	50	50	42
Barnet	42	15	11	16	60	59	41
Romford	42	17	5	20	51	65	39
Hillingdon Borough	42	16	6	20	53	59	38
Dartford	42	12	11	19	49	63	35
Folkestone	42	11	11	20	41	72	33
Guildford City	42	10	11	21	59	84	31
Ramsgate	42	9	13	20	35	61	31
Poole Town	42	10	10	22	50	88	30
Burton Albion	42	9	7	26	43	81	25
Waterlooville	42	4	16	22	33	63	24



Barry Franklin hits a shot on the turn just before half-time. It flew over the top – and Kidderminster survived to earn a replay.

Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune

Kidderminster Harriers – Preliminary Round Replay

Borough made the journey to play Kidderminster Harriers in a FA Cup Preliminary Round Replay.

Borough: Robinson, Swift, Gill, Lewis, Bridgett, Smith, Turpie, Harris, Shepherd, Franklin, Baker. Sub: Goodfellow.

Trevor Shepherd, the pint sized forward who packs explosive shooting power, scored the goal which made Borough believe in themselves. And it paved the way for a tremendous win that lifted the gloom.

Shepherd scored in the 22nd minute with a shot that stunned Kidderminster, silenced the Aggborough crowd – and brought Nuneaton's confidence flooding back. It was a stunner. He collected a short square pass from Gerry Baker 35 yards out and, without warning, hammered the ball in off the underside of the bar.

This one magical moment lifted Nuneaton sky high and set the scene for a dramatic, tension packed Cup tie, not decided until the last kick. Borough responded with magnificent, all out effort, while Kidderminster, still in a daze after Shepherd's goal, tried to gather their game.

Borough withstood 15 minutes of intense pressure at the end of the game which would have broken most teams. Goalkeeper Brian Robinson redeemed himself after Saturday's blunder with two match saving point blank range saves in the final 90 seconds.

Skipper Dave Lewis inspired a defence who were prepared to fight until they dropped – and Roger Smith rolled back the clock. Smith unearthed the flair and enthusiasm that has been missing from his play, pushed forward, took on defenders, and looked as if he was enjoying himself again.

But it was an all round team effort which carried Borough into the next round. Seldom has a Nuneaton side faced such pressure on it to win – and never has one responded so well. Smith

Kidderminster Harriers – Preliminary Round

Borough welcomed Kidderminster Harriers to Manor Park for a Preliminary Round FA Cup tie.

Borough: Robinson, Harris, Bridgett, Smith, Gill, Goodfellow, Shepherd, Baker, Franklin, Lewis, Turpie. Sub: Pleat.

Kidderminster: Roberts, Isherwood, Price, Lander, Jewkes, Boot, McGee, B. Wassall, P. Wassall, Lynch, Billington. Sub: Jones.

Borough were the better of two moderate sides and will probably not get as many chances in the replay as were passed up on Saturday.

Borough took the lead just before half-time, only to see it snatched away less than a minute later. And although they hit the Harriers with a 20 minute barrage of second-half pressure, they were unable to get another goal.

Had they been able to hang on to their lead, given to them by Gerry Baker in the 41st minute, until half-time, things would surely have turned out better.

But only seconds after Baker scored, goalkeeper Brian Robinson called for

the ball and missed it on the edge of his 18 yard box and Pat Lynch coolly lobbed in the equaliser.

It was a tragic error from Robinson, who earlier made two saves from former Borough skipper Mickey Boot, one of them a tremendous effort.

A goal during Nuneaton's hectic start to the second half when Harriers' stand-in goalkeeper Harry Roberts pulled off a string of fine saves might have crushed the Harriers.

Roberts stuck out a leg to stop a certain goal from full-back Ray Bridgett and pushed out a couple of pile-drivers from Trevor Shepherd. It was all Nuneaton at this stage and Kidderminster were forced to pack their defence.

As it stands Borough now face a mountainous task. They had their chances against grimly determined Kidderminster, who were not a patch on some of the Aggborough sides who have visited Nuneaton in the past.

Borough also have their problems and have yet to impress the crowd which fell below the 2,000 mark.

announced Borough's intentions as early as the second minute when he raced 20 yards and hit a shot Harriers' goalkeeper Harry Roberts was glad to push out for a corner.

The game see-sawed before Shepherd exploded on the scene and then 15 minutes into the second half Robinson blocked a shot from Billington before Smith again cut in and shot over.

Tension built to breaking point as the minutes ticked away – and then Kidderminster launched their last desperate bid to save the game. Nuneaton, unaccustomed to being in front fell back anxiously, but that was when Dave Lewis and John Gill and Co. came into their own.

Lynch missed a chance for the Harriers with the goal at his mercy and, as the game moved into its final stages, Paul McGee hit the post with a header from a Mickey Boot cross. Robinson got his body behind a shot from Lynch and did brilliantly to push the ball around the post for a corner.

And, in injury time, the keeper blocked another effort from Harriers' centre-half Terry Jewkes. But Nuneaton held out for a win that could go down in the Manor Park record books as one of the most vital in the club's history – it was certainly one of the most exciting.

Lockheed – 1st Qualifying Round

Borough welcomed Lockheed to Manor Park to play a 1st Qualifying Round FA Cup tie.

Borough: Robinson, Howshall, Lewis, Gill, Bridgett, Smith (Goodfellow), Harris, Turpie, Shepherd, Franklin, Baker.

Borough cantered to an FA Cup date at Rugby with a 4-1 victory over Lockheed which was as easy as the scoreline suggests. Lockheed were still in the hunt as late as the 73rd minute when they really had no right to be.

Borough, a class above Geoff Coleman's outfit, dictated for most of this clash. It was the killer instinct that was missing. They wasted enough openings to



John Gill forgot his defensive duties for the first time in the 77th minute, when he grabbed Borough's third goal.

Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune

win three matches as the front line problems that have hindered their progress this season were still evident.

Former Nuneaton Amateur League starlet, Dennis Taylor, gave Lockheed fresh heart with a goal in the second half. Borough did not make it safe until 13 minutes from time when John Gill surprised everyone with a well taken goal. And goal number four came in injury time.

Gill scored one of his rare goals when he collected a bad clearance from Ernie Wilkinson, raced forward to take a return pass from Gerry Baker and stormed through to beat the advancing Bob Steane.

Baker started the Lockheed downfall – and sealed it with a late header from a clever run to the near post to meet substitute Jimmy Goodfellow's corner. Baker's first, in the 19th minute, was a gift. Goalkeeper Steane was badly at fault – completely misjudging Baker's

flighted cross, which sailed over him into the net.

In front of a 1,653 crowd, disappointing by Nuneaton's standards, the match failed to stir the excitement that usually surrounds Manor Park Cup ties. Gerry Howshall and Wilkinson were booked for fouls after the break, but it was never a rough encounter.

For the second week on the run Borough had to overcome a shaky start, and could have faced a two-goal deficit. Dennis Walker was the man who could have caused the upset. He saw a 14th minute header hit the bar, and within 60 seconds was left clear when Gill slipped, only to be foiled by Brian Robinson's good timing. The winger had another chance shortly afterwards.

Dave Lewis gradually settled down his defence and Borough took control. In-form Roger Smith produced the sort of runs that have made him a Manor Park favourite. With Len Harris and Bob

Turpie also working well, Nuneaton had the upper hand in the middle.

Harris' efforts were rewarded with the best goal of the match – his first of the season – in the 56th minute. He fooled Steane with a 20 yards cross-shot, with Lockheed's defence expecting him to carry it through.

Rugby Town – 2nd Qualifying Round

Borough travelled to Oakfield to play Rugby Town in a 2nd Qualifying Round FA Cup tie.

Rugby: Jones, A'barrow, Thomas, Griffiths, Knox, Archibald, Cassidy, Adcock, Stewart, Vaughan, Lee. Sub: McGrogan.

Borough: Robinson, Harris, Bridgett, Howshall, Gill, Jones, Smith, Starkey, Franklin, Lewis, Turpie. Sub: Goodfellow.



Rugby goalkeeper Dave Jones wins an airborne tangle with Barry Franklin – but the Borough centre-forward had the last laugh. He notched the 52nd minute match winner that put Borough into the next round.

Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune

Borough inched into the third qualifying round with a 52nd minute

goal from Barry Franklin. It was that close as two tough, determined sides battled for supremacy on a rock hard surface that played tricks with the ball.

It was another indication that Borough have become a hard side to beat. Only one team, Atherstone, have managed it in the last eight games. And Rugby seldom looked like being the second.

Borough's hero for the second week running, was keeper Brian Robinson. He handled superbly and flooded confidence into the defenders. Alan Jones and John Gill were again solid pillars at the heart of defence and full-back Ray Bridgett celebrated his return from injury with a cool display.

It was in midfield where Nuneaton struggled. Bob Turpie, Dave Lewis and Gerry Howshall were determined, but not very constructive. Up front, youngster Tom Starkey had a fine game. He turned in some strong running and played a part in Franklin's match winner with a break past two defenders and a shot that Rugby keeper Dave Jones could only push out to the centre-forward's feet.

Starkey and Roger Smith looked far more dangerous after the first half-hour when they went wide to stretch the home defence. Franklin was again the match winner with a goal that was worth all of his £1,500 fee.

He almost dragged the ball wide after Starkey's shot had been pushed out by the goalkeeper, but followed up to squeeze a powerful shot into a narrowing gap between an upright and Rugby full-back A'Barrow.

That settled a typical cup tie, earned Nuneaton a third qualifying round game against Alvechurch at Manor Park and put them one step closer to a first round place.

Alvechurch – 3rd Qualifying Round

Borough welcomed Alvechurch to Manor Park to play a 3rd Qualifying Round of the FA Cup.

Borough: Robinson, Stephens, Bridgett, Harris, Gill, Jones, Lewis, Starkey, Franklin, Turpie, Baker. Sub: Goodfellow.

Alvechurch: Ward, Lyne, Francis, Inchmore, Puncheon, Palmer, Davies, Deehan, Lawrence, Horne, Allner. Sub: Elder.

Bob Turpie booked Borough's place in the final qualifying round with a shock tenth minute goal. And centre-forward Barry Franklin confirmed the reservation when he settled the tie a few minutes from the end.

But in between the goals Borough, whose destination is a place in the first round, almost lost their way. They were unimpressive for more than an hour against the Midland Combination amateurs, struggled in midfield and ran into blind alleys up front. Their cash and glory hopes hung from a slender thread as Alvechurch fought to wipe out Turpie's goal.

Brave goalkeeping from Brian Robinson, bad finishing by Alvechurch and the fighting spirit of the back four helped them to cling to their lead. Yet things could have been different had they maintained the form they showed in a brief spell after Turpie had headed them in front.

They pushed forward along the flanks, particularly down the right hand side where Tom Starkey set up the goal and made Alvechurch look a mediocre side. But they faded as half-time approached and looked a different team after the break, stopped using the space on the wings and became tense and anxious.

The tie produced a string of crunching tackles and John Gill and the Worcestershire side's substitute Malcolm Elder were both booked. Gill had his name taken for a heavy tackle on Alvechurch centre-forward Kenny Lawrence a few seconds after Lawrence had clashed with youngster Kirk Stephens on the edge of the Borough box. The teenage full-back went off to the dressing rooms, but returned after treatment to add courage and character to his undoubted potential.

For long periods it was easy to see



Bob Turpie heads Borough into the lead with the tenth minute goal that hit Alvechurch like a hammer blow and put the Manor Park side on the way to a final qualifying round tie.

Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune

Alfreton always looked more likely to crack under pressure and their defence spent a lot of time looking for Gerry Baker, hat-trick hero of Nuneaton's win on the same ground last season. Baker proved them right in the 50th minute when he slipped his shadows to head Borough in front after Gill had nodded a Ray Bridgett free-kick across the goal.



The joy of success as Baker, Dave Lewis and Bob Turpie acclaim the first goal.

Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune

why Borough's Cup run has failed to capture the imagination of the fans. But to be fair, David Pleat's side were on a hiding to nothing against the Midland Combination kingpins. And to be kind, they did enough to win.

Yet, they will have to improve if they are to take the next vital step which leads straight into the First Round.

Alfreton — 4th Qualifying Round

Borough travelled to Alfreton to play a 4th Qualifying Round FA Cup tie.

Alfreton: Fowler, J. Blackburn, I. Blackburn, B. Walker, Renshaw, Tunstall, Ford, Harrison, Slater, Griffiths, S. Walker. Sub: Roberts.

Borough: Robinson, Stephens, Bridgett, Lewis, Gill, Jones, Starkey, Goodfellow, Franklin, Turpie, Baker. Sub: Shepherd.

Law student Tom Starkey helped Borough to graduate into the First Round of the FA Cup. He controlled the ball on the run and smashed a powerful cross shot into the net to make certain Nuneaton went through.

And the Manor Park side now has a chance to re-ignite the interest among the fans who have drifted away. Their FA Cup flame has flickered through six ties – but it now has a chance to burn through the gloom.

All of their ties leading up to the First Round, with the exception of Lockheed, have been close, hard fought affairs with more tension than entertainment. Saturday's was no different. Neither side was in complete command, but Borough always looked capable of winning, despite the Midland Leaguer's record of 12 games without defeat.

Yet goalkeeper Brian Robinson pulled them out of trouble with three fine saves – two of them stamped with brilliance. As early as the second minute he pushed a header from centre-half Steve Renshaw over the top. It was a superb header – equalled by a superb save.

And as late as two minutes from the end he flung himself full length to push a shot from Dave Griffiths around the post for a corner during Alfreton's desperate last ditch bid to save the game. His other save was from a point-blank range header. An instinctive stop to an effort that went straight at him.

Borough won because they had more solid foundations than the well organised, but far from skilful home side. They were as hard as a rock at the back where Gill and Jones dominated the area in front of Robinson.

Telford United — 1st Round Proper

Borough travelled to the Buck's Head to face Telford United in the 1st Round Proper of the FA Cup.

Telford: Irvine, Harris, Ray, Coton, Croft, Ross, Thompson, Fudge, Owen, Bentley, Jagger.
Sub: Draycott.

Borough: Robinson, Stephens, Gill, Jones, Howshall, Lewis, Harris, Starkey, Shepherd, Baker, Turpie. Sub: Franklin.

Nine incredible closing minutes turned a grim, tense FA Cup tie into a classic. Tension, drama, joy and despair. It was all there as Borough made a bid to stay on the glory trail. Four goals, two from each side, near misses, and the thrills and spills of real Cup tie soccer were contained in the cliff hanger of a finale.

Borough midfielder man Len Harris was sent off – after scoring the best goal of the game. The tie, which had simmered for more than an hour, spilled over and exploded into life with an 81st minute John Gill header which put Borough back into the game. Nuneaton had battled for half an hour to wipe out a tragic own goal from Alan Jones. Yet within 50 seconds they were shattered by the goal which killed off their hopes.

The cheers were still ringing in their ears when Mickey Fudge picked up the ball, ran at the Nuneaton defence, side stepped John Gill, and drove a superb shot into the net from 20 yards.

Borough were stunned. And before they had time to catch their breath Telford went 3-1 up when centre-half Paul Coton had time to pick his spot after



John Gill's moment of triumph – Borough's 81st minute equaliser and the goal which led to the incredible closing spell.

Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune

the ball had cannoned across goal to his feet from a Jones tackle on Jagger.

Still they were not finished. With two minutes to go Len Harris hit a shot from outside the box which carried too much power for Irvine, who got his hands to it, but could not stop it from going in.

Borough had just seconds left when Harris was sent off for arguing, and the battle was still at boiling point when the final whistle put an end to the thrills.

All this followed a free-kick littered first-half during which both sides struggled. Telford did most of the attacking for an hour, but Borough's defence easily dealt with their long ball raids and cut their chances down to a minimum.

Brian Robinson made one save from Coton. Jack Bentley carved out a shooting chance for Fudge, and Coton headed wide after a free-kick. During this time Alan Jones was magnificent in the Borough back four. But his triumph turned to tragedy six minutes from half-time. He played a back pass to Robinson and then held his head in horror as he watched it enter the net.

Borough then launched an all-out attacking spell which had the home side in desperate trouble. Bob Turpie shot wide, Trevor Shepherd blasted a free-kick over the top and Dave Lewis hit a point blank range shot against Irvine. And Gerry Baker had a chance that will haunt him. Completely clear with just the keeper to beat, he tried to lob the ball over Irvine's head, only to present him with a save.

Telford were dangerous at this stage with counter attacks, spearheaded by Fudge, who tried to exploit the gaps left at the back by Nuneaton's attacks. Yet there looked to be only one side in it – Nuneaton. The rest is history. Gill's equaliser, Fudge's killer blow and the nine minutes which made it a match to remember.



Some of the hundreds of fans who made the trip along the Watling Street.

Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune

Margate — 3rd Qualifying Round

Borough made the journey to Hartsdown Park to play Margate in the 3rd Qualifying Round of the FA Trophy.

Margate: Brodie, Summers, Butterfield, K. Jones, Paton, Houston, Baber, Clayton, Barry, Brown, Walker. Sub: Ferry.

Borough: Robinson, Stephens, Gill, Howshall, Jones, Starkey, Baker, Lewis, Shepherd, Harris, Turpie. Sub: Goodfellow.

Proud, confident, at times almost arrogant, Borough swept into the first round of the Non League Cup. They forged another link in their chain of success away from home with a magnificent win.

Faced with one of the toughest final qualifying round tasks, they rose to the challenge and met it with spirit, determination – and skill. Margate's much feared attack, they have rattled in 34 premier division goals this season, held no fears for the Manor Park side.

They showed what most Southern League sides know but are not brave enough to prove – that Margate's defence is nothing like as good as their front line. Once they had shaken off the first 15-20 minutes, always vital after a long trip, they settled down to attack.

And attack they did. Margate were stunned as goals from Bob Turpie and Tom Starkey opened up a 2-0 lead inside the first 51 minutes. David Pleat sent his side out to take the game by the scruff of the neck. If Margate expected Nuneaton to sit back and soak up pressure they were sadly mistaken.

The second half was a thriller. Barry Brown cut Borough's lead, Starkey increased it to 3-1 and then Brown

struck again with just six minutes to go. But Turpie missed an easy chance and also rattled the crossbar while the tension built up among both sides.

Borough stayed cool and controlled – they have the best defence in the Southern League – and Margate were done for. They have proved they can defend, ask Wimbledon, Barnet, Yeovil, Kettering and Chelmsford, but this time they showed they can attack, even without injured top scorer Barry Franklin. When was the last time a Borough side hit three goals away from home against top class opposition? And what a game in which to do it.

They were mobile and imaginative up front, moved smoothly from defence into attack and rocked Margate to their bootlaces. It was a solid all round performance. Full of hard work and determination, but two players deserve a special mention.

Gerry Baker, player-manager at Margate until last September, had one of his best games of the season. He ran his old side ragged and helped to destroy the team he built at Hartsdown Park. And Len Harris was supreme in midfield alongside Dave Lewis.

Borough had a team of workers and runners. Solid, workmanlike, confident, dependable – and skilful. Three were booked – Gerry Howshall, Kirk Stephens and Gerry Baker - Howshall for a crash tackle on Margate winger Baber and the other two for more trivial offences.

Eleven tired, but happy Nuneaton players walked proudly off the Hartsdown Park pitch at the end – and strode triumphantly into the competition proper.

Barnet — 1st Round Proper

Borough welcomed Barnet to Manor Park for a 1st Round Proper FA Trophy tie.

Borough: Robinson, Stephens, Gill, Jones, Bridgett, Lewis, Harris, Starkey, Franklin, Baker, Turpie. Sub: Goodfellow.

Barnet: McClelland, Lye, Fusedale, Fascione, Tom, Powell, Plume, Ferry, Embery, Davies, Eason.

Borough's Non League Cup hopes hinge on a first round replay, which should not have been necessary. Their impressive away record will be tested to the full on the North Londoners' sloping Underhill pitch. But Borough made a rod for their own back. They tossed away a string of chances in a tie they should have won hands down.

It was incredible to watch as Borough set up a constant stream of attacks. They had Barnet bewildered, but could not supply the killer touch. There was only one team in it for 85 per cent of the match.

Dave Lewis, Len Harris, Ray Bridgett, Gerry Baker and Bob Turpie all had chances which would have won the match. Yet Barnet almost plundered a win late in the game when Colin Davis thundered a shot against the crossbar and had another pushed over the top by Brian Robinson.

But for most of the tie, Robinson, who shook off an ankle injury to play, was redundant as Nuneaton pushed forward. Bob Turpie had a tremendous first-half and youngster Tom Starkey promised great things. It looked just a matter of time.

But time ran out. The longer the game went the more obvious it became that David Pleat's outfit would not break the spell. The razor sharp finishing Borough displayed against Bedford lost its edge and their attacks were blunted by their own failings.

Barnet defended well – they had to – but they should never have been allowed to survive. And the crowd huddled under the stands against the



Bob Turpie slides the ball past Margate goalkeeper Chick Brodie for the goal that put Borough on the victory trail in Saturday's five goal Non-League Cup-tie. Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune

steady rain waited in vain for the goal feast that Nuneaton promised, yet failed to supply. Even two appeals for penalties – one when Turpie was sent sprawling by full back Lye and then when Franklin was kicked from behind – failed to prise open the way to goal.



Was it a penalty? This tackle by Barnet full-back Jimmy Lye sent Bob Turpie sprawling into the box and had the crowd roaring for a spot kick. Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune

The referee did not help matters with some strange decisions, Borough might ask for him to be changed for the replay. But Nuneaton only had themselves to blame. They made the

chances, set themselves up for a win – yet tossed it away.

They have a habit of pulling through when the odds are against them. Kidderminster, Margate and Bedford can vouch for that – but the pressure will be on in the replay. They cannot get as many chances again.

Barnet – 1st Round Proper Replay

Borough made the journey to Underhill to play Barnet in the 1st Round Proper of the FA Trophy.

Borough: Robinson, Stephens, Gill, Jones, Bridgett, Lewis, Harris, Turpie, Starkey, Franklin, Baker. Sub: Smith.

Torrential rain washed out Borough's Non League Cup tie four minutes into extra time. And the FA will now have to be called in to sort out the venue for the third game between the two sides. The teams were locked at 2-2 when Luton referee Mr M. C. Dixon finally called a halt. They had defied wind, mud and a constant downpour to stage a thrill-a-minute duel.

But a monsoon-like cloud burst

turned an already swamplike pitch into a paddy field. It was impossible for them to continue. Both teams were magnificent under the appalling conditions and richly deserved the ovation they received at the end.

Nuneaton were again the better side. They took an early lead, fought back from behind, and it was Barnet who tottered on the brink of defeat when the tie was called off.

They carried the game to the North Londoners against the Underhill slope and Bob Turpie scored direct from a right wing corner after 15 minutes. And they then had to fight off two second-half hammer blows – a penalty and gift goal.

Mr Dixon gave Barnet a spot-kick two minutes into the second half when Colin Davies hammered a shot against Dave Lewis. The Borough skipper could not get out of the way. He protested in vain, but Dave Plume equalised from the 12 yard mark.

Twenty-five minutes later goalkeeper Brian Robinson made a tragic error which almost cost his side the match. He sliced a goal kick straight at Barnet danger man Colin Powell, who hit the ball back into an empty net from 25 yards.

It looked as if all of Nuneaton's efforts would be in vain. But they showed their character and determination and 12 minutes from time Tom Starkey fired an equaliser into the roof of the net.

That was the signal for Borough to regain the grip on the game that they had lost during Barnet's two goal period. And they had the North Londoners in all kinds of trouble with an all out last ditch assault. One goal-line scramble had to be seen to be believed.

The cloudburst which finally ended the match began while the sides prepared for extra-time. Mr Dixon took them off for eight minutes, emerged from the dressing rooms to carry out a final inspection – and called it off.



Another escape for Barnet as Gerry Baker heads a Tom Starkey cross against the bar with the North Londoner's defence in all kinds of trouble. Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune

Barnet — 1st Round Proper Second Replay

Borough made the journey to Banbury to play Barnet in the 1st Round Proper Second Replay of the FA Trophy.

Borough: Robinson, Stephens, Jones, Lewis, Bridgett, Harris, Howshall, Starkey, Franklin, Shepherd, Turpie. Sub: Baker.

Borough destroyed Barnet in a spectacular finish to their Non League Cup second replay, which was played in foggy conditions. They pierced the gloom of a winter's night with three goals in four minutes to banish Barnet from the Wembley trail.

The North Londoners, last year's beaten finalists, had no answer to Borough's goal power or to the skills of one man – Bob Turpie. Borough's ex-Peterborough winger stood head and shoulders above everyone on the park with one of the finest individual performances from a Nuneaton player in years.

Terrific Turpie tormented Barnet to defeat. He scored one goal, had a hand in three others, and ran the opposition ragged. Turpie left a trail of wreckage in his wake with one of the best performances of his career – a night of magic.

But the whole team played well and received a standing ovation from their fans at the end of the game. They are now through to the last 32, have a second round tie at home to Wimbledon – and Wembley is not that far away.

Borough did last night what they should have done to Barnet a fortnight ago. Only this time the goals went in. Tremendous in defence, tight in midfield, and razor sharp up front, they reduced Barnet to a shambles at the end.

But they struggled for 20 minutes at the start of the second half before they prised open the way to goal and ran riot. Tom Starkey and Bob Turpie did the damage before the break on the flanks. They took on their full

backs and turned the Barnet defence inside out.

Yet Borough were only one goal up at half-time, scored by the adventurous full-back Ray Bridgett. He collected a Turpie pass, moved down the line, and hit a cross shot which went in off the foot of the far post. That was in the 35th minute, but Borough had to wait half an hour for their next goal.

And it was Turpie who scored with a glancing header from a Trevor Shepherd corner. Barnet full-back Dick Plume made a vain attempt to clear, but the ball was already over the line. Nuneaton were already on their way into the second round when they suddenly launched a three goal burst – sparked off by a penalty.

Shepherd was brought down by Field as he ran on to a Turpie pass and Barry Franklin rifled in the spot kick. Two minutes later Len Harris hammered an unstoppable shot into the roof of the net from a goalmouth scramble. And, with seconds left, Franklin stabbed in the fifth from close range after a

Turpie cross had been pushed back into the middle by Shepherd from beyond the far post.

That was it. The Nuneaton fans went wild with joy as the players walked off the pitch – led by Bob Turpie, who last night looked the complete non league footballer.

Wimbledon—2nd Round Proper

Borough welcomed Wimbledon to Manor Park for the 2nd Round Proper of the FA Trophy.

Borough: Robinson, Stephens, Bridgett, Lewis, Swift, Jones, Starkey, Shepherd, Franklin, Goodfellow, Turpie. Sub: Smith.

Wimbledon: Guy, Stockley, Loughlan, Rice, McCready, Summerhill, Armstrong, Marchant, Cooke, Silkman, O'Rourke. Sub: Larkin.

Borough should be making plans for a Non League Cup second round replay. Instead they are out of the competition, their Wembley dreams in ruins and a gaping hole has been torn in their hopes for the rest of the season. Borough had their problems



Bob Turpie sprawls in the mud as his overhead kick sends the ball towards the net.

Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune

against solid, skilful Wimbledon and they twice fought back bravely from behind.

But they lost to a goal in the dying seconds that should never have been allowed. Because the ball was over the line when Wimbledon winger Dave Armstrong pulled it back for Andy Marchant to complete his hat-trick with the match winner.

At that stage the lines had been almost obliterated after a furious battle in the rain, sleet and snow. Full-back Kirk Stephens and Brian Robinson both hesitated, waiting for a whistle which never came. Robinson made a desperate bid to cut out the cross to Marchant, but he had no chance of repairing the damage.

It was a bizarre, cruel and controversial ending to a magnificent mud-splattered battle which was a credit to both sides. They turned what could have been a farce into a near classic on a pitch that made running a hazard and mistakes inevitable.

Five goals, numerous near misses, two glorious chances tossed away and a fast and furious pace provided the fans with all of the thrills of a typical cup tie. Wimbledon were better organised. Strong in defence, tight in midfield and skilful up front.

It was easy to see why they are the most consistent side in the Southern League Premier Division and they must have a wonderful chance of reaching Wembley.

Borough did not have the same compactness in their play. Their back four looked anxious at times and they were never on top in midfield. They missed John Gill, due to return after a 28 day ban. The centre-half, who would have been tailor-made for the conditions, was taken ill the night before the game.

And Len Harris, without doubt the club's best midfield man, has another week left of his 21 day ban. But no-one could be faulted for effort. And the crowd, huddled under the stands against the weather, responded to David Pleat's call for all-out support. The tie was always wide open, but Wimbledon won it on the left wing where Armstrong created havoc with the Nuneaton defence.

Billed as an outside right, he switched flanks at the kick-off, turned in a man-of-the-match display, and had a hand in all three of Wimbledon's goals. His near post corner gave Marchant his first goal after six minutes – a close range header. He beat stand-in centre-half Dave Swift and flat-footed the

Borough defence to set up Marchant's second three minutes before half-time.

And he was involved in the disputed match winner after another run which had the Manor Park side in all kinds of trouble. Barry Franklin cancelled out the first goal with a superb shot on the turn from the edge of the box in the 23rd minute.

Bob Turpie notched the second equaliser three minutes into the second half with an overhead kick which slipped through goalkeeper Dickie Guy's hands and trickled over the line.

Gerry O'Rourke missed a glorious chance for Wimbledon when he headed wide of an empty net with the defence hopelessly beaten. And Tom Starkey failed to cash in for Borough after Guy had thrown the ball straight to his feet 20 yards out. Guy saved Starkey's shot with his legs.

Despite Armstrong and their weaknesses, Borough deserved a second chance of a place in the last 16. No-one can deny that.

But while the arguments raged the snow covered up the evidence – and Wembley might well have been a million miles away.



Wimbledon can't believe it and goalkeeper Dickie Guy kneels in despair on the line – but Bob Turpie rushes to receive the acclaim of the crowd. His overhead kick had slipped through Guy's hands.

Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune



Nuneaton Borough 1972-73

Back: Stan Marshall (trainer), John Gill, David Swift, Brian Robinson, Dave Lewis, Roger Smith, Alan Jones,
Ray Bridgett, David Pleat (player-manager), David Kite (physio).

Front: Tom Starkey, Gerry Howshall, Bob Turpie, Gerry Baker, Trevor Shepherd, Lennie Harris, Jimmy Goodfellow

Southern League Premier Division: Fixtures, Results & Scorers- 1972-73

Nuneaton Scores First

Date	Opposition	Venue	Competition	Score	Scorers	Attendance
07.29	Rugby Town	H	JST	2-1	Baker, Bridgett	1012
08.02	Bromsgrove Rovers	A	PSF	0-3		
08.05	Leicester City XI	H	PSF	0-2		1588
08.07	Notts County	H	PSF	2-1	Franklin (2, 1 pen)	1319
08.12	Worcester City	H	L	3-1	Baker, Turpie, Franklin	2943
08.14	Wimbledon	H	L	0-0		3643
08.19	Dartford	A	L	1-2	Starkey	890
08.21	Telford United	A	SLC 1-1L	1-2	Turpie	1351
08.24	Evesham United	H	BSC1	2-1	Franklin, Baker	1014
08.26	Cambridge City	H	L	1-2	Franklin	2400
08.28	Telford United	H	SLC1-2L	0-3		1714
09.02	Kidderminster Harriers	H	FACP	1-1	Baker	1842
09.04	Kidderminster Harriers	A	FACPr	1-0	Shepherd	1383
09.05	Wimbledon	A	L	1-1	Franklin	
09.09	Weymouth	H	L	1-1	Franklin (pen)	1853
09.16	Lockheed	H	FAC1Q	4-1	Baker (2), Gill, Harris	1653
09.19	Barnet	A	L	1-1	Baker	940
09.20	vNuneaton Borough 1967	H	T	3-2	Franklin (2), Starkey	1400
09.23	Folkestone	H	L	3-0	Baker, Franklin (2),	1815
09.26	Atherstone Town	H	MFC	0-2		2192
09.30	Yeovil Town	A	L	0-0		2706
10.07	Rugby Town	A	FAC2Q	1-0	Franklin	1871
10.09	Cheltenham Town	H	MFC	3-1	Franklin, Lewis, Hubbard	1055
10.14	Poole Town	A	L	2-4	Baker, Franklin	404

Nuneaton Borough 1970-1979 – Part 1



Southern League Premier Division: Fixtures, Results & Scorers- 1972-73

Nuneaton Scores First

Date	Opposition	Venue	Competition	Score	Scorers	Attendance
10.16	Chelmsford City	A	L	0-1		2879
10.17	Bedworth United	A	MFC	3-0	Franklin (2), Starkey,	426
10.21	Alvechurch	H	FAC3Q	2-0	Turpie, Franklin	1987
10.23	Bedworth United	H	MFC	4-1	Starkey, Shepherd (2), Franklin	1054
10.28	Dover	A	L	0-1		814
11.04	Alfreton Town	A	FAC4Q	2-0	Baker, Starkey	1814
11.06	Kettering Town	A	L	0-0		2256
11.11	Margate	A	FAT3Q	3-2	Turpie, Starkey (2)	1180
11.13	Sutton Coldfield Town	H	BSC2	2-1	Baker (2)	820
11.18	Telford United	A	FAC1	2-3	Harris, Gill	3196
11.25	Waterlooville	H	L	1-1	Turpie	1604
11.27	Bedford Town	A	L	3-1	Baker, Gill, Franklin	
12.02	Barnet	H	FAT1	0-0		1523
12.05	Barnet	A	FAT1r	2-2 aet	Turpie, Starkey	724
12.09	Guildford City	H	L	3-2	Turpie (2), Baker	1728
12.16	Burton Albion	A	L	3-0	Starkey, Franklin (2)	970
12.18	Barnet	At Banbury	FAT1 r2	5-0	Bridgett, Turpie, Franklin (2), Harris	634
12.22	Yeovil Town	A	L	1-1	Turpie	1919
12.26	Hillingdon Borough	A	L	0-0		
01.02	Dartford	H	L	0-1		2080
01.06	Folkestone	A	L	2-1	Crook (o.g.), Franklin	752
01.09	Atherstone Town	A	MFC	1-2	Franklin	1502
01.13	Ramsgate	A	L	1-0	Shepherd	269
01.20	Wimbledon	H	FAT2	2-3	Franklin, Turpie	1468
01.27	Weymouth	A	L	1-2	Baker	1201
01.29	Poole Town	H	L	2-0	Franklin, Turpie	1621
01.31	Cheltenham Town	A	MFC	0-4		
02.03	Ramsgate	H	L	0-0		1919
02.05	Tamworth	A	BSC3	1-1		810
02.10	Kettering Town	H	L	2-2	Lewis (2)	1595
02.12	Rugby Town	A	F	4-4	Starkey (2), Hubbard, Shepherd	
02.17	Romford	A	L	2-1	Hubbard, Turpie	907
02.19	Tamworth	H	BSC3r	2-1	Lewis, Shepherd	1298
02.24	Telford United	H	L	0-0		1650
02.26	Chelmsford City	H	L	1-2	Shepherd	1801
03.03	Telford United	A	L	2-2	Turpie (2)	971
03.05	Worcester City	A	L	0-1		1486
03.10	Romford	H	L	1-0	Harris	1654
03.15	Bedworth United	H	PC	2-0	Harris, Smith	631
03.17	Margate	A	L	2-1	Franklin, Harris	901
03.19	Margate	H	L	2-1	Turpie, Jones	2099
03.24	Dover	H	L	2-0	Gill, Turpie	1939
03.27	Lockheed	A	BSC4	0-2		
03.31	Waterlooville	A	L	2-1	Keeley (2)	317
04.02	Luton Town	H	F	2-1	Stewart, Franklin	
04.00	Barnsley	H	F	2-2	Stewart, Keeley	
04.07	Burton Albion	H	L	2-0	Franklin, Jones	1898
04.14	Guildford City	A	L	2-1	Franklin, Keeley	806
04.16	Barnet	H	L	0-2		2151
04.20	Cambridge City	A	L	1-3	Starkey (pen)	214
04.21	Bedford Town	H	L	0-0		1590
04.23	Hillingdon Borough	H	L	0-1		1095
05.18	East Stirling	H	F	3-1	Franklin (2, 1 pen), Turpie	

KEY : L = Southern League Premier, FAC = FA Cup, SLC = Southern League Cup, BSC = Birmingham Senior Cup, MFC = Midland Floodlit Cup, PC = President's Cup, PSF = Pre Season Friendly JST = Jack Scamp Trophy T = Testimonial



Borough Must Have Some Good Signings!

To The Editor

Borough must have some very good signings in the pipeline when we can afford to let the best player on the books leave and pay another club to take him.

Pleat says his policy is to sign proven non-league players. I suppose Roger Smith, for some reason best known to Pleat, does not come into this category. I know this move has not gone down very well with the vast number of fans I am in contact with daily.

We could do with more players of Smith's calibre. I bet Malcolm Allen couldn't get the transfer papers out quick enough. All credit to him.

As for Roger not being able to command a first-team place last season. I would think 'not being given a fair chance' more suitable.

No-one expects a manager to listen to fans help him pick a team, but it would do Mr Pleat well to remember that the fans he seems to treat with contempt are the backbone of the club, the club with the finest non-league potential in the country.

Brian Deacon, 183 Edward Street, Nuneaton.

Borough Should Be Football League In Five Years

A Nuneaton Borough campaign for Football League soccer could pay off within five years. That's the view of Borough manager David Pleat after the club polled their first-ever vote at its third attempt for election into the League.

Pleat said: "Nuneaton is a footballing area with great crowd potential. League clubs realise this. If we go out of our way we will surprise ourselves just how far we can push for a place.

"Under the present system it would have to be a five-year campaign. If the proposed National League comes about it could be quicker. But it can be done."

Alf On The Committee

Nuneaton Borough chairman Alf Scattergood was this afternoon elected to the management committee of the Southern League for a one year term. He replaces Mr M. Sinclair from Guildford City, who resigned.

The Manor Park chairman was elected at his third attempt, but Reg Read, chairman of Atherstone, failed in his bid for a place on the executive committee.

National League Plan Gets Backing

Non League soccer pledged overwhelming support at the weekend to the plans for a National League the season after next. The Southern League clubs gave their management committee a 98 per cent vote in favour of continuing talks.

And in Manchester yesterday the Northern Premier League received a one hundred per cent mandate from its members to go ahead. A joint committee from the two leagues will now

meet for further discussions before calling in the Football Association.

Fifteen clubs from the Southern League premier division, including Nuneaton Borough, and seven from the Northern League are earmarked for the top flight...

Southern League More Expensive

Southern League soccer will cost the fans more next season – an increase of five pence throughout the divisions. Nuneaton Borough led the bid to raise the minimum charge from 25p to 30p and received overwhelming support at the annual meeting in London. Only seven clubs voted against the increase, including re-elected Bedworth United.

Isolation, Obscurity Will Be Outlawed

Surely the plan for a pyramid system through a Southern/Northern League merger must represent the greatest breakthrough in the lower sphere of soccer since the formation of the Third Division South and North. If the plan gains approval, promotion and relegation to and from the Fourth Division is certain to follow – if not immediately, within two seasons.

The implications are obvious. Isolation and obscurity will have been outlawed from all professional soccer with promotion and relegation forging a link from the higher peaks of the First Division giants to the lower reaches of an area league "minnow".

No fairer system could be adopted and I have written thousands of words to promote this idea and have had letters printed on the subject in newspapers from Margate to Macclesfield. Of course, the plan is not without teething troubles. And one must surely have sympathy for such clubs as Atherstone and Tamworth, placed out of their natural geographical area.

But "Adders" chairman Reg Read seems to be way off beam in his suggestion that the reorganisation would merely create a springboard for a few clubs with their eyes on League status.

Every club within the system would have equal opportunity of achieving equal status, dependent solely on their playing ability. That is creating a vehicle on which all clubs can ride to victory. As Southern League secretary Bill Dellow said: "The way the clubs are selected (for the area leagues) will be a big argument. But it is only a minor matter compared with the implications the plan holds for the future." What he meant was that when member clubs vote on the merger on June 1 they will be voting for progress – with the chance of writing a new chapter into the annals of soccer history.

Nemesis (Full name and address supplied)

Borough Sign Vaughan

Full-back Alan Vaughan, an amateur with Rugby Town last season, has signed professional forms for Nuneaton Borough. He has been connected with the club for more than a month and played the end of season friendly against Barnsley.

Borough Receive Bid For Howshall

Nuneaton Borough have received a bid from another Southern League club for midfield player Gerry Howshall.

“We have agreed in principle to the offer,” said David Pleat, who retained the ex-West Brom and Norwich wing-half at the end of the season. But Howshall re-joined his family in Devon and asked to leave.

Meanwhile, Borough have signed Roger Bray, who has been released by Northampton. Bray is a former Sandon Rangers player, who was previously with Leicester City.

Borough’s German Tour Falls Through

Nuneaton Borough’s plans for a pre-season trip to Germany have fallen through. They had hoped to make a short three match visit to the Dusseldorf area as part of their build-up to the new season. But the German FA forbid friendlies on consecutive days, which would have meant a longer stay.

Borough Sign Sorbie

Nuneaton Borough manager David Pleat last night signed Coventry-born youngster Charlie Sorbie from Bedford Town. Sorbie made 20 appearances at centre-forward for the Eagles and his strength in the air earned him six goals. Yet Pleat, who first saw the player at Luton, sees him as a back four player.

In other news, Gerry Howshall has joined Weymouth for a small fee. Howshall links up with Graham Williams, who is player coach at the Dorset side and previously played with Howshall at West Brom.

Borough Want To Quit Birmingham Senior Cup

Nuneaton Borough want to pull out of the Birmingham Senior Cup because they are upset at the way the competition was handled last season. Manager David Pleat said today: “We have told them we don’t want to participate next season. I don’t want to go into the reasons, but the County FA have acknowledged our letter and will call a meeting to discuss it.”



Nuneaton Borough began the hard slog of pre-season training when they reported back for duty last night. Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune

Gill Agrees To Stay With Borough

John Gill is to stay with Nuneaton Borough – for the time being at least. The defender has been persuaded by manager David Pleat to reconsider a request to leave. Gill, retained

by the Manor Park club at the end of last season, wanted to move because of travelling difficulties connected with his job.

Elsewhere, Dennis Oakes, who had been linked with Borough, has signed for Chelmsford City.

Gordon Ferry – No Deal

Barnet have turned down Borough’s offer for Gordon Ferry, rated by David Pleat as the best back four player in the Southern League. The rejection follows a substantial cash bid by the Manor Park club for the ex-Arsenal and Orient defender. Pleat has decided not to look elsewhere, and said: “Ferry was the player we wanted and for the time being the transfer is not on. We will carry on as we are, and I don’t intend to go round the other clubs looking for alternatives.”

Borough Told: You Play

Borough have been told that they must take part in the Birmingham Senior Cup this coming season. Their bid to pull out has been refused by the County FA – and it could lead to a showdown. Other clubs angered by the County FA’s handling of the competition last season, are all set to support Nuneaton.

They are upset at the way the six Football League clubs affiliated to the County FA were allowed to reach a “financial arrangement” after originally being ordered to play.

1973-74

Nuneaton Borough v Altrincham

28-07-1973

Borough: Robinson, Sorbie, Newton, Jones, Bridgett, Harris, Lewis, Flannagan, Franklin, Keeley, Stewart. Sub: Bray.

Borough welcomed Northern Premier League Altrincham to Manor Park for a pre-season friendly.

David Pleat watched his side lose to a gift goal in their first pre-season friendly and admitted: “We still have a lot to do.” He added: “Some of our play was stuttery and there was indecision and misunderstanding. But, if anything, we finished the stronger side – it was just that we couldn’t get a goal.”



Barry Franklin beats the Altrincham defence with a header which flashed wide.

Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune

Altrincham, a strong, well balanced side, curbed a lot of Borough’s individual flair in a keenly contested game. Borough opened the game with a smooth nine man move before the Northern Premier League team’s hard, often

Nuneaton Borough 1970-1979 – Part 1



physical approach opened flaws in their play. The defence, after a solid start, failed to dominate in the air.

Up front, Borough peppered in a dozen shots without getting a goal and had more individual skill, but less pace, than the visitors. Adrian Stewart had a point blank range piledriver blocked by goalkeeper Peter Eales and the Altrincham defence sagged before the danger was cleared. The best chance of the game went to Mick Keeley. Stewart and Barry Franklin set it up, but Keeley made the mistake of trying to stroke it home and missed out.

Altrincham's winner followed a mistake by Ray Bridgett, Tom Heathcote chipped the ball to the far post and Tom Broadhead beat a stranded Brian Robinson.

Nuneaton Borough v Stafford Rangers 30-07-1973

Borough: Robinson, Vaughan, Lewis, Jones, Newton, Flannagan, Harris, Turpie, Franklin, Keeley, Stewart. Sub: Gill.

Borough welcomed Stafford Rangers to Manor Park to play a pre-season friendly match.

Borough failed to impress in the second of their pre-season warm up games. Powerful Stafford Rangers wrapped up the match with two second half goals and could have had more. And the Manor Park side are still searching for the blend and balance the friendlies are designed to produce.

Stafford went ahead with a 60th minute goal from midfield man Jim Sergeant and clinched the match with a glorious header from Terry Bailey 17 minutes later. Both goals exposed flaws in the Nuneaton defence. Sergeant took a pass from Bailey and scored off the foot of a post and Bailey cashed in on a static defence after winger Mike Cullerton had pulled the ball back across the middle.

Six minutes from time Stafford manager Roy Chapman hit the woodwork from a chance set up by Max Kernick, son of former Borough boss Dudley Kernick. Borough struggled for openings, despite some promising approach work. Chances were few and far between and Stafford, beaten 3-1 at home by Barnet last Saturday, finished the stronger side.

Bedworth United v Nuneaton Borough 01-08-1973

Bedworth: Garnell (Hills, 45), Hambridge, Lyons, Hill, Dixon, Karacinski, Healey, Hall, Shepherd, Eades, Bilboe

Borough: Robinson, Vaughan, Lewis, Jones, Bridgett, Harris, Newton, Turpie (Bray, 75), Stewart, Keeley, Franklin.

Borough travelled to The Oval to play Bedworth United in the President's Cup.

Gerry Baker's battling Greenbacks inflicted another set-back on Borough's pre-season build-up. They won the President's Cup with a goal after just 18 seconds from ex-Tamworth winger Dave Bilboe and survived heavy Nuneaton pressure in the final 20 minutes. Afterwards Baker confessed: "We are not ready yet. Some of the players did not get back from holidays until last weekend."

Bilboe's goal gave United's youngsters the boost they needed and they went on to shake the Manor Park side, although they almost lost control towards the end. For Nuneaton it was the same sad story. Three practice match defeats – and no goals – paint the picture of David Pleat's problems. They had chances, particularly in the closing minutes, but the bite Pleat is searching for has yet to materialise.

And they had no-one in their side to match the class, coolness and skill of ex-Coventry and Torquay defender Brian Hill. He oozed quality in the heart of the United back four and must surely be the best signing they have made in 20 years. Borough are still looking for the discipline Pleat has demanded after giving his players their freedom in the first two friendlies.

They never mastered midfield and their lack of height up front was exposed by the immaculate Hill and the Bedworth defence. Borough now have just two games to find their goal touch before the Southern League season gets under way.

Altrincham v Nuneaton Borough 04-08-1973

Altrincham: Schofield, Allan, Brooke, Ashworth, Casey, Owens, Heathcote, Broadhead, Windsor, Pritchard, Dickenson. Sub: Gill.

Borough: Allsopp, Stephens, Bridgett, Lewis, Jones, Newton, Flannagan, Harris, Keeley, Franklin, Turpie. Subs: Vaughan, Stewart.

Borough made the journey to Moss Lane to play Altrincham in a pre-season friendly.

Borough eased their pre-season problems with a much improved display at Altrincham. Much tighter, better disciplined and more co-ordinated, they shook the Northern Premier Leaguers with a goal after two minutes and matched them for the rest of the game. Barry Franklin, playing better than at any time since his move from Atherstone, scored the goal. He coolly cashed in on a slip by Altrincham centre-half Gerry Casey, who had failed to cut out a ball down the middle.

Centre forward Andy Windsor equalised for the home side in the 20th minute after the Nuneaton defence had been caught in a line and the game ended in stalemate after an even and often dull second half. But Borough did enough to suggest that manager David Pleat has found the formula he has been searching for after three disappointing games.

Stand-in goalkeeper Mike Allsopp did well, despite a few moments of indecision. The back four improved with the return of Kirk Stephens and looked more able to cope with Altrincham's speedy attack. And Bob Newton showed signs of settling into the ball winning role in midfield, left vacant by Dave Lewis's switch to his defensive role alongside Alan Jones.

Bob Turpie and John Flannagan added width to the attacks and newcomer Adrian Stewart, on for Turpie in the second half, could find himself the odd man out when the season starts. In all, it was a much more solid, all round performance against a side as good, if not better, than most of the teams Nuneaton will meet in the Southern League.

Nuneaton Borough 1970-1979 – Part 1



Nuneaton Borough v AP Leamington 06-08-1973

Borough: Robinson, Stephens, Lewis, Jones, Vaughan, Newton, Harris, Turpie, Franklin, Keeley, Flannagan. **Sub:** Stewart.

Borough welcomed AP Leamington to Manor Park to play a pre-season friendly match.

Borough wound up their disappointing pre-season, in a game that exposed their major problem, a lack of goal power. They had chances against AP Leamington, but finished up with a blank score sheet. And they have only one goal to show from their five warm up matches as they prepare to enter the Southern League season against Guildford City.

Leamington goalkeeper Dave Jones turned in a man-of-the-match display with a series of brave saves. But he was helped considerably by Borough's bluntness in attack. They lacked penetration in the first-half and when they did create chances after the break they lacked bite. The need for more height and power up front became even more evident, despite the fact that the side has tightened up.

Nuneaton should have beaten Lockheed, but the Brakes could have snatched a win had Trevor Hubbard and Bobby Horne snapped up two excellent chances that fell their way. Borough are well off in defence. The back four should be able to continue where it left off last season.

National League Casts A Shadow

The shadow of the National League will hang over Southern League soccer this season – making competition for places at the top even more fierce. Clubs know that they have to do well to make sure of a place in the new "Fifth Division" in 1974-75. Nuneaton Borough are no exception. They have maintained steady progress under David Pleat, but need to do better to establish themselves as a top club.

"This season is going to be crucial, stronger and more competitive," said Pleat. "Clubs motivated by their boards of directors, have done a lot of panic buying because of the National League. For every pound they were paying out last season in wages, signing on fees and transfer fees, they are now paying out double."

Nuneaton Borough v Guildford City 11-08-1973

Borough: Allsopp, Stephens, Newton, Lewis, Gill, Jones, Flannagan, Harris, Keeley, Franklin, Turpie. **Sub:** Stewart.

Guildford: Brooks, Peters, Watts, Summerhill, O'Connor, Malley, Kerr, Smith, Burge, Moody, Dobson. **Sub:** Westburgh.

Borough welcomed Guildford City to Manor Park for a Southern League Premier Division encounter.

Borough, notoriously bad starters, failed to remove their fans' fears in the opening game of the season. Manager David Pleat has admitted: "Things are not going as well as I had hoped." And the pessimism reflected itself in the disappointing 1,700 gate on a humid August afternoon. But there were signs that

things will not go as badly as many people believe. Pleat has worries. The blend is still not there after six matches, five of them pre-season friendlies and several players are below form.

They struggled to put their game together in the first half, struck their best patch early in the second – and then allowed Guildford to hit back. Yet it took a goal in the final seconds to deny them the morale boosting win they so badly needed. Guildford's ex-Brentford winger George Dobson scored after Mike Allsopp could only fist out a centre from Paul Smith.

The goal tarnished an otherwise fine display from the young stand-in keeper who won a week long fitness battle to play in the match. He had previously pulled off a string of saves when Guildford, nothing like a top Southern League outfit, applied pressure. Dobson's leveller wiped out a 34th minute effort from Barry Franklin, Nuneaton's best forward.



The Guildford keeper looks baffled. Franklin isn't – he has just scored Borough's first goal of the new season. Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune

But he, like Allsopp, blotted his copy book when he failed to cash in on a gilt edged second half chance that would have settled the match. Put clear by Flannagan just inside Guildford's half he ran through alone, but lost his head as City keeper Brooks came out and blasted the chance high and wide.

Both sides clearly have problems. Both struggled up front, although Borough had enough chances to have wrapped it up. Big John Gill, recalled when the back four was re-shuffled because of an injury to Ray Bridgett, was a pillar of strength in the heart of the defence.

Skipper Dave Lewis, who carried a heavy load in midfield, was another Nuneaton success. But too many of the other players were inconsistent and below par and Dobson's 89th minute goal ruined their hopes of a win that would have flattered.

Cambridge City v Nuneaton Borough 18-08-1973

Cambridge: Barker, Way, Keenan, Murray, James, MacDonald, Comny, Crane, Hunter, Elliott, Knight. **Sub:** Martin.

Borough: Robinson, Stephens, Bridgett, Lewis, Jones, Newton, Turpie, Stewart, Keeley, Franklin, Flannagan.

Borough made the journey to Milton Road to take on Cambridge City in a Southern League Premier Division game.

Borough manager David Pleat has tried team reshuffles and positional changes in a bid to come up with the right



combination. But at Cambridge his problems loomed large. Nuneaton did not manage a worthwhile effort at goal in the whole of the match. They went close to a draw, there were only six minutes left when City grabbed the winner. But the goal was on the cards as Borough, incapable of creating anything up front, were forced to defend.

City substitute Dave Martin netted after Brian Robinson had failed to hold a hard, low, angled shot from Ian Hunter. Robinson had previously made a number of fine saves behind a battling defence in which Alan Jones and Dave Lewis were outstanding. Nuneaton had a goalkeeper and a back four – and the problems. They were poor in midfield and even worse in attack. And their confidence badly needs a boost.

Pleat pulled Mick Keeley back into the middle of the park in a bid to add skill and strength in a department where Nuneaton badly need a class player. The move was not a success. Keeley operates better in the confined spaces of the opponents' penalty area where he can use his skill on the ball.

He was pushed forward after the break, but by that time Borough were already deeply enmeshed in all kinds of problems. Adrian Stewart has less time and space than he had in the Southern League first division at Rugby. And Barry Franklin is usually too wide or too deep to use his goal grabbing ability. It all adds up to a depressing picture for Pleat. He must come up with a few answers – otherwise Nuneaton are heading for a repeat of their previous two disastrous starts.

Burton Albion v Nuneaton Borough 22-08-1973

Borough: Robinson, Stephens, Lewis, Jones, Sorbie, Flannagan, Newton, Stewart, Franklin, Keeley, Harris. **Sub:** Turpie.

Borough made the journey to Eton Park to take on Burton Albion in a Southern League Cup first round first leg tie.

A crowd of over 2,000 came to see the new look home side, which included four former Walsall players, whip the Borough. Burton had scored 12 and conceded only two in three Southern League games. But by the end Borough had stamped their class on the game – which for the first 45 minutes saw them have only one serious shot on target.

Borough had keeper Brian Robinson and stout defending to thank for the fact that they only trailed 1-0 at the break. The Burton goal was scored in the 41st minute by Naylor. Robinson pulled off four superb saves. In the space of 20 minutes at the end of the half he tipped a Buckley header over, leapt acrobatically to push over a Naylor drive, robbed the same player as he dribbled through the defence and then dived full length to parry a Buckley thunderbolt, which was destined for the net.

When Borough emerged for the second half they were a different side. And one player, in particular, emerged to produce his own brand of skill. Adrian Stewart, Borough's close season signing from Rugby, dazzled on the right flank.

His quick bursts saw him leave one or two defenders in his wake. And in the 57th minute one such burst gave Borough the equaliser. Lenny Harris, looking more himself as the midfield general, split the Burton defence with a peach of a pass to Stewart. He quickly fed Keeley who swept the ball into the net. Borough, with their tails up, notched the winner six minutes from time. Another right flank move between Keeley, Stewart and Franklin, ended with the latter putting the ball into the net.

It was a win both players and manager Pleat needed to give them confidence. Borough showed their fighting qualities. At the back they were resolute, in midfield assured and for the last 45 minutes determined in attack. The Keeley-Franklin-Stewart trio linked up to dominate the Burton defence. Lenny Harris returned to his form of last season and the Lewis-Jones duo was strong.

John Evans Joins Borough

John Evans, who recently ended a three-year spell as fixture secretary of the Nuneaton Sunday League, has joined Nuneaton Borough Football Club. He has taken over as secretary on a part-time basis.

Mr Evans, who is 30 and lives in Wentworth Drive, Nuneaton, is a teacher at Alderman Smith School.

Said Borough chairman Alf Scattergood: "John has agreed to join us to give David Pleat more time to concentrate on training, coaching and scouting."

Pleat has been operating in the joint role as secretary-manager for the past few months.

Maidstone United v Nuneaton Borough 25-08-1973

Maidstone: Maggs, Sheriden, Barker, Richardson, Priestley, Debnam, McVeigh, Watson, Everest, Angel, Basey. **Sub:** Paris.

Borough: Robinson, Stephens, Sorbie, Lewis, Jones, Newton, Stewart, Harris, Keeley, Franklin, Flannagan. **Sub:** Turpie.

Borough made the journey to Kent to play Maidstone United in a Southern League Premier Division game.

Two cool second half goals cost much improved Borough the success they deserved against newly promoted Maidstone. Flannagan gave Nuneaton a 34th minute lead before Maidstone hit back with goals from Keith Angel and Jimmy McVeigh.

The first was headed, out by Newton, but a linesman said the ball had crossed the line. And the second came when Lewis hit the ball off McVeigh's chest in an attempt to clear.

Maidstone had an early scare when full back Barker played a ball back to goalkeeper Maggs, who had left his line. It went just wide of an upright for a corner. Flannagan then beat Debnam but was robbed by Sheriden before Maidstone showed their speed in attack.

Everest almost forced his way past Sorbie and Robinson collected a shot from Watson. Maggs then raced to the edge of his box to fist the ball away as Keeley challenged. The

home side pushed players forward early on but Nuneaton, composed and confident, soon made them wary. And Richardson was forced to hook the ball away for a corner as Lewis closed in on Stephens' free-kick. The corner was cleared before Maidstone launched a quick raid, which ended when Everest hit a centre from Watson over the top.

Basey shot into the side netting from another Everest cross. Nuneaton continued to deny Maidstone control. There was an obvious all-round improvement in their play. But the Kent club had a clear-cut chance when Angel was left clear as the Nuneaton defence moved out, but he headed wide.

Watson had a shot charged out by Lewis after Stephens had given away a free-kick and Maidstone began to test the Nuneaton defence. But Flannagan, busy on the left wing for Borough put the Manor Park side into the lead with a delicately taken goal in the 34th minute.

He chipped the ball into the net from the edge of the 18-yard box after a long throw-in from Newton had been headed out. Five minutes before half-time, Maidstone had another chance. A Basey challenge put Nuneaton in trouble, only for Watson to blast the ball wide in the confusion.

After the break, Franklin headed over from close in after Maggs had palmed a Stewart cross onto his head. Robinson saved a weak effort from McVeigh before Maidstone cleared a Flannagan corner. Flannagan was then just inches away from another goal with a left-foot drive after a wing-to-wing pass from Stewart.

Robinson beat out a cross from Watson and Lewis broke up another attack. But the home side equalised in the 58th minute through Angel. McVeigh started the move, Everest took the ball to the line and crossed it beyond the far post, where Angel beat the Borough defence to head goalwards.

Newton headed the ball out from underneath the bar but the linesman flagged that it had crossed the line. Maidstone took the lead in the 74th minute through McVeigh – after Lewis had kicked the ball against the centre-forward's chest in an attempt to clear.

Nuneaton Borough v Burton Albion 27-08-1973

Borough: Robinson, Stephens, Lewis, Jones, Sorbie, Newton, Harris, Stewart, Keeley, Franklin, Flannagan (Turpie, 69).

Borough welcomed Burton Albion to Manor Park to play a Southern League Cup first round second leg tie.

Barry Franklin booked Borough's place in the second round with a 70th minute goal. But the glory belonged to right winger Adrian Stewart who made the match winner with an electrifying burst of speed. Stewart left Burton full-back Peter Shone in his slip stream before hitting over a low, hard cross.

Brian George missed it, Bob Wesson dived over the ball – and Franklin was there to turn it into the net. The goal highlighted a lively second half from the Manor Park side, who were a goal up from the first leg. They missed chances and Albion's

ex-Walsall centre-half Stan Jones gobbled up a stream of crosses. But they always looked a shade better than Burton, who have made such a bright start in the First Division North.

Both sides had chances before the break in a game that improved in the last half-hour. Franklin did everything right only to shoot at goalkeeper Wesson and impressive Charlie Sorbie headed off the line from a Brian Beresford header. Stan Jones blocked a Dave Lewis header and Wesson saved from Franklin with his feet as the first-half ended.

Stewart then came into his own as the Albion defence started to creak. He engineered a goalmouth scramble and Shone then almost put through his own net. Franklin's goal settled it and although Albion tried to raise a late rally Nuneaton ran out worthy winners.



Barry Franklin raises his arm in salute as he runs the ball into the net from a Stewart cross in the 70th minute. Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune



Jones To Make 500th Appearance

Nuneaton Borough defender Alan Jones will next Saturday set a record that could stand for all time – 500 appearances for the Manor Park club.

He reaches his milestone in the Southern League game against Bedford Town at Nuneaton.

One club man Jones moved to

Nuneaton at the age of 16 and graduated through the youth and reserve sides.

Last season he broke Malcolm Allen's record of 459 appearances and his switch to centre-half could add years to his career. His record does not include friendlies or substitute appearances.

Pleat Denies Offer

David Pleat has denied reports of a cash plus player bid for Worcester City striker John Inglis, although he admits that the centre-forward's name was mentioned in a conversation with the Worcester City manager.

Nuneaton Borough v Bedford Town 01-09-1973

Borough: Robinson, Stephens, Sorbie, Lewis, Jones, Newton, Stewart, Harris, Keeley, Franklin, Turpie. **Sub:** Flannagan.

Bedford: Alexander, Skinn, Folds, Gould, Rodney, Cooley, Barratt, Scurr, Sargeant, Dove, Dunkley. **Sub:** Dean.

Borough welcomed Bedford Town to Manor Park to play a Southern League Premier Division match.

Borough dropped another home point in a game that mirrored their early season problems. It underlined their struggle for goals and left them still searching for their first Southern League win. And it must have accelerated David Pleat's attempt to sign another striker – someone like big John Inglis, whose name was linked with the club recently.

The side's struggles in front of the net have provided Pleat with a major headache since the season began. Borough have gone four matches without a win and are heading for the kind of start that has blunted their hopes for the past two seasons. But chances were few and far between in a poor game that lacked quality and drive.

The team set up just a handful of openings between them. And the best two went to Bedford. Centre-forward George Sargeant had a shot saved by goalkeeper Brian Robinson with his legs. And midfield man Jackie Scurr turned a shot across the face of the Borough goal with the home defence struggling. Bedford denied Nuneaton control in midfield where Len Harris and Bob Newton were always outnumbered and failed to stamp any authority on the play.

Consequently the service to the front runners was affected and they had to do a lot of running for no reward. Pleat has problems on the left hand side of the park where neither Bob Turpie nor newcomer John Flannagan settled into their stride. Both look more effective playing deeper and the Borough manager may have to sacrifice width up front for more security and flair in midfield.



A picture for Alan Jones' scrapbook and a piece of Nuneaton Borough history – the presentation from the players to mark his 500th appearance. Jones received presentations from team mates, the board and fans.

Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune

David Tinney Joins Borough Board

Kenilworth farmer and racehorse trainer David Tinney has joined the board of Nuneaton Borough Football Club. Mr Tinney, a 36-year-old bachelor, who farms at Bishop's Itchington, is chairman of Racing Club, Warwick, a former chairman of Leamington Sunday League and a qualified referee. He said last night: "Obviously Nuneaton are one of the top non-league sides and there is a great future here, particularly if the National League comes off."

Nuneaton Borough v Worcester City 03-09-1973

Borough: Robinson, Stephens, Lewis, Jones, Sorbie, Harris, Newton, Flannagan, Stewart, Keeley, Franklin. **Sub:** Turpie.

Borough welcomed Worcester City to Manor Park to play a Southern League Premier Division game.

Dependable Bob Newton dragged Borough from the brink of defeat. He ran 25 yards to meet a Barry Franklin cross and bulleted a header past Worcester keeper Bob Knight with just two minutes to go. That made the score 2-2 after Nuneaton had opened brightly, taken the lead – and then trailed.

And it gave them their third premier division draw of the season – but left them searching for their first win. Barry Franklin shot Borough ahead in the 12th minute after City defender Neil Merrick had failed to control the ball. Both goals then had narrow escapes before Worcester equalised seven minutes later.

Brian Robinson forced a Ray Aggio free-kick from under the bar and it dropped for Peter Hensman, who ran in to score. The game continued in its open style, but Nuneaton were an improved side with John Flannagan supplying skill and sparkle in midfield. But the defence often looked troubled by City's lanky strikers John Inglis and Barry Kelcher.

And it was one of their airborne assaults that gave Worcester the lead five minutes from time. Kelcher headed over Robinson's arms from a left wing cross and Inglis ran in behind Charlie Sorbie to hammer the ball into the roof of the net. But just when it seemed that the Manor Park side's improvement had been all in vain Newton popped up with his last ditch equaliser.

John Gill Sold To Atherstone

Nuneaton Borough have sold John Gill to Atherstone Town, less than a fortnight after manager David Pleat said: "I want him to stay." The deal went through last night and the centre-half makes his debut for Atherstone in tomorrow's home match with Margate.

Gill's transfer followed more talks between Alf Scattergood and Adders' chairman Reg Read. Last week the Nuneaton board vetoed a move after the two chairmen had agreed on a fee. But they reversed their decision after another approach from the Sheepy Road club, who are anxious to strengthen a sagging back four.

Kettering Town v Nuneaton Borough 08-09-1973

Kettering: Livsey, Ashby, Myton, Jones, Suddards, Atkinson, Dilsworth, Pawley, Clayton, Kiernan, Hawkesby. **Sub:** Cleary.

Borough: Allsopp, Stephens, Sorbie, Lewis, Jones, Newton, Stewart, Harris, Keeley, Franklin, Flannagan. **Sub:** Turpie.

Borough made the journey to Rockingham Road to take on Kettering Town in a Southern League Premier Division match.

Borough were outskilled and outclassed as Kettering demonstrated the gulf that separates the two clubs. Adventure, skill, ambition and cash – the Poppies have it all. Borough are still among the also rans. They aided the champions with gift goals, but at no time did they match their class.

Kettering's player-manager, Ron Atkinson, summed it up at the end when he said – without a trace of arrogance: "If they had scored four we would have scored six." Kettering won the game in a canter. Like champions. Borough showed how much work they have to do. Pleat laid foundations, but there is still something missing – class.

Kettering had absolute control in midfield and Eddie Dilsworth did untold damage in his bursts down the right wing. Consequently, Borough's back four had to shoulder a tremendous burden in the sweltering September sunshine. It proved too much – even for players with the fierce competitive pride of Dave Lewis and Alan Jones. But a team that struggles so badly to score cannot afford to give away goals and expect anything but defeat.

Roy Clayton lobbed Kettering ahead after seven minutes with goalkeeper Mike Allsopp off his line. Twelve minutes later full back Roger Ashby netted with a free header on the edge of the six yard box and, seconds before half-time, he converted a penalty after man of the match John Hawkesby was brought down by Lewis.

Barry Franklin netted for Nuneaton – his fifth goal in eight games. But it was more of a consolation than a spur. Because, with 17 minutes to go, Dilsworth grabbed a slick smooth solo effort after the Nuneaton defence gave him a huge gap.

Pleat Resigns

David Pleat has resigned as manager of Nuneaton Borough Football Club after a weekend of behind the scenes drama at Manor Park. He said today: "I had no alternative, but I know I did the job honestly and to the best of my ability under the circumstances. For the supporters' sake I hope the club will be successful and the experience can only help me in the future. But I have nothing further to say."

Pleat handed in his resignation after Saturday's 4-1 defeat at Kettering, the side's sixth Southern League game without a win. The board held a two-hour emergency meeting at Manor Park on Sunday to discuss the position. Afterwards, they announced that second team manager Geoff Coleman will take over for the next month.

"If he is a success the job will be his," said chairman Alf Scattergood. The club's transfer of John Gill to rivals Atherstone Town is believed to be one of the reasons behind Pleat's decision. They turned down an initial approach from the Adders and then sold Gill – against Pleat's wishes.

"As far as that is concerned," said Mr Scattergood, "Gill had said he wanted first team football and as David Pleat had said he didn't figure in his first team plans, we felt it was only right to let him go."

Added the chairman: "We are sorry to see David go, but it was getting more difficult with his travelling to and from Luton. He was never refused anything he wanted, but he became an expensive luxury when he stopped playing.

"Financially, we are £5,000 down since he took over, despite the progress he made and it got to the stage where things were getting worse."

Geoff Coleman, manager of Lockheed Leamington for four years, takes over immediately. The directors have made it clear that they want a part-time manager or a player-manager.



Coleman Takes Charge

Geoff Coleman has taken over as caretaker manager of Nuneaton Borough – only six days before the vital FA Cup tie with Gresley Rovers. And he admitted he faces a difficult task over the next month, his period of grace before the directors make a final decision.

He has to lift a side that is still seeking its first Southern League win and the players are bound to be affected by David Pleat's resignation.

But the ex-Redditch and Lockheed manager said: "The club has to carry on whether I am a success or not."

Fans Launch Directors Out Petition

Angry Nuneaton Borough fans, upset at David Pleat's departure, have launched a petition calling on the directors to quit. They intend to enlist the aid of local businessmen to add weight to their campaign. And they are planning to call a public meeting to rally supporters to their cause.

Club chairman Alf Scattergood is the man in the firing line after a weekend of drama at Manor Park. But a spokesman for the fans said last night: "We feel that the club will not progress while the present board is in charge. We do not believe that David Pleat was allowed to manage; gates have gone down and the club is dying."

Mr Scattergood, central figure in the controversy that threatens to split the club, today declined to comment.



Trialists To Stay With Borough

Geoff Coleman has told Nuneaton Borough's first team squad: "You will all stay at Manor Park." Charlie Sorbie, Mike Allsopp and Roger Bray will have their trial periods extended while the new manager works out his plans. Sorbie has established himself as a Southern League premier division full-back and both Allsopp and Bray could provide useful cover. All three are on a month's trial with a four week option – and will have to stay with the club.

Borough Fans To Meet Board

Nuneaton Borough's directors, already under heavy fire from the fans, face a delegation from the official Supporters' Association. And David Pleat's departure and the John Gill transfer will be top of the list of topics they want to thrash out. Supporters' Association chairman Horace Breeds will head tonight's delegation. Another group of fans have launched a petition calling on chairman Alf Scattergood to resign.

A spokesman for the petition organisers today stressed: "It is the chairman we want to resign, not the whole board. We feel the club needs a different leader with different ideas and a more go-ahead outlook. If we can do that we will melt into the background. We are not doing this to stir up trouble. We are doing it because nothing has been done for so long and the club is in danger."

Scattergood Gives Up Chairmanship

Alf Scattergood last night resigned as chairman of Nuneaton Borough Football Club after a week of pressure from the fans. He will stay on as a director – with Kenilworth businessman Ken Peal as the new chairman. Mr Scattergood, who took over four years ago from Reg Bull, was not available for comment today. But his decision followed an avalanche of criticism from the supporters after the resignation last weekend of manager David Pleat.

Angry Fans Drop Anti-Alf Battle

Nuneaton Borough's militant fans have dropped their campaign against the club – and pledged full support. This follows the resignation last night of chairman Alf Scattergood, the main target in a week of discontent. The fans, upset at manager David Pleat's departure, raised a petition calling on the chairman to quit.

Nuneaton Borough v Folkestone 17-09-1973

Borough: Robinson, Stephens, Lewis, Jones, Bridgett, Harris, Newton, Flannagan, Franklin, Keeley, Stewart. Sub: Sorbie.

Borough welcomed Folkestone to Manor Park to play a Southern League Premier Division game.

Borough cast aside their goalscoring problems and shattered Folkestone's eleven match unbeaten run. They hit two goals inside 60 seconds midway through the first-half and added another towards the end. And confidence oozed back into

the side as they marched to their first Southern League win of the season.

Folkestone began with the confidence of a side that had not been beaten since the first match of the season. They stretched Borough's defence on the flanks and winger Les Harfield twice went close. But Nuneaton changed all that in the space of a minute with a two goal burst. Len Harris shot them ahead in the 21st minute after Adrian Stewart laid back a Barry Franklin cross. Harris steered the ball past stranded goalkeeper Keith Bowley – and did a cartwheel of delight to celebrate his second goal in three days.

Folkestone were still stunned when Franklin headed the second with a superb glancing header from a Mick Keeley cross. Borough then began to knock the ball around as the goals pumped adrenalin into their play. But Folkestone were still dangerous with long balls down the middle and from the flanks for lanky target man Eric Whittington.

Brian Robinson pulled off the save of the match when he dived full length to clutch a piledriver from Shovelar. Seven minutes from time Franklin crowned the win with a fine goal when he beat Bowley from the edge of the box. It was his seventh goal in ten matches – and he has now notched half the club's goals this season. But the win belonged to a fine team effort that crushed fifth in the table Folkestone.

Barnet v Nuneaton Borough 22-09-1973

Barnet: McClelland, Lye, Tom, Ferry, Embery, Plume, Turley, Court, Meadows, Silkman, Bibby. Sub: George.

Borough: Robinson, Stephens, Lewis, Jones, Sorbie, Newton, Stewart, Franklin, Keeley, Harris, Flannagan. Sub: Turpie.

Borough made the journey to Underhill to play Barnet in a Southern League Premier Division match.

Borough put in a competent performance which made a nonsense of their league position and fell to a goal 17 minutes from time. It was the sort of goal that no amount of planning can account for. It followed a right wing cross – Barnet had already had the break of seeing the ball stay in play off the corner flag – and the man whose name goes down in the records, Tony Turley, was more surprised that anyone at Underhill. The ball dropped beyond the far post and was pumped hard across the face of the goal by Dave Bibby. Turley appeared to be trying to get out of the way when it struck him half on the shoulder, half on the face, and ricocheted just inside a post.

Borough proved, as they have done so often in the past that their defence can be as good as any in the Southern League. But it was hardly surprising that in the first-half against the considerable Underhill slope they had one or two anxious moments. Billy Meadows headed over after Brian Robinson had parried a drive from danger man Dave Bibby. The dependable keeper showed perfect positioning to foil Bibby a second time and remarkable reflexes to block a close range effort from Ben Embery. But the Borough keeper was relieved

Nuneaton Borough 1970-1979 – Part 1



to see Bibby volley over just before half-time after failing to cut out a centre, his one lapse in 90 minutes.

The North Londoners opened the second half with one of the best moves of the game with Turley firing inches outside. But this was not a signal for Barnet pressure. At this stage Borough gained control with some smooth, accurate football. The work rate of Len Harris, Bob Newton and John Flannagan, who all covered a lot of ground, was particularly notable.

Borough intelligently made space and reached the danger zone without a Barnet player getting near the ball. The finishing bite, however, was missing and scoring attempts were limited mainly to long range efforts. Having gained the upper hand Borough should have been more direct up front. On the few occasions Barry Franklin and Adrian Stewart used their speed and ran at the Barnet defence, it looked suspect.

Substitute Bob Turpie was sent on in place of Mick Keeley 15 minutes from time to try and inject a little extra into the attack – but Barnet's lucky goal had proved to be a killer blow.

Coleman Snaps Up First Signing

Nuneaton Borough manager Geoff Coleman has snapped up his first signing – a centre-back with Football League experience. Coleman has signed 22-year-old John Pakaliniets on a month's trial. He will make his home debut in the Reserves. The Borough manager sees him as a replacement for John Gill, sold to Atherstone Town two weeks ago.

Weymouth v Nuneaton Borough 26-09-1973

Borough: Robinson, Sorbie (Turpie), Bridgett, Lewis, Jones, Newton, Stewart, Franklin, Keeley, Harris, Flannagan.

Borough made the journey to The Rec to play Weymouth in a Southern League Premier Division match.

Borough were hit by two goals in the first eight minutes of the match and found it impossible to lift themselves off the floor. And but for fine goalkeeping by overworked Brian Robinson the scoreline could have been more. He pulled off some fine saves but had no chance with any of the four goals. Poor Nuneaton persevered without luck as Weymouth rattled up their best win of the season.

Mick Keeley was out of luck when keeper Clarke saved his shot from point blank range – just before the interval. And Clarke came to Weymouth's rescue after the break to push aside an awkward bouncing effort from the head of Alan Jones. But these two efforts were isolated incidents in a night that belonged to Weymouth. Youngster Alan Beer gave the Terras a 90-second lead and seven minutes later Brown made it 2-0 with a shot from 20 yards which scraped under the bar.

Although Weymouth continued to dominate it took them until the hour mark before they made the game water tight. Rod Adams, who had troubled the Nuneaton defence all night, began the move with a run down the right flank. He evaded a lunging tackle and squared the ball across the

goalmouth to Alan Beer who slotted home his sixth goal of the season with a solid drive inside the far post. Eight minutes from time Weymouth nailed down Nuneaton's coffin when Alan Skirton rose above Borough's defence to head neatly past Robinson.

Nuneaton Borough v Maidstone United 29-09-1973

Borough: Robinson, Stephens, Sorbie, Lewis, Jones, Newton, Stewart, Harris, Keeley, Turpie, Flannagan. **Sub:** Starkey.

Maidstone: Maggs, Sheridan, Barker, Richardson, Priestley, McVeigh, Tough, Finch, Basey, Angel, Watson. **Sub:** Debnam.

Borough welcomed Maidstone United to Manor Park to play a Southern League Premier Division game.

Nuneaton Borough and their fans can resign themselves to a season of mediocrity – unless something is done to find the goal sparkle that is sadly missing from the side. And the simple truth is that manager Geoff Coleman will have to look further than his present squad to come up with the answers.

Borough would have paid a greater price for their lack of goals, but for an amazing miss just 15 seconds from the end by Maidstone's Phil Basey. He ran clear from slithering defenders, evaded a desperate lunge by Brian Robinson, but looked to the heavens in despair as his shot rolled against the wrong side of an upright.

On the law of averages Nuneaton should have snapped up one of the chances they created. Two fell to Turpie in the second half. He fired wide when a corner found him unmarked on the far post and in the 85th minute, after putting himself in a great position by winning a tackle, he failed miserably with goalkeeper Johnny Maggs off his line and Mick Keeley unmarked to his right.

But probably the best chance, also late in the game, was muffed by Nuneaton's liveliest forward, Adrian Stewart. He moved in to meet a right wing cross and amazingly failed to connect with his head only feet from the line.

The game never had chance to progress above ordinary because of the monotonous string of free kicks – mostly for trivial offences. Redditch referee, P. J. Davis, let nothing go and had two names in his book at the end – Nuneaton's Charlie Sorbie for a deliberate trip and Finch of United for a similar infringement.

The Borough rearguard with Dave Lewis and Alan Jones back in command after the four goal midweek mauling at Weymouth was generally compact. Apart from the 11th hour let off, their only other anxious moment was three minutes after the break when Basey hit the bar and Tommy Watson fired over after Robinson failed to collect the rebound.

Stones could hardly curse their luck though. Just before half-time the same crossbar had denied Borough from a deflected Turpie effort. The rest of the action was restricted mainly to a negative midfield tussle, territory which no side ever commanded. The result just about summed it up.



Nuneaton Borough v Redditch United 01-10-1973

Borough: Westley, Stephens, Sorbie, Jones, Pakalinietis, Newton, Stewart, Starkey, Turpie, Lewis, Hood. **Subs:** Keeley and Harris.

Borough welcomed Redditch United to Manor Park to play a Birmingham Senior Cup first round tie.

Borough struggled through a maze of misses, mistakes and misplaced passes to salvage a draw. Law student Tom Starkey brought a touch of sanity to a grim match with a 60th minute equaliser. But even that goal had an element of luck about it. Starkey, back after spending the summer in America, got a rebound and ran on unchallenged to score from 25 yards with a deflected shot goalkeeper Blackwall should have saved. It wiped out a 27th minute effort from impressive Redditch striker Gary Fleet, the best player on the park.

He challenged cumbersome John Pakalinietis and scored as goalkeeper Steve Westley dwelt on his line. Young Westley, who answered an eleventh hour call to play, made amends when he parried a 68th minute piledriver from Barry Evans which could have won the match.

Yet Nuneaton had enough chances to have won one of the worst games seen at Manor Park all season – in a competition they tried to unload. Bob Newton blasted a shot wide of a gaping net and Adrian Stewart blasted the ball over when it would have been easier to score.

Manager Geoff Coleman had a load of pre-match problems. Barry Franklin, Ray Bridgett and Brian Robinson were all unfit, reserve team keeper Mike Allsopp went down ill and Mick Keeley arrived late after car trouble.

Skipper Dave Lewis added much needed bite in midfield and youngster John Hood packed plenty of effort into his debut. But Borough were poor, always struggled and at times hit rock bottom. And they now face a replay they could well do without.

Borough Sign Billy Baxter

Billy Baxter, who skippered Ipswich Town back into the First Division six seasons ago, has joined Nuneaton Borough. The signing was completed last night and he will make his debut in the FA Cup tie against Hednesford.

Baxter won a First Division championship medal and two Second Division trophies during his 11 years at Ipswich. He made 459 appearances before leaving Portman Road in 1970 for Hull City and last season was player-manager of Northampton Town.

Geoff Coleman Confirmed As Borough Boss

Geoff Coleman has taken over as manager of Nuneaton Borough - with no strings attached. His month's trial ended last night and the board gave him a unanimous vote of confidence to carry on. "He has the full confidence of the board," said club chairman Ken Peal today. "And we are

happy that this step has been taken." Coleman will operate without a long term contract for the time being.

The new Borough manager said: "I have not asked for a contract because I would like first to see how much progress I can make. If at the end of the season I feel I have done well – and the board agree – I will then ask for one."

Borough Release Three Players

Charlie Sorbie, Nuneaton Borough's Coventry-born full-back has been released after making seven Southern League appearances. He is one of three players freed by manager Geoff Coleman, who intends to reshape the first team squad.

The others are stand-in goalkeeper Mike Allsopp and local youngster Roger Bray. All three were signed in the close season by David Pleat and have been on trial at Manor Park.

Borough Set To Sign Centre-half

Nuneaton Borough are all set to sign centre-half Terry Branston from Lincoln City. The ex-Northampton and Luton Town defender will be at Manor Park tonight for talks with manager Geoff Coleman. And the signing could go through in time for him to play at Worcester City.

Rugby born Branston has agreed to join Borough on a month's trial – with a view to staying at Manor Park.

Worcester City v Nuneaton Borough 13-10-1973

Worcester: Knight, Allen, Chester, Aggio, Bache, McEwan, Hadley, Martin, Kelcher, Merrick, Hensman. **Sub:** G. Newton.

Borough: Robinson, Stephens, R. Newton, Baxter, Branston, Jones, Stewart, Franklin, Keeley, Lewis, Turpie. **Sub:** Harris.

Borough made the journey to St George's Lane to play Worcester City in a Southern League Premier Division game.

Borough ran themselves into the ground in an always hard, often rugged and sometimes raw clash between two struggling sides. All out effort and determination – rather than skill – gave them the share of the spoils they deserved. Yet the result could be the turning point in their battle to pull away from the bottom reaches of the table.

Both teams have won only one premier division match this season. Both have seen better days and face a long hard season. The first hour was poor, almost devoid of cohesion and flair. But the final 30 minutes provided non-stop incident and made up for the colourless period that had gone before.

A game that dragged along, punctuated by a series of petty fouls, drab play and niggling stoppages, suddenly burst into life with a freak goal. Brian Robinson, his right leg strapped from toe to thigh, punched a Ray Aggio free kick against City striker Neil Merrick. It hit him on the shoulder and rebounded into the net. That was in the 61st minute but another rare football moment saw the Manor Park side draw level ten minutes later. Barry Franklin drove the ball goalwards from close range and City goalkeeper Bob Knight dragged it back



from over the line. The referee allowed play to continue, but spotted a linesman's flag and after a brief consultation the goal was awarded.

Just three minutes later Worcester split the Nuneaton defence and Barry Kelcher laid on Worcester's second for Merrick – the best of the four. But Borough again pulled themselves back from the brink of defeat and 12 minutes from time Terry Branston notched a debut goal. He headed in off a post to give Geoff Coleman's side a point they so richly deserved. Rugged, raw-boned Branston added steel to a battling back four in a match in which no Nuneaton player could be faulted for lack of effort.

Dave Lewis was fiercely competitive in midfield where Bill Baxter's vast experience was invaluable. The back four curbed City's airborne threat and there was more mobility up front where Mick Keeley ran himself almost to a standstill. But the point belonged to an all out team effort.

Redditch United v Nuneaton Borough 15-10-1973

Borough: Westley, Vaughan, Jones, Newton, Bridgett, Lewis, Harris, Turpie, Stewart, Starkey, Flannagan. Subs: Stephens and Franklin.

Borough made the journey to The Valley to play Redditch United in a Southern League Cup first round replay.

Geoff Coleman last night revisited Redditch, the club he once skippered, left out six key players – and watched his Borough side win with ease. They crushed a feeble Senior Cup challenge from the Worcestershire club and coasted into the second round.

Two goal Tom Starkey settled the replay with one in each half, but Nuneaton could have trebled their score. Only in a brief 15 minute period did they face any threat from Redditch. And that was because they were so much on top they became casual and pushed players forward in search of more goals.

But Redditch supplied the man of the match in Gary Fleet, who played Borough on his own. He was behind everything the home side did before he limped off with a twisted knee just before the end. John Flannagan always looked a potential match winner and with Ray Bridgett's powerful overlaps they created havoc down the left hand side.

Starkey twice exposed Redditch's back four in the air before Borough took the lead. Adrian Stewart laid a ball back to Flannagan, whose cross was side-footed in at the far post by Starkey. The ball bobbed as he met it and it looped into the net. Fleet created some anxious moments for Nuneaton and winger John Jones was only a whisker away from an equaliser just before half-time.

But there was only one side in it as Borough, relaxed and confident, strung together a whole series of smooth raids. Yet they lost their way midway through the second half and exposed themselves to quick counter strikes. Fleet twice played measured passes through to Jones. But 17-year-old goalkeeper Steve Wesley made two brave challenges and

touched one shot onto the woodwork. Borough badly needed another goal, despite their all-round superiority. It came in the 69th minute when skipper Dave Lewis, a powerhouse in midfield, hit a cross from the right.

The ball reared off the treacherous pitch and beat Redditch centre-half Alan Shaw as Starkey challenged. Goalkeeper John Blackwell committed himself and Starkey headed home.

Malcolm Allen Accepts Borough Job

Malcolm Allen has rejoined Nuneaton Borough – and will probably be in charge of scouting and spying missions. He will be out on Saturday, running the rule over future opponents.

Allen, sacked as manager of Atherstone on Monday, was offered the job by Geoff Coleman, who said: "Malcolm has accepted and his experience should be a great asset to us."

Borough Bid For Striker

Nuneaton Borough have made a bid for Stourbridge striker Chick Bates – but may have to break the club's transfer record to get him. Bates, leading scorer in the Southern League First Division (North), is rated in the £5,000 class at Amblecote.

Nuneaton Borough v Tamworth 22-10-1973

Borough: Robinson, Vaughan, Branston, Jones, Newton, Lewis, Baxter, Flannagan, Stewart, Franklin, Starkey. Sub: Harris.

Borough welcomed Tamworth to Manor Park for a Midland Floodlit Cup game.

Terry Branston, Borough's iron-hard newcomer, put them back on the winning trail. Lean, rangy Branston, on loan from Lincoln, stretched his six foot frame to send a 70th minute header looping into the net. It was enough to beat Tamworth in a game between two clubs who have seen better days.

It showed how Nuneaton badly missed a player with Branston's aggression in the Cup tie against Highgate. He scored after Bill Baxter had curled a half cleared Dave Lewis free-kick out to Adrian Stewart. Tamworth, unbeaten for nine game looked the better of two poor sides in the early stages and Tommy Morrow had a goal disallowed for offside.

But they had a narrow escape after 25 minutes when Stewart hit the face of the bar and Gary Brown blocked Tom Starkey as he tried to cash in on the rebound. Ray Holmes, much sharper than when he was at Atherstone, twice threatened Nuneaton before Barry Franklin again almost scored. He steered a header wide of Mick Richards, only for the Tamworth keeper to come from nowhere and claw it out.

Both defences maintained a tight grip. Although Tamworth, with long serving Dave Seedhouse their star, had to work much harder. For Borough, Bob Newton had his best game of the season at left-back – the spot he occupied during his seven years at Tamworth.

But neither side had players with sufficient quality, skill – or



confidence – to take the initiative. The only time Nuneaton ran the ball at the Tamworth defence was in the closing minutes – and it almost brought another goal. Adrian Stewart took them on in the box and Seedhouse was forced to make a desperate clearance to thwart Franklin.

Facelift For Borough Stand

Manor Park's main stand, built more than half a century ago, is to get a facelift. The club is making inquiries about the cost of a new roof and work could start at the end of the season.

"We are getting estimates," said chairman Ken Peal. "Although it's the sort of job that can only be done in the close season."

Nuneaton Borough v Romford 27-10-1973

Borough: Robinson, Stephens, Branston, Jones, Newton, Lewis, Baxter, Flannagan, Stewart, Starkey, Franklin. Sub: Keeley.

Romford: Lightfoot, Yorath, Tapping, Mann, Robinson, Bickles, Sanders, Bailey, Chandler, Gunderson, Manning. Sub: Parmenter.

Borough welcomed Romford to Manor Park to play a Southern League Premier Division game.

Borough, ready to spend cash on a striker, paid another heavy price for their misses. Nervous, anxious, almost neurotic in front of goal, they allowed their fifth home point of the season to slip through their grasp. They were much-improved and showed character after being rattled by an early Romford goal.

But they again found out that courage, effort and determination are poor substitutes for confidence and flair. And the point will be driven home time and again in the coming months unless they can find an end product for their often impressive approach work.

Romford, with a patched up side and shaky defence were allowed to survive when they should have been beaten out of sight. Borough's revival against Romford was led by an inspired midfield performance from all action skipper Dave Lewis. He had a tremendous game and almost beat the Essex side on his own. One of his shots crashed against the bar and another flew inches wide.

Barry Franklin was an inch away from an Adrian Stewart centre and had another shot blocked on the line. But Borough, by far the better side in the second half, could not pierce Romford's rearguard. Their attacks lacked variation and were often stereotyped and Romford's centre-backs were able to deal with a stream of speculative crosses.

Both of the goals were gifts. Romford's Arvid Gunderson scored in the seventh minute through a casual defence and Tom Starkey equalised 20 minutes later with an ice cool effort after a slip by visitors' centre-half Peter Robinson. After that it was all Borough and no goals. Romford winger Roy Sanders almost snatched a dramatic winner in the last five minutes, but Robinson pulled off a fine save.

Nuneaton Borough v Merthyr Town 29-10-1973

Borough: Robinson, Stephens, Newton, Baxter, Branston, Jones, Stewart, Franklin, Starkey, Lewis, Flannagan. Sub: Drew.

Borough welcomed Merthyr Tydfil to Manor Park to play a Southern League Cup second round tie.

Borough allowed Merthyr to escape with a draw, when they didn't warrant it. Nuneaton dominated play and had more than 85 per cent possession. They were rugged at the back, competent in midfield – but again lacking up front. All their hard work in build up were wasted by jittery, panicky actions at the sight of goal.

Borough took a 32nd minute lead from iron defender Terry Branston. He raced in to head a Flannagan corner high into the net for his third goal in four appearances. But Merthyr came straight back. An unusual blunder by Alan Jones, when he lost possession in the Nuneaton goal area, left Nick Deacy the easiest of chances to score.

Deacy nearly added to that 37th minute equaliser a minute later when he slashed at a ball with a gaping net in front of him. That effort marked the end of Merthyr's challenge in effect. But Nuneaton couldn't capitalise on their obvious superiority. So the game in the second half went from mediocrity to sheer boredom as goalscoring chances were restricted to one Starkey header at the far post from a Stephens cross. Rosser was booked in the 80th minute for a foul on Starkey.

John Charles, the 43-year-old legendary Welshman, showed his class in a sweeper role in which he was never troubled. He stroked the ball around, headed away the high crosses and did everything simply.

Borough Ask Council For Co-operation

Borough chairman Ken Peal is to meet Nuneaton Council officials next month – to see how the Corporation and the soccer club can co-operate.

He feels both sides can work together for the benefit of sport in the area. "There are many ways we can help each other and a general round the table talk can do nothing but good," he said. But he was quick to point out that Borough are not looking for hand outs.

Keeley Breaks Leg

Nuneaton Borough suffered a cruel injury blow when striker Mick Keeley broke a leg during an innocent training match. He was involved in a challenge with centre-half Terry Branston only a few minutes before the session was due to end. Manager Geoff Coleman today described the tragic incident which will keep Keeley out of soccer until January.

He said: "It was all so innocent – it wasn't even a tackle. Terry was on the floor when Mick tried to go past him. Their legs tangled and Mick fell badly." The training session



was immediately ended and Keeley was rushed to see physiotherapist Peter Downs before being taken to Birmingham Accident Hospital. His tibia is broken just above the ankle and he may have to have a pin inserted to help it knit.

Dartford v Nuneaton Borough 03-11-1973

Dartford: Morton, Read, Stevens, Carr, Burns, Binks, Light, Glozier, Marshall, Mitchell, Payne. Sub: Halliday.

Borough: Robinson, Stephens, Newton, Baxter, Branston, Jones, Drew, Starkey, Franklin, Lewis, Flannagan. Sub: Stewart.

Borough made the journey to Watling Street to face Dartford in a Southern League Premier Division game.

A penalty turned half an hour of hope into a grim 60 minute struggle. For much of the first half Nuneaton were a match for the top of the table Kent side. Inspired by Dave Lewis from midfield and held together at the back by Alan Jones and Terry Branston, they equalled the Darts. But a split second of confusion in a crowded penalty area changed all that.

The referee pointed to the spot amid protests from Borough and Dartford defender John Stevens stepped up to score. The referee afterwards confirmed that Bob Newton had handled. Ninety seconds later striker John Mitchell headed Dartford's second from a free kick. It was a direct result of the penalty – scored while Borough were angry and unsettled.

Players' heads went down and their confidence ebbed. Players like Lewis, Branston, Jones and Brian Robinson showed their character while others drifted out of the game. Robinson made a number of brave saves in the second half when solid, hard working and determined Dartford tightened their grip on the game. And teenager Nigel Drew showed some bright touches on his debut.

Borough could have travelled back with something. Barry Franklin missed a glorious chance to make it 2-1 midway through the second half. He blasted a shot over the top – and two minutes later tough tackling Graham Carr notched Dartford's third. His shot spun off Bill Baxter to strand Robinson and give him no chance. Almost on time Dave Lewis scored a richly deserved goal from a Baxter free-kick.

For most of the match Nuneaton struggled up front where Starkey and Franklin failed to make a dent on Carr and big Les Burns, two of the most formidable defenders in non-league soccer.

Barry Franklin In Swap Deal

Barry Franklin, Nuneaton Borough's leading goalscorer, will re-join Atherstone Town in a surprise double move. The two clubs have agreed on a "two for one" swap deal after a weekend of behind the scenes activity. Franklin will go back to the Adders – in exchange for Sheepy Road midfield player Bobby Mackay and striker Bobby Vincent. The forms will be signed at the Oval tonight before Atherstone meet Bedworth in the Floodlit Cup.

Kettering Want Lewis

Dave Lewis, Borough's tough tackling skipper, is wanted by Southern League champions Kettering Town. But Borough are unlikely to allow him to leave Manor Park.

The Poppies see Lewis as an ideal player to add fire to their midfield play as they chase more honours. And Rockingham Road player-manager Ron Atkinson has long been an admirer of his fierce competitive spirit.

Resignations Rock Borough

Four directors of strife torn Nuneaton Borough Football Club were meeting this afternoon to discuss a resignation crisis that has rocked Manor Park. Chairman Ken Peal, manager Geoff Coleman and company secretary Sam Downs have all quit. All three resigned on a "matter of principle" after the board blocked the proposed Barry Franklin-Bobby Vincent, Bobby Mackay transfer deal with Atherstone.

Longest serving director Ces Dawson called the crisis meeting after a sensational chain of events. He said today: "I have to sort it out and we must have a meeting to see what we can do." Vic Openshaw, Peter Barratt and Ernie Davenport were at the meeting – the others have resigned or are unavailable.

The trouble broke out when Ken Peal was told that four directors wanted to stop the transfer move. He said last night: "I resigned on a matter or principle. If the board appoints a manager he must be allowed to manage."

Adders Would Have Reported Anyone Else

Reg Read, chairman of Atherstone Town, today claimed his club had been innocent victims of Nuneaton Borough's internal politics. He said: "If it had been any club but Nuneaton we would have reported the facts to the Football Association."

Mr Read last night waited at Bedworth Oval to complete a transfer exchange deal that fell through after being blocked. "We are not really concerned with the internal politics of the Nuneaton club," he said. "But there are two main sufferers – the players and the fans of both clubs."

Transfer Deal Goes Through

The transfer deal that has split Nuneaton Borough down the middle was completed last night – without a hitch. And Geoff Coleman, who quit as manager along with chairman Ken Peal and company secretary Sam Down on Monday, was on hand at the Manor Park ground to supervise the deal.

The surprise move came out of a crisis meeting called by four of the remaining six Borough directors – in another eventful day at the strife torn club.

Vic Openshaw, Ernie Davenport, Ces Dawson and Peter Barratt decided at the meeting, held at the ground yesterday, to let the transfer deal go ahead – so reversing the original decision of the board.



Bobby Vincent signs as Bobby Mackay (right) and Geoff Coleman look on.

Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune

Ken Peal Has Full Support

Nuneaton Borough's fans sounded a simple but clear message for all to hear last night: "We want Ken Peal back as our chairman." The club's Vice Presidents, General Purposes Committee and Supporters' Association all agreed to give Mr Peal their 100 per cent support.

Mr George Haines, chairman of the Vice Presidents, said after an hour long meeting at the ground: "We unanimously pledged our full support to Mr Peal."

Alf Scattergood Resigns

Former Nuneaton Borough chairman Alf Scattergood has climbed off the Manor Park merry-go-round. He has resigned as a director – but not as chairman of the social club. Mr Scattergood, chairman until seven weeks ago said he took the decision "with much regret."

Mr Scattergood said: "I hope that Ken Peal returns as chairman. Everyone must give them their full support. I will certainly do so."

Transfer Wrangle Explained

Ernie Davenport, one of the directors under fire from the fans, this afternoon explained why the Barry Franklin transfer was allowed to go ahead. Franklin went back to Atherstone

in exchange for Bobby Vincent and Bobby Mackay – after the deal had been called off 24 hours earlier. Said Mr Davenport: "We had no idea of the players' feelings at the time and it was unfair to make them stand around waiting to sign. The players come first in my opinion, so I proposed that the transfer should go ahead as originally intended."

Borough Fans Call On Directors To Resign

Angry Nuneaton Borough fans today handed in a petition to the Evening Tribune threatening to withdraw support – unless three directors resign. The fans, fully behind Ken Peal, want Alf Scattergood, Ces Dawson and Ernie Davenport to quit.

They were three of the directors who this week voted to block the Barry Franklin transfer deal with Atherstone – the move which split the club. The petition calls for the resignations to enable Mr Peal to return along with the directors who supported him.

Dawson Stands Down

Ces Dawson, longest-serving member of the Nuneaton Borough board, has resigned – the fourth director to quit in five days. And he admitted the decision to step down after 12 years was taken "with a lump in his throat."

His resignation went before this afternoon's meeting at Manor Park when the club's future was at stake. It was discussed along with those of chairman Ken Peal, company secretary Sam Downs and former chairman Alf Scattergood before any further steps will be taken.

But the signs are that Ken Peal will be asked to return, along with Sam Downs. Mr Peal was not present at the crisis talks. "There is no point in me attending. Either they accept my resignation – and that's it – or they refuse and ask me under what conditions I am prepared to withdraw it. I did what I did on principle and as far as I am concerned the principles are still the same."

Peal And Scattergood Hold The Key

Ken Peal and Alf Scattergood meet for talks in just over 24 hours time – holding the key to Nuneaton Borough's future. They must come to some solution – or else the Manor Park club could be without a single director on Monday. That is the prospect facing crisis-hit Borough should the talks end in deadlock. David Tinney, acting chairman and the man who arranged the get-together, said: "This is a last-ditch effort. There has to be a full and final settlement from this meeting and I am hopeful.

"But if there is deadlock, and Mr Peal does not come back as chairman, then it is almost certain that the remaining directors will resign on Monday," he added.

Scattergood Breaks Silence

Alf Scattergood today broke his silence on the Barry Franklin-Bobby Mackay-Bobby Vincent transfer that sparked off a week of turmoil at Manor Park. Chairman Ken Peal, company

secretary Sam Downs and manager Geoff Coleman resigned after the deal was blocked by the board. Alf Scattergood was one of four directors who voted against the move.

He said: “When I learned about the transfer at lunchtime last Monday I assumed that Geoff Coleman had done it on his own. I rang Ken Peal and he told me that he had agreed to it. I then asked if it was right for Franklin, who cost us nearly £2,000, to be exchanged for two players Atherstone signed on free transfers.

“I was not against it in principle but time was on our side and I said ‘let’s discuss it’ – that’s what happened.”

Boardroom Crisis Settled

Ken Peal and Alf Scattergood have settled the boardroom crisis that threatened the future of Nuneaton Borough Football Club. They resolved the squabble that split the board after a 55-minute meeting at a Stonebridge hotel – with a handshake.

Former Chairman Mr Scattergood agreed to give up some of his shares in the club, one of the issues at stake. And Mr Peal today took over as chairman after a brief meeting of the five remaining directors.

Tonbridge v Nuneaton Borough 10-11-1973

Tonbridge: Seymour, Weston, Kinsey, Keirs, Carragher, Gilchrist, Flood, Muir, Johnson, Adams, Brown. **Sub:** Smith.

Borough: Robinson, Stephens, Newton, Flannagan, Branston, Jones, Drew, Starkey, Vincent, Lewis, Mackay. **Sub:** Turpie.

Borough travelled to Kent to play Tonbridge in a Southern League Premier Division game.

Borough healed some of the wounds from a week of boardroom warfare with a precious point. They travelled to Tonbridge with a question mark hanging over the club’s future. Without a manager, a chairman and a board on the verge of an en-bloc resignation.

But they managed to salvage a draw from a match they could not afford to lose. After the turmoil of the previous five days they badly needed something from the trip to Kent. And only a needless penalty five minutes from time denied them their first away win of the season. Centre-half Terry Branston made a totally unnecessary challenge on Tonbridge striker Mickey Brown.

Brown crashed to the ground and there were a few moments of confusion before the referee pointed to the spot. He consulted a linesman as the players argued – the only issue at stake was whether the foul was in the box or not. The referee decided it was and Jimmy Keirs stepped up to score the equaliser. Tonbridge had threatened to score after Borough had fallen back to defend a Bob Newton goal.

Newton netted two minutes before half-time with a shot that went in off Ian Seymour’s left hand post. Earlier, Nuneaton’s defence had staggered, but Tonbridge were not

much better. Consequently the first-half was sprinkled with missed chances from both sides and the second punctuated by long periods of negative play. But Borough managed to pull themselves together and newcomers Bobby Mackay and Bobby Vincent both did reasonably well.

Bustling Vincent, perhaps not as skilful as Barry Franklin, added much needed power and aggression up front. He twice went close to a goal. But he marred his game when he clashed with Mickey Brown amid the arguments that followed the penalty and left the Tonbridge player with a gash under his left eye. Vincent, astonishingly escaped without even a warning, but earned himself a dressing down from Geoff Coleman.

Bobby Mackay, whose midfield role is not as straightforward as Vincent’s front running job, will improve the side. The stylish Scot hit the bar, lifted a shot over the top and went close with a header.

Coleman Carries On

Geoff Coleman has agreed to carry on as manager of Nuneaton Borough now that the boardroom crisis has been resolved. He resigned last week “on principal” when the trouble flared up over the Barry Franklin transfer.

John Gore Set For Debut



John Gore signs Southern League forms for Borough at the weekend and plays tonight at Merthyr. Also in the photo are Ken Peal (left) and reserve team manager Alan Foggarty. Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune

Merthyr Town v Nuneaton Borough 12-11-1973

Borough: Robinson, Stephens, Newton, Baxter, Branston, Jones, Flannagan, Gore, Starkey, Lewis, Turpie. **Sub:** Hood.

Borough made the journey to Merthyr Tydfil to play a Southern League Cup second round replay.

Bob Turpie, determined to reclaim his first team spot, shot Borough into the third round of the Southern League Cup. The ex-QPR and Peterborough winger scored 20 minutes from time to clinch a replay win at Pennydarren Park. And the goal came from one of the smoothest moves of the match.

John Flannagan hit an early cross to the far post, Tom Starkey nodded it down into space – and Turpie cracked the ball into the net. The goal crowned a fine performance from Turpie, who has drifted in and out of the side this season. But the players travelled back from South Wales full of praise for teenager John Gore.

Gore made his debut in a front running role and showed some of the skill he has turned on in reserve teams games this season. Centre-half Terry Branston won his battle with Merthyr player-manager John Charles – but it was another solid team performance from Nuneaton that steered them home. They are now away to Telford in the third round.

Nuneaton Borough v Telford United 17-11-1973

Borough: Robinson, Stephens, Newton, Lewis, Branston, Jones, Turpie, Starkey, Vincent, Mackay, Flannagan. **Sub:** Gore.

Telford: Weir, Harris, Croft, Ray, Fairhurst, Ross, Fudge, Owen, Bentley, Bridgwood, Hawkins. **Sub:** Thompson.

Borough welcomed Telford United to Manor Park to play a Southern League Premier Division game.

Bob Turpie stepped out of the shadows of second team soccer to open a Premier Division escape route for Borough. He boosted their bid to clear the bottom four with a well-taken 65th minute match-winner. And the gap at the bottom that threatened to widen has now been closed to just one point. Turpie's goal highlighted a fighting performance.

Newcomers Bobby Vincent and Bobby Mackay made a big difference – but the man of the match honours went to full-back Kirk Stephens. The teenage number two has had his bad times this season – along with the rest. Yet against Telford he turned on the kind of display that attracted League clubs last season. He was always busy and often left without cover as Borough pushed forward.

But whenever Telford's speed on the flanks threatened Nuneaton, Stephens rose to his task. And in new striker Vincent, Nuneaton have found a centre-forward with bite and power – and more skill than he has been credited with. Vincent had a superb first-half and his former Atherstone team mate Mackay added steadiness and style in the middle of the park. Once Vincent gets his name on the score sheet Nuneaton can forget the troubles the transfer raised.



Telford goalkeeper Phil Weir flings himself full-length to cut out a cross from Bobby Vincent in the first-half. Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune

Big Jack Bentley offered early problems to the Nuneaton defence and Telford's pace up front often promised danger. But he was soon controlled when the Shropshire side lost Bentley's front running partner Joey Owen their chances slumped. Owen, strong and skilful, went off injured early in the second half with groin trouble.

At times the game was hard and rugged and two players were booked – match-winner Turpie in the first-half and Telford defender Bill Fairhurst shortly afterwards. But Turpie, who has spent much of the season in the reserves and on the subs' bench had the last laugh.

Coleman Bids £2,500 For Joey Owen

Nuneaton Borough manager Geoff Coleman has made a £2,500 bid for Telford striker Joey Owen. The offer went in after Owen's impressive display for the Shropshire side at Manor Park on Saturday.

Said Coleman today: "He would be the ideal player to play alongside Bobby Vincent. He has proved himself in the premier division and is strong with a lot of skill. If we can get him we will be only a couple of players short of a good side."

Borough Offered Generator

Nuneaton Borough have been offered a generator to power the Manor Park floodlights. And the offer, which will avoid a fixture pile-up for the club, could also benefit Borough's Southern League neighbours Atherstone Town and Bedworth United. Company secretary and Borough director Sam Downs said today: "I would like to see Borough let the ground to Atherstone and Bedworth for their midweek fixtures.

"We must help our neighbours out. But that decision will obviously rest with the board." Mr Downs is to meet the donor – a Coventry man who wishes to remain anonymous at the moment – at the Borough ground tomorrow night.

"We will be hiring the generator. It is hoped to have it fixed for Saturday so we can have a 3pm kick-off," he said.



Nuneaton Borough v Cambridge City 24-11-1973

Borough: Robinson, Stephens, Newton, Lewis, Baxter, Branston, Flannagan, Starkey, Vincent, Mackay, Turpie. **Sub:** Gore.

Cambridge: Barker, Elliott, Galenski, Murray, James, MacDonald, Comny, Crane, Hunter, Keenan, Martin. **Sub:** Knight.

Borough welcomed Cambridge City to Manor Park to play a Southern League Premier Division game.

Geoff Coleman watched his side battle for a point and then defended a decision that rocked the fans. He left out long-serving Alan Jones in favour of Bill Baxter. And Baxter was involved in a second half penalty that almost cost Nuneaton the match. The Borough manager admitted the move was an unpopular one, but said: "I am not in this job to be popular. I am here to do the best for the club."

The goal that threatened to end Borough's improved form, came in the 60th minute when Baxter, caught in a one-against-one situation from a long clearance, pulled down City striker Ian Hunter. Hunter stumbled and sprawled in the box and Cambridge full-back Ray Elliott covered the spot kick.

It took Borough eight minutes to equalise after they had forced spells of confusion in the City goalmouth. Bobby Vincent was credited with the goal, but the scorer was afterwards confirmed as Bob Turpie. Bobby Mackay dropped a free-kick over the City defence and Vincent put in a power-packed header that keeper Keith Barker failed to hold. Turpie forced the ball home from a narrow angle.

Borough had taken a 20th minute lead with a goal only Dave Lewis could have scored. He chased a lost ball and slid it into the net from what looked an impossible angle as Barker challenged. Ten minutes later City winger Peter Martin cashed in on feeble defensive work by Bob Newton to level the score.

Most of the match was ruined by near gale force winds. And both sides deserved credit for battling away under the difficult conditions. The match cost Borough a point, but City manager Tommy Bickerstaff gave a message of hope for third from bottom Nuneaton. The Cambridge boss said: "Five weeks ago we were near the bottom and relegation was being talked about. Now, if we can maintain this form, we will be in a very healthy position by the end of January."

Keith Ball For Borough

Ex-Port Vale and Walsall goalkeeper Keith Ball has finally agreed terms and joined Nuneaton Borough – after a month of speculation. The on-off move began at the beginning of the month when the Darlaston keeper came to Manor Park for talks after the West Midland Leaguers had agreed on a price.

But two days later 30-year-old Ball, who made 138 appearances for Port Vale and 48 for Walsall, changed his mind. "I'm glad to say that Keith Ball has now signed," said Borough boss Geoff Coleman. "We need another goalkeeper. We don't want the same problems we had when Brian was out."

Borough Sign Joey Owen

Nuneaton Borough have completed a £3,000 deal with Telford for striker Joey Owen – and equalled the club's transfer record. It matched the fee Borough paid to Banbury in 1968 for centre-forward Tony Jacques.

Borough have handed over £2,500 and will pay out another £500 when Owen signs for next season. Manager Geoff Coleman and chairman Ken Peal travelled to Shropshire to finalise the transfer.

Yeovil Town v Nuneaton Borough 08-12-1973

Yeovil: Franklin, Irwin, Harrison, Briggs, Cotton, Impey, Slattery, Pickett, Brown, Thompson, Clancy. **Sub:** Cottle.

Borough: Robinson, Stephens, Jones, Branston, Newton, Lewis, Baxter, Mackay, Turpie, Owen, Vincent. **Sub:** Bridgett.

Borough made the journey to The Huish to take on Yeovil Town in a Southern League Premier Division match.

Borough once drab and dreary, were exciting, skilful and full of fight as they twice stormed back from behind to shake Yeovil rigid. And the side that Geoff Coleman has rebuilt should move up the Southern League table. Coleman has unlocked their defensive chains and the players are relishing their new found freedom.

Gone are the dour backs to the wall tactics dominated by fear. But the real fact of the matter is that the players he has signed – six in 12 weeks – are better than the ones that have gone. The team is so much better than it was in those depressing early weeks of the season. Ask Yeovil. They expected a struggling side and were shaken to the core.

Forget that Bob Turpie snatched the point with an equaliser in the third minute of injury time – by that time Nuneaton had proved they were the better side. Before half-time they had staged their best performance for two years – and were a goal down. Bobby Vincent cancelled out a third minute shocker from Yeovil's John Brown – and gave one away.

Vincent mis-hit a back pass straight into the path of the Somerset side's new signing, Ray Pickett from Oxford. But Vincent's partnership up front with Joey Owen was one of the most exciting features of a tremendous performance. Unselfish Owen has added a new dimension to the front line and looked worth every penny of the £3,000 he cost from Telford. Borough have two recognised strikers for the first time since the Crawley-Richards era.

No longer will the midfield men have to play "hit and hope" passes or push the ball square. And no-one will benefit more than Bill Baxter, who had another superb game as the middle of the park anchor man alongside Dave Lewis and Bobby Mackay. He has found a new role – and taken on a new lease of life. Centre-half Terry Branston summed up the tremendous spirit of the side after being troubled with a virus infection on the morning of the match. He was under the weather, but won his battle with Pickett, who will not look

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forward to meeting him when he is well. Borough's attacking style allowed Yeovil to launch counter attacks and Kirk Stephens kicked off the line from Thompson.

Yet all looked in vain as the minutes ticked away – before Turpie netted his fourth goal in five games, from a Lewis centre. It took them almost two minutes to catch him as he went on a victory run while Yeovil goalkeeper Mike Franklin lay injured. The goal crowned the performance and prevented a travesty of justice. But the message is clear – Borough are on their way back.

Nuneaton Borough v Hillingdon Borough 15-12-1973

Borough: Robinson, Stephens, Newton, Baxter, Branston, Jones, Mackay, Owen, Vincent, Lewis, Turpie. **Sub:** Bridgett.

Hillingdon: Phillips, Butler, Titterton, Ryan, Archer, Watt, Taylor, Bence, Reeve, Swain, Huxley. **Sub:** Moore.

Borough welcomed Hillingdon Borough to Manor Park to play a Southern League Premier Division game.

Borough ran into big trouble on the unlucky 13th Saturday of Geoff Coleman's reign – after promising better things. They suffered a relapse on the road to recovery with a shock defeat against bottom of the table Hillingdon. After a tremendous performance at Yeovil they were all set to beat Hillingdon and move out of the bottom four. But the wind of change blew itself out as Jim Langley's side snatched a smash and grab win. And David Pleat, whose September resignation sparked off the Manor Park upheaval, was there to see it happen.

Borough had enough chances to have sunk the Middlesex side without trace, but were hit by two sucker goals. Bobby Vincent could have had a hat-trick in the first 20 minutes and went on to miss some more. Victory looked on the cards during that early period – until Nuneaton gave away the first goal. Terry Branston and Alan Jones went for the same ball after Branston had half cleared and Eddie Reeve beat Brian Robinson from six yards.



Dave Lewis tries to force the ball through an archway of legs during Borough's second half bid to save the game.

Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune

Twenty minutes and more Nuneaton misses later, Hillingdon did it again. Youngster Gary Huxley was allowed the luxury of an unchallenged shot from the edge of the six yard box and snapped up the chance.

Nuneaton launched long periods of second half pressure and Joey Owen troubled the visitors' defence with his skill in the air. Dave Lewis powered through from midfield to have a shot and a header cleared off the line and two more efforts saved by goalkeeper Gordon Phillips. Bob Turpie burst into life and looked as if he would continue his remarkable scoring spell. But Borough had too many stragglers, missed too many chances – and left it too late.

And Hillingdon almost hit them again from breakaway after Bobby Mackay had been booked for dissent. Swain hit the face of the bar and Huxley had a shot headed off the line by Bobby Mackay.

Peal Calls For Two Month Halt To Season

Ken Peal, chairman of Nuneaton Borough, today called for a two month halt to the soccer season. "We must have a death wish to want to carry on," he said. "Things are going from bad to worse. We could suspend the season for two months and suspend players' contracts for the same period.

"There are no floodlights, we are struggling to get fuel and there will soon be no trains. It's costing clubs like us hundreds of pounds."

Gates have already been badly hit by the early kick offs – and the three day working week, scheduled to start in the New Year, will reduce them even more.

Wimbledon v Nuneaton Borough 22-12-1973

Wimbledon: Guy, Stockley, Loughlan, Crosby, McCready, Langford, Smith, Cooke, Pinkney, Lucas, Gadston. **Sub:** Hall.

Borough: Robinson, Stephens, Newton, Baxter, Branston, Jones, Mackay, Owen, Vincent, Lewis, Turpie. **Sub:** Flanagan.

Borough made the journey to Plough Lane to take on Wimbledon in a Southern League Premier Division game.

Bob Turpie saved a precious point for Nuneaton with an 85th minute equaliser – his sixth goal in nine games. Turpie's header cancelled out a 52nd minute own goal from Dave Lewis which threatened to plunge Borough to defeat

But Lewis made amends with a header that set up Turpie's chance and Nuneaton collected a well-earned draw. McCready beat Vincent in the air to a Newton free kick before Turpie forced Guy to a full length save. Robinson held a powerful shot from Lucas outside the box.

Wimbledon had the ball in the net after 10 minutes when Pinkney ran on to a long pass from Smith, cut across Branston and fired in off the bar. It was a spectacular effort – but the crowd's cheers died as Cooke was pulled up for offside. Borough broke down two more Wimbledon attacks before Turpie sliced a left foot shot wide.

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Turpie then almost snatched goal when he flicked out his boot to an Owen pass, but Guy saved. Wimbledon were soon back on the attack and Lucas tried his fourth shot of the match, across the face of the Nuneaton goal. But Turpie began to worry the home side's defence and set up two attacks which could have led to goals.

McCready headed out after the winger had worked his way to the line and Guy made a brave save after Turpie had again beaten Stockley. A powerful tackle by Jones halted Pinkney and Jones cut out more danger when he robbed the ex-Crystal Palace forward after he had beaten Stephens.

Owen was only a bootlace away from another Turpie pass and the Borough striker then hit a shot on the run after Lewis had set up the chance. Rain began to sweep down on an already heavy pitch as Vincent hit a shot over the top after Owen had set up the chance. Baxter robbed Pinkney as he shaped up for a shot and a first half which promised goals ended with the score line still blank.

Owen threatened from the first attack of the second half, but lacked support. Gadston was pulled up for offside and Robinson collected a header from Cooke as the Dons hit back. Jones again beat Pinkney and Guy made a one-handed save from Vincent. But Borough fell behind seven minutes after the break to an own goal. Lewis tried to clear a Crosby corner at the near post and glanced the ball into his own net. It was a desperately unlucky blow for the Manor Park side, who did not deserve to be behind.

Yet they almost conceded another goal when Gadston was slow to react as a Cooke centre rolled across the goalmouth. Borough continued to fight and Vincent went close with an overhead kick after Guy had failed to hold another Turpie centre. But they struggled to force a way through as the minutes ticked away, despite a series of attacks.

Borough equalised five minutes from time through Turpie. Lewis headed a Newton cross into the middle from beyond the far post and Turpie nodded the ball over goalkeeper Guy.

Nuneaton Borough v Atherstone Town 26-12-1973

Borough: Robinson, Stephens, Branston, Newton, Lewis, Baxter, Mackay, Owen, Vincent, Turpie. **Sub:** Flannagan.

Atherstone: Johnson, Kavanagh, Preston, G. Smith, Russell, R. Smith, Quinney, Kenning, Dyer, Franklin, Mellor. **Sub:** Bates.

Borough welcomed Atherstone Town to Manor Park to play a Southern League Premier Division match.

Much travelled Mike Kenning added a touch of tinsel to a game that had all of the trimmings of a local derby – but none of the glitter. He fired a spectacular 20-yard shot into the roof of the net ten minutes from time to give Atherstone a well-deserved point. Barry Franklin wandered out to the left wing to set up the chance and Kenning's shot left goalkeeper Brian Robinson stranded.

The goal wiped out a 52nd minute header from Borough

centre-half Terry Branston. But it was one of the few memorable moments in a forgettable free-kick strewn clash. The referee was the busiest man on the park, booking Adders' full-back Gerry Kavanagh and Borough striker Bobby Vincent as well as awarding 47 free-kicks.

The game threatened to swing Borough's way in the first-half when they attacked a tightly packed, but often jittery Adders' defence. That was when Kenning came into his own. He held Atherstone together in midfield and provided rare touches of class. Borough's most dangerous forward was Joey Owen, who needs better support.



Adders' goalkeeper David Johnson stretches full length to clutch for the ball as Bob Turpie challenges – for one of the 47 free kicks in an untidy local derby.

Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune

But Borough's problems lay in midfield where Dave Lewis struggled for help from Bill Baxter and Bobby Mackay. Adders' goalkeeper David Johnson pushed out a Bob Newton shot for a corner. Mackay cracked an effort wide and Owen twice went close. But Borough had an anxious moment when Kenning drove the ball wide after a run by Bobby Mellor.

Kavanagh was booked and Turpie lectured as the free-kick tally began to mount. And then Vincent followed him into the book after a needless tackle on powerful Mick Preston after the ball had gone. Mick Russell, who had a fine game at left-back for the Adders, then halted Turpie before Owen superbly created space for himself and Johnson did well to keep the shot out.

Owen went close just after the break before Terry Branston broke the deadlock – following a free-kick just outside the Adders' penalty area. It was taken short by Baxter to Mackay,

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who found his chance of a shot barred by Mick Russell and changed his mind to hit a delicate chip which Branston headed home with the Atherstone defence watching on.

Borough then piled forward in an attempt to seal the match, but this left them exposed to the quick counter-attack and Adders cashed in – two minutes after Johnson had finger-tipped a shot from Vincent over the top, Kenning notched his goal and an untidy and predictable game ended all square.

Vincent's Fifth Booking

Nuneaton Borough centre-forward Bobby Vincent faces disciplinary action – after his fifth booking of the season. He had his name taken four times before his transfer from Atherstone, but had steered clear of trouble until yesterday's game – against Atherstone.

AP Leamington v Nuneaton Borough 29-12-1973

AP Leamington: Garrett, Taylor, Brady, Bowden, Griffiths, Boot, Goodfellow, Lee, Horne, Foster, Talbot. Subs: Sweenie and Thomas.
Borough: Robinson, Vaughan, Newton, Harris, Branston, Jones, Mackay, Owen, Turpie, Lewis, Flannagan. Subs: Stephens and Starkey.

Borough made the journey to The Windmill to play AP Leamington in the Birmingham Senior Cup second round.

Borough bade farewell to a year they will want to forget, with their worst performance of the season. It took a 70th minute penalty, given away by Alan Jones and converted by John Brady, to win the tie. But Borough had, by that time, disappeared into a maze of mistakes and complacency.

The penalty was harsh – yet cannot be offered as an excuse for such a mediocre display. Borough strolled through the first-half, could have been well in front, but missed chances. The best one fell to Dave Lewis who drove the ball wide after goalkeeper Dave Garrett had forced out a Bob Newton cross.

Borough were rarely under pressure and they controlled the game. It was a different story in the second half – completely the opposite. Leamington emerged from the half-time break with more fire and determination and Nuneaton fell away. They lost their game, dropped their heads – and struggled to string passes. Jimmy Goodfellow, one of six Brakes' players with Nuneaton connections, hit the post and mis-kicked in front of an open goal.

And Leamington set up a series of raids as Borough faded as an attacking force. But a replay was on the cards as two sides that had little or no idea in front of goal muddled through. That was before Jones was adjudged to have handled an Ivor Talbot cross and Brady planted his spot-kick winner well wide of Brian Robinson.

Nuneaton's only reply was a well hit free kick from Bobby Mackay which brought out a magnificent save from Garrett. Geoff Coleman made changes to his side, bringing in Vaughan for Kirk Stephens and Len Harris for Bill Baxter. Bob Turpie

was moved into the centre, to replace Bobby Vincent, who was cup tied. Vaughan had a steady game, but lacked Stephens' attacking flair which they could have done with when they were on top. Turpie, a left flank player, struggled down the middle where he could not find the time and space he needs.

In the final analysis, Leamington just about deserved their win for the effort they put in after the break. But it was typical of so many Nuneaton matches this season. They had chances, failed to put them away – and struggled.

Grantham Town v Nuneaton Borough 01-01-1974

Borough: Robinson, Stephens, Branston, Jones, Newton, Lewis, Baxter, Mackay, Turpie, Vincent, Flannagan. Sub: Harris.

Borough made the journey to London Road to face Grantham Town in a Southern League Premier Division match.

Borough's hopes of a bright start to the New Year were dimmed at Grantham – by a cruel goal. They were the better side for long spells on a snow-carpeted pitch and went in front with an early Bobby Mackay goal. But Grantham hit back to equalise and notched the winner with just ten minutes to go. Bob Norris hit a weak shot which Brian Robinson had covered, but the ball hit Terry Branston and deflected into the opposite corner of the net.

It was a tragic blow for the Manor Park side, who now face a grim struggle for Premier Division survival. Their performance was again sprinkled with missed chances and relegation now stares them in the face. They carried the game to Grantham and went ahead with a well-taken goal from Mackay. Dave Lewis hit a powerful centre to John Flannagan, who laid on the chance. Flannagan had one of his best games on the left flank and Lewis starred in midfield. The goal was a just reward for their effort and they began to pressurise the Grantham goal.

An overhead kick from Bob Turpie was booted away by goalkeeper Gardiner, Bobby Vincent shot wide – and Lewis hit a post. Grantham, due to face Middlesbrough on Saturday in the Cup, struggled to survive. But Borough, as in so many matches this season, failed to get another goal. And with the second half just seven minutes old the Lincolnshire side grabbed an equaliser.

Right winger Horobin drove a shot into the middle, Robinson pushed it out, and Norris netted through Branston's leg. Still Nuneaton had chances as they pulled themselves together after the leveller. Bob Turpie should have scored from a header, Vincent drove a shot against the post and other openings went begging. Then came the deflected shot – and a superb save by Gardiner from a Mackay header which he forced over the bar.

Borough travelled back empty handed – from the sort of game that relegated teams look back on and say "We should have won." But that would be little consolation.



Dover v Nuneaton Borough

05-01-1974

Borough: Robinson, Stephens, Branston, Jones, Newton, Lewis, Baxter, Mackay, Owen, Turpie, Flannagan. Sub: Bridgett.

Borough made the journey to The Crabble to take on Dover in a Southern League Premier Division game.

Borough lifted themselves out of the relegation places with a classy display. They went into the match at the bottom of the league and defeat would have been disastrous. But they emerged with hope after their first away win of the season – from a performance that threatened to tear Dover to ribbons.

Bob Turpie hit both goals, one in each half, and Nuneaton could easily have trebled their score. Even a bomb scare failed to rattle them and they earned high praise from Dover manager Terry Adlington, who rated them: “The best team we have played all season.”

Turpie grabbed the goals with a tremendous display alongside Joey Owen up front after Bobby Vincent was surprisingly left out. And Terry Branston held the back four together – he won everything in the air. But the player who supplied much of the magic was John Flannagan, the enigma of Manor Park.

Flannagan, whose displays last season put Atherstone Town into the premier division, found the sparkle he had lost. Playing at outside left, he teased, tormented and finally destroyed Dover full-back Ken Reynolds and had a hand in both goals. Borough pulled themselves together after a scrappy start, began to dominate the game, and scored ten minutes from the break.

It started on the edge of their own 18 yard box after a poor cross from Dover full-back Les Hall. The ball went from Bill Baxter to Bob Turpie, on to Joey Owen and back to Flannagan, who had a shot which hit Dover defender Wilf Tranter before Bobby Mackay tried an effort which was stabbed in by Turpie.

Borough’s next goal, 20 minutes later, was superb. Peter Brooks sliced a clearance out to Flannagan, who then beat him and Reynolds before laying on an inch perfect killer pass. Turpie ran on to it and cracked a shot in off the post near the angle from his left foot.

There was only one side in it. Owen hit Dover centre-half Alan Woods with a shot from three yards, Turpie headed over and was a whisker away from a diving header. And then Turpie hit the woodwork after Dover had launched their final assault. It brought them a goal six minutes from time after Borough had lost some of their composure. Brooks side-footed the ball into the net after a twice taken free-kick.

Borough Win Battle With Taxman

Nuneaton Borough Football Club won a battle with the tax man last year – and saved themselves more than £4,000. They negotiated a massive purchase tax rebate on their bingo

ticket sales after months of wrangling. Explained chairman Ken Peal: “It involved the wording on the tickets. They said we were liable to tax, but we insisted we were not. We went to London and won our case which covered a period of more than three years.”

“It means we are £2,810 in the red instead of £6,551, the figure in 1972.” The club showed an operating loss of £441 on the year ending May 31, 1973, despite increased costs and falling gates. Gates were down by £5,000 but the club held its own by strict budgeting and with income from its money raising schemes...

Dave Lewis Transfer Request

Dave Lewis, Nuneaton Borough’s tough tackling skipper has been put on the transfer list – at his own request. The shock move from Manor Park comes just three days before Nuneaton’s two vital cup ties in 24 hours. And interest will obviously centre on Nuneaton’s Non-League Cup opponents Kettering – a club who made inquiries about Lewis earlier in the season, as did Romford.

Telford United v Nuneaton Borough

20-01-1974

Borough: Ball, Stephens, Baxter, Jones, Bridgett, Starkey, Newton, Flannagan, Gore, Randle, Turpie. Sub: Branston.

Borough made the journey to The Buck’s Head to play Telford United in a Southern League Cup third round tie.

Bob Turpie gave Telford a glimpse of his goal magic with a tremendous 22nd minute header. He rose above the Shropshire side’s defence and powered a John Flannagan free-kick past startled Phil Weir for his 13th goal of the season. Telford equalised six minutes later from the penalty spot to take the Cup game to a replay.

Full back Geoff Croft scored the penalty – after a harsh hand-ball decision against Borough midfield player Bob Newton. But the tie was a triumph for Geoff Coleman’s re-shuffled side – and his youngsters. Forced to make changes to the team after Saturday’s two hour grueller against Kettering, he brought in reserve team strikers Keith Randle and John Gore, goalkeeper Keith Ball and Tom Starkey.

And for an hour they played their part in a Nuneaton performance that threatened to swamp managerless Telford. Skipper Dave Lewis was injured, striker Joey Owen cup tied, centre-half Terry Branston nursed an injury on the sub’s bench. Yet there was only one side in it for almost an hour as Nuneaton plugged away with total commitment.

Weir pulled off a lucky save from Randle, Newton was only inches away with a volley that screamed over the top and Telford struggled to stay alive. But the penalty put the home side back into the tie and tempers began to fray. Bridgett was booked for a tackle from behind on Mickey Fudge in the 31st minute. And Telford forward Gavin Lang was sent off early in the second half for a stupid foul on Stephens after the ball had gone.

Tom Starkey starred for Borough in midfield. He was a revelation in his best performance since he joined the club. Goalkeeper Ball impressed with some immaculate handling and a series of brave saves and Alan Jones held big Jack Bentley in a vice-like grip. Strangely, Nuneaton had their worst patch after Telford had been reduced to ten men.

Borough flagged as the home side redoubled their efforts to make up for the gap in their ranks. It was understandable after Borough's effort the previous day. But it was a great performance from the Manor Park side in front of Telford's biggest crowd of the season. The Borough players did the club proud in a weekend of action, drama – and thrills.

Atherstone Told No Deal For Lewis

Nuneaton Borough have turned down a bid from Atherstone Town to take transfer listed Dave Lewis back to Sheepy Road. Adders have stepped in with a substantial bid, but Borough chairman Ken Peal said: "They wanted a quick decision and the answer, quite simply, is 'no'. Our valuation is higher than that of Atherstone."

Also out of the running are Southern League champions Kettering Town, who have baulked at the £5,000 price tag.

Nuneaton Borough v Telford United 27-01-1974

Borough: Ball, Stephens, Branston, Jones, Newton, Starkey, Baxter, Lewis, Randle, Turpie, Flannagan. Sub: Gore.

Borough welcomed Telford United to Manor Park for a Southern League Cup third round replay.

Keith Randle launched his Southern League goalscoring career with a 45th minute match winner. Borough's young striker scored on the stroke of half-time to put them into the quarter finals. He forced the ball into the net from a John Flannagan near post corner which Telford should have cleared.



Impressive Keith Randle scores the goal that crowned his first team home debut and put Borough into the quarter finals of the Southern League Cup.

Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune

Brave and strong, Randle could have had a hat-trick with a performance that will certainly give him a part to play in

Borough's future. He volleyed a Bill Baxter free kick across the face of the Telford net, and forced Weir into a spectacular full length save from another Baxter pass. He also had a header blatantly handled on the line by Telford full-back Geoff Croft.

The match official also ignored a foul by Kirk Stephens on Dennis Hawkins, a few minutes from the end, which looked suspiciously like a penalty. Borough often stretched Telford, who had beaten league leaders Dartford the previous day. But Borough's slow and often unimaginative build ups gave the Shropshire side time to pack their 18-yard box.

In one attack there were as many as 16 players inside the Telford penalty box. Once Terry Branston had a measure of big Jack Bentley, the visitors' attack rarely troubled the competent Ball. Bentley managed a couple of efforts at goal, but was dominated for most of the match by Branston, surely among the top centre-halves in the Southern League.

Kirk Stephens had another fine match at full-back and the back four was secure. Where Nuneaton sometimes struggled was in the middle of the park. They were patchy and often erratic, despite a terrific performance from skipper Dave Lewis, who had a tremendous first-half. Tom Starkey drifted in and out of the tie and Baxter improved after a poor first half. Telford defenders Croft and Bill Fairhurst were both booked and forward Gavin Lang, sent off last week, was involved in a scuffle with Lewis.

But Nuneaton were never in danger of losing, although Bentley almost snatched an equaliser in the dying seconds. Borough, whose record in the Southern League Cup has been poor, are now through to the last eight for the first time in four years.

Borough Sign Goodwin

Nuneaton Borough last night completed the signing of Ian Goodwin from Third Division Brighton – after six weeks of talks. The deal had dragged on since before Christmas and Borough had to agree to pay a small fee.

Goodwin, a powerful 13 stone six footer, can operate in midfield or in the back four.

Hillingdon Borough v Nuneaton Borough 02-02-1974

Hillingdon: Phillips, Butler, Ryan, Titterton, Archer, Watt, Brown, Swain, Reeve, Bishop, Huxley. Sub: Marchant.

Borough: Ball, Stephens, Newton, Baxter, Branston, Jones, Mackay, Owen, Turpie, Lewis, Flannagan. Sub: Goodwin.

Borough made the journey to Hillingdon Borough to play a Southern League Premier Division game.

John Flannagan and Bill Baxter scored precious goals for Borough. Flannagan cancelled out Hillingdon's first goal and Baxter notched an 83rd minute equaliser after a penalty had again put Nuneaton behind. And Bobby Mackay almost made it a tartan triumph when he hit the crossbar in the dying minutes. The goals helped to lift a grim relegation clash.



It was a shapeless duel between a team at the bottom of the table and one trying to keep its head above the surface. The first-half was almost a non event. It contained one fierce volley from Hillingdon's Eddie Reeve and a couple of brave saves from Borough's Keith Ball – not much more. Experienced Ball did well on his Southern League debut.

Flannagan worked hard on the left flank for Borough, but Joey Owen and Bob Turpie failed to make an impression up front. The second half opened with a goal that almost made up for the boredom before the break. Only a minute had gone when Reeve volleyed home a right wing cross to put Hillingdon ahead. Seven minutes later Flannagan equalised with a delicate chip from a Baxter free-kick.

Hillingdon were then reduced to ten men when midfield man Malcolm Swain was sent off. Swain, who arrived at the ground in top hat and tails from his brother's wedding, went for dissent. It was a harsh decision, but the referee was just as hard on Nuneaton eleven minutes from time. He gave Hillingdon a penalty for a foul by Terry Branston on Gary Huxley – and full-back Phil Archer scored from the spot.

Reeve dummied Branston to put Huxley through, but the winger had miskicked and was off balance when Branston challenged from behind. The penalty was the seventh to be given against Borough this season – they have yet to be awarded one. It looked as if it would cost them a point before Baxter snatched them from the jaws of defeat. Reeve lost the ball on the edge of the box and Baxter volleyed it high into the net.

Tamworth v Nuneaton Borough 03-02-1974

Borough: Ball, Stephens, Newton, Starkey (Owen, 68), Goodwin, Jones, Flannagan, Vincent, Turpie, Lewis, Briscoe.

Borough made the journey to The Lamb to play Tamworth in a Midland Floodlit Cup game.

Borough striker Joey Owen ended his two month goal famine in whirlwind fashion. Substituting for Tom Starkey after 68 minutes, the blonde haired former Telford player cracked home two goals inside nine minutes. He began in the 71st minute with a 25 yard blockbuster that crashed against the bar and ran down the back of the netting.

Owen's second, six minutes later, came from a one-two movement with improved Bobby Vincent. Owen beat two defenders and the keeper in a chase for the ball – and slotted home Borough's fifth. Youngster Steve Briscoe, making his debut for the first team helped himself to a goal. The other two coming from Bobby Vincent and a Tom Starkey penalty.

Nuneaton, twice behind against a never-say-die Tamworth outfit, hit the front just before the interval and helped themselves to a 15 point haul. Manager Coleman rested Baxter, Branston and Mackay – and drafted Starkey, Briscoe and latest signing Ian Goodwin into the line-up.

Tamworth took the lead after 15 minutes. Steve Sherry collected a pass from former Borough player Roger Bray,

on trial at Tamworth, beat Goodwin and slid the ball past keeper Keith Ball. Twelve minutes later Stephens and Starkey combined to give Bobby Vincent an equalising goal. Within seconds Tamworth were back in front when Sherry again beat Goodwin to the ball to head a Millard cross home.

Borough struck twice in the 35th and 39th minutes to give themselves a 3-2 interval lead. Steve Briscoe scored with a scorching shot after a Flannagan effort had been half-cleared. Tom Starkey scored from a penalty. The tempo relaxed slightly after the break until the arrival of Joey Owen – who capped a fine display from the Manor Park side.

Borough Players Out On Loan

Nuneaton Borough's Mick Keeley and Len Harris, both in search of regular first-team football, have joined Tamworth on a month's loan. And Atherstone Town's unhappy duo of Brian Bates and Alan Harper look certain to make it a sensational foursome move to the Kettlebrook ground.

Nuneaton Borough v Wimbledon 09-02-1974

Borough: Ball, Stephens, Bridgett, Baxter, Branston, Jones, Mackay, Owen, Vincent, Turpie, Lewis. Sub: Flannagan.

Wimbledon: Guy, Stockley, Rice, Langford, Bryant, Bloss, Smith, Mahon, Bennett, Lucas, Cooke. Sub: Hall.

Borough welcomed Wimbledon to Manor Park to play a Southern League Premier Division game.

Borough battled against wind, rain and squelching mud – and a goalkeeper named Dickie Guy. The visitors' keeper, rated best in the Southern League, kept Borough at bay with a series of superb saves. And he was the main reason why ten man Wimbledon survived the second half after striker Bob Bennett was sent off.

Bennett received his marching orders in the 54th minute for a rash tackle on Terry Branston. But the Manor Park side were unimpressive for long spells and the message is now clear. Unless they can improve their home performances they will be in serious trouble. Half the sides in the premier division are unsafe and Nuneaton know that if they are to stay up they must do it at home. Yet they have now dropped ten precious points in front of their own fans.

Saturday's draw was their 13th draw of the season – and eight of them have been at Manor Park. Granted Guy was superb, the conditions were difficult, and Wimbledon failed to create a single clear cut chance. While Guy performed acrobatics Borough keeper Keith Ball was no more than a spectator. Teams that create chances, they say, have no problems, but unless they stick them in the back of the net they do. And Nuneaton have struggled in front of goal all season.

The back four is amongst the best in the Southern League, but that's where the side's consistency ends. Dave Lewis gave his usual 100% in midfield, although Bobby Mackay and Bill Baxter struggled to make a contribution. Bob Turpie and Joey

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Owen both worked hard and Bobby Vincent did extremely well on his return to the side. Guy saved from Vincent, Turpie, Owen, Branston, Mackay and Jones – and two shots were cleared off the line.



Wimbledon goalkeeper Dickie Guy dives at Bobby Vincent's feet to thwart the impressive Borough striker. Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune

In the dying seconds the bearded goalkeeper clawed the ball out of the net as Nuneaton launched their last desperate bid to save a home point. But again they were technically inferior to their opponents, who were much better organised. And with another match gone the Manor Park side still totter on the brink of the drop.

Borough Reject Peterborough Proposal

Kirk Stephens, Borough's talented young full-back, has been offered a fortnight's trial by Peterborough United. But Nuneaton manager Geoff Coleman has flatly turned down the approach from the Fourth Division promotion hopefuls.

"They want the best of both worlds," said Coleman today. "They must make up their minds whether they want him or not. They want to look at him and then decide."

Bedford Town v Nuneaton Borough 16-02-1974

Bedford: Alexander, Skinn, Folds, Gould, Cooley, Earl, Hawkins, Parratt, Sargent, Dove, Scurr. **Sub:** Silous.

Borough: Ball, Stephens, Bridgett, Baxter, Branston, Jones, Mackay, Owen, Turpie, Lewis, Vincent. **Sub:** Flannagan.

Borough made the journey to The Eyrie to play Bedford Town in a Southern League Premier Division match.

Enigmatic Borough took another step towards safety. And their season has now taken on a similar pattern to last year. Often threadbare at home, but embroidered with richly woven performances in away games. Saturday's match was an ideal example of this. After dropping a home point last week, they staged the kind of display the fans rarely see at Manor Park. Solid, incisive and full of determination, they made Bedford look third raters for two thirds of the match.

It was the kind of display that inspires confidence that they will climb out of trouble – and none of the fans who made the trip down the M1 will disagree. Borough steadily gained belief

in themselves after a scrappy start, dominated the game, and then survived a desperate closing rally from the Eagles. But when they were on top, they made struggling Bedford look like candidates for the drop.

Bob Turpie clinched the win with a 39th minute goal – his 14th of the season. An ambitious ball from Bill Baxter was going out for a goal kick when Bedford's Peter Hawkins tried to play it back to his goalkeeper. He made a hash of it and Kirk Stephens darted in to whip over a centre for Turpie to score with a diving header. Ironically, Hawkins was the Eagle's best player – the only one who constantly threatened to trouble a dominant Nuneaton defence.

But Stephens deserved a part in the match winner after another fine display, although he had a shaky start. Stephens, Keith Ball, Dave Lewis, Alan Jones and, of course, Turpie, had starring roles in a well blended team performance. Lewis worked non-stop alongside Bill Baxter and Bobby Mackay, both better players than they were last week. Ball helped Borough survive the closing stages and Jones was magnificent in the back four.

But Terry Branston, Ray Bridgett, Bobby Vincent and Joey Owen all made their contributions. It was this all round depth that made Bedford struggle and Baxter and Mackay almost notched spectacular goals before Bedford's final push. Baxter half volleyed a shot over the bar from 30 yards and Mackay cracked a Baxter pass towards the top corner, only to see it brilliantly saved by Alan Alexander.

The Eagles' late bid to save the game followed a period of indecision from Borough. Goalkeeper Ball made saves from Bobby Folds, Hawkins and Gary Sargent to keep the home side at bay. With only 30 seconds left he arched his body backwards to save a Sargent header on the line when a goal looked certain.

Nuneaton Borough v Dover 23-02-1974

Borough: Ball, Stephens, Bridgett, Mackay, Branston, Jones, Flannagan, Owen, Turpie, Lewis, Vincent. **Sub:** Goodwin.

Dover: Franklin, Reynolds, Hall, Tranter, Wood, Fursden, Hamshere, Arnold, Brooks, Bowman, Thornley. **Sub:** Moy.

Borough welcomed Dover to Manor Park to play a Southern League Premier Division game.

Bobby Vincent regained his goal touch with a man of the match display. He put Borough back into the game with a 57th minute penalty – and he hit a spectacular winner eight minutes later. Nuneaton struggled after a bright start in a see-saw struggle studded with odd goals.

The clash provided plenty of excitement and gave them two more points in their struggle for Southern League premier division safety. Dave Lewis shot them in front after just 90 seconds when he blasted the ball in off Chris Hamshere. Dover then found time and space in midfield and Borough's normally sound back four began to struggle.

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The Kent side then took the lead with two goals in the space of the first eight minutes of the second half. Centre-half Alan Wood headed the equaliser after Terry Branston had twice only half cleared. Four minutes later substitute Tony Moy, Dover's top scorer, put them ahead after a hard driven free-kick found its way through off Branston's boot.

It then took what looked a harsh penalty decision to change the face of the game. Alan Bowman was adjudged to have tripped Joey Owen from behind and Vincent netted after goalkeeper Mike Franklin had parried his spot kick. The penalty was hard on Dover, but Nuneaton have had seven given against them this season – some of them just as harsh.

Vincent then crowned a fine individual performance with the winner from a John Flannagan cross. He flat-footed defender Alan Fursdon on the edge of the box and rifled in a right foot shot from 20 yards.

Borough Call For National League

Ken Peal, Nuneaton Borough's progressive chairman, remains adamant that a National League would be non-league soccer's salvation. Mr Peal returned late yesterday from a meeting of nine non-league clubs in London to find the best way of getting into the Football League.

But afterwards he said: "I still feel there is only one way – the formation of a National League. The meeting was very fruitful but there are still basic problems."

Grantham Town v Nuneaton Borough 24-02-1974

Borough: Ball, Stephens, Branston, Jones, Bridgett, Lewis, Baxter, Goodwin, Turpie, Starkey, Flannagan. **Sub:** Newton.

Borough made the journey to London Road to play Grantham Town in the Southern League Cup quarter final.

Borough pulled off a tremendous win against second in the table Grantham. The Lincolnshire side had been beaten only twice at home in two years – and one of those defeats was against Middlesbrough. They had even made provisional arrangements to meet AP Leamington in the next round.

But Borough remembered that they should have won at Grantham on New Year's Day – and that they are the best away side in the Premier Division. And the Manor Park side outskilled, outfought – and often outplayed their opponents to march proudly into the semi-finals. Dave Lewis notched the winner in the 35th minute after Grantham centre-half Ron Harrison failed to cut out a long ball from Ian Goodwin. That goal settled the tie, but there was a much wider margin between the two sides.

Some of the football Borough played in the first half astonished the success-steeped home fans. They ran, fought, made themselves available – and their belief in themselves grew as the game went on. And they are now just two games away from their first major honour in 15 years of Southern League soccer.

It was a team effort, studded with superb individual displays from Kirk Stephens, Ray Bridgett, Terry Branston, Keith Ball – and Ian Goodwin. Newcomer Goodwin, making his first full appearance, strode midfield like a colossus. The power-packed ex-Coventry and Brighton player could turn out to be the signing of the season. Players like Bill Baxter and Dave Lewis also made major contributions; Lewis for his all-out competitiveness and Baxter for his steadying influence in midfield. Stephens and Bridgett proved once again that they are the best attacking full backs in the Southern League.

Branston won everything in the air against Bob Norris and Ball is still to have a bad game in goal. He made a tremendous save in the opening minutes when a cross from Brent Horobin hit Baxter and almost deflected into the net. Grantham's best player was Chris Gardiner, who made one save in the 81st minute that was stamped with brilliance. He pushed out a John Flannagan header and then forced the ball around the post as Bob Turpie followed up.

Turpie had a header forced on to the bar by full-back Andy Crawford and a Branston miskick almost let in Dave Benskin two minutes from time. The ball bobbed on the tricky surface, but Ball raced out of goal to block Benskin's shot – and Borough were in the last four.

Guildford City v Nuneaton Borough 02-03-1974

Guildford: Brooks, Peters, Summerhill, Finn, Harris, Watts, Malley, Westburgh, Smith, Wright, Burge. **Sub:** Dobson.

Borough: Ball, Stephens, Bridgett, Mackay, Branston, Jones, Goodwin, Owen, Turpie, Lewis, Vincent. **Sub:** Starkey.

Borough made the journey to play Guildford City in a Southern League Premier Division game.

Borough emerged unscathed from a bruising battle in Surrey, picking up their third away win on the season. But manager Geoff Coleman summed up their feelings when he said: "We are thankful to get away without any serious injuries."

Guildford, the worst Southern League side they have met all season, had three players booked – and one sent off. Darby Watts, Phil Summerhill and Colin Harris had their names taken and Tony Burge received marching orders. He punched Terry Branston in a goalmouth scuffle six minutes from the end. Borough were always the better side, although much of the match was as dead as the atmosphere at the Metropolitan Police ground.

Only 185 fans turned up – the lowest crowd in the history of the Southern League Premier Division. The goal that won the match came from Bobby Vincent – and was richly deserved. Vincent has found his form in the past fortnight and was a constant menace to the City defenders. He scored in the 61st minute after taking a pass from Joey Owen and turning past three defenders.

But Guildford, who improved early in the second half when they stopped kicking and started playing football, were a

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disgrace. Borough's front runners were scythed down at every opportunity and it was a credit to the club that they did not retaliate.

Nuneaton Borough v AP Leamington 03-03-1974

Borough: Ball, Stephens, Branston, Jones, Bridgett, Goodwin, Baxter, Lewis, Starkey, Turpie, Flannagan. **Sub:** Randle.

Borough welcomed AP Leamington to Manor Park to play a Southern League Cup semi-final match.

Borough's hopes were shattered by three goals in the last six minutes. They crashed out of the semi-finals with a display that made a mockery of their recent form.

A bitterly disappointed Geoff Coleman paid tribute to Leamington's effort. He admitted he had players who did not give enough, but thought that Saturday's game at Guildford took a lot out of the side. Ironically, two of the players who did not play in Surrey, had poor games. John Flannagan was totally ineffective and Tom Starkey failed to make an impression. He and Bob Turpie could not shake off the attentions of Tony Bowden and Ernie Wilkinson.

In midfield, both Bill Baxter and Ian Goodwin struggled alongside hard working Dave Lewis. Neither of them could match Steve Lee, who played a major part in the Brakes' win. The saddest man at Manor Park was goalkeeper Keith Ball. He looked at fault for all three of the goals.

Ivor Talbot scored the first from 25 yards in the 84th minute from a Norman Foster pass. Five minutes later, Talbot robbed Kirk Stephens just inside the Borough half and raced forward to shoot. Ball failed to hold the shot and Neil Armstrong followed up to score. Stephens' mistake contributed to the goal – but the young full-back was the only Borough player who matched Leamington for all out effort.

Leamington's third goal was scored in injury time when Lee scored direct from a free-kick with Ray Bridgett and Ball on the line. The three goal burst came after a scrappy game had been lifted by a 67th minute disallowed effort from Norman Foster. He lashed the ball into the net, but was pulled up for offside. But, from that moment, Leamington realised they could win – and Borough faded out of a competition that could have given them their first major honour in 16 seasons of Southern League football.

Borough Injury Problems

Alan Jones, Nuneaton Borough's iron hard back four player, is on the injured list – with a broken arm. He collected the injury 15 minutes from the end of Sunday's Southern League Cup tie against AP Leamington. But the extent of the damage was not known until yesterday.

Also injured is Ian Goodwin, who had been pencilled in to take Jones' place in the back four. Goodwin picked up a hamstring injury in the Leamington game and is unlikely to be fit to face Romford on Saturday.

Romford v Nuneaton Borough 09-03-1974

Romford: Lightfoot, Parmenter, Tapping, Nann, Robinson, Bickles, Sanders, Chandler, Perry, Yorath, Bailey. **Sub:** Manning.

Borough: Ball, Stephens, Newton, Lewis, Branston, Baxter, Mackay, Owen, Keeley, Turpie, Vincent. **Sub:** Starkey.

Borough made the journey to Brooklands to face Romford in a Southern League Premier Division game.

Borough won an unlikely point, but in the end it could have been two. Ravaged by injury and with Ray Bridgett having to cry off with a bout of the flu, Borough were up against it. Borough's reshuffled side had their backs to the wall. But they tossed aside their troubles and outplayed the home side.

After sustaining some early pressure Nuneaton moved forward with confidence and took the game to Romford. Wily Bill Baxter showed his calibre with a switch to the back four alongside Terry Branston. Utility man Bob Newton replaced Bridgett at full-back. With Baxter and Branston soon striking up a quick relationship, and Lewis and Owen prompting front runners Vincent and Turpie, Borough outshone their opponents.

Mick Keeley had the best chance of the half for Borough. A Joey Owen centre found Keeley unmarked. But thinking he was about to be challenged the centre-forward dived to head the ball wide of the post. The second half began explosively with Nuneaton being denied the lead. In the 49th minute Lewis won a free-kick on the right hand goal line. He took the free-kick himself, and the ball cannoned off a defender back to his feet. He crossed the ball again and Vincent scored from six yards.

Borough's joy was short-lived as the referee consulted his linesman, and then disallowed the goal, ruling that Turpie was offside, interfering with play on the goal-line. The protests had hardly had a chance to die down when Borough took the lead through Bobby Vincent. The Nuneaton striker showing real determination, latched on to a Turpie pass to beat former Atherstone keeper Chris Lightfoot.

His celebration cartwheel summed up Borough's feeling. But from that point on they began to struggle and Romford cashed in 14 minutes from time when Roy Saunders planted an unstoppable half-volley past Keith Ball. It was Borough's eighth away point in five unbeaten trips and stretched their unbeaten run in the Southern League to six games.

Nuneaton Borough v Margate 16-03-1974

Borough: Ball, Stephens, Newton, Lewis, Branston, Baxter, Starkey, Owen, Keeley, Turpie, Vincent. **Sub:** Flannagan.

Margate: Bowtell, Summers, Walker, S. Brown, Breach, Clewlow, Clayton, Fusco, Hold, B. Brown, Baber. **Sub:** Houston.

Borough welcomed Margate to Manor Park to play a Southern League Premier Division game.

Unstoppable Borough broke down the barriers. Fortune finally smiled kindly on Manor Park and Borough recreated

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their away form – and rapped in four goals. Plagued by mounting injuries and forced to reshuffle at the back and in midfield, they proved to themselves that they can overcome the Manor Park jitters.

For players like utility man Bob Newton, always prepared to fill a gap anywhere in the team, there was a goal. Costly Joey Owen, playing far deeper than he is accustomed to, received his reward for honest running, scoring his first Southern League goal for Nuneaton. Bobby Vincent kept on the goal trail with his fifth league goal in four games. And front runner Bob Turpie collected his 15th goal of the season.

Borough took the lead in the fifth minute when Bob Newton floated a corner kick over Margate's keeper for a slightly fortunate goal. But then they drifted for the remainder of the half as pass after pass went astray. Struggling Margate were allowed to pick themselves up as Borough lost their composure.

As the second half opened Margate's Barry Brown spelt a moment of danger for Nuneaton's rearguard when he shot past the post with keeper Ball stranded. But on the hour the tide turned. Borough nosed further ahead as they struck three goals in 21 minutes. Joey Owen, pushing up front after a first-half of grafting from a deep midfield position, got the all-important second. A Turpie corner was mis-kicked by Margate defender Stan Brown and Owen lashed the ball home from six yards.

In the 76th minute Vincent scored a fine solo goal. He sped past two defenders and hit a 25 yard effort which skidded under the keeper's body. Nine minutes from time Bob Turpie cracked the fourth after keeper Steve Bowtell had failed to hold a Lewis drive.

The four goals did as much for the Borough players as the two points. The large winning margin will give them a tremendous boost.

Atherstone Town v Nuneaton Borough 17-03-1974

Atherstone: Johnson, Kavanagh, Russell, G. Smith, Preston, R. Smith, Quinney, Kenning, Franklin, Webster, Flannagan. **Sub:** Mellor.

Borough: Ball, Stephens, Bridgett, Starkey, Goodwin, Baxter, Flannagan, Randle, Turpie, Lewis, Briscoe. **Sub:** Vincent.

Borough made the journey to Sheepy Road to take on Atherstone Town in a Midland Floodlit Cup game.

Big-hearted Steve Quinney kept a grip on the Floodlit Cup for Atherstone. Quinney rose to the occasion with a goal in an exciting but bruising battle. His 59th minute winning effort, when he met a Jim Flannagan cross with his powerful head was a fitting tribute to Quinney's rugged style and determined approach. After the game Adders' manager Gil Merrick commented: "Steve is the type of player you need – a real clubman. He always does a tremendous job when I call upon him. He knows he is suited to a particular situation and he gives of his all."

But Quinney's goal did more than win praise from his manager – it has split the section table wide open. Had Borough triumphed, Merrick would have been the first to admit that Nuneaton were home and dry.

Adders took the nailbiter by a solitary goal, but both sides finished all square in fouls, with 23 apiece. Borough, with a changed side from the one that upset Margate the day before, began impressively with a strong wind behind them. Youngster Steve Briscoe looked particularly threatening in the first half an hour and gave Adders full-back Gerry Kavanagh a rough ride.

There was action, excitement and plenty of needle. Mike Kenning was brought down twice in as many minutes by Borough's Lewis and Ian Goodwin, who replaced Branston at the back. Kenning was subdued, as Borough swept forward with Turpie and Briscoe going close. Turpie worked another move out for Goodwin who fired wide on the edge of the six yard box.

Borough's challenge died on the half-time whistle when the listless John Flannagan missed a golden opportunity after Starkey had carved out the chance. Atherstone had held firm against the stiff breeze and took control after the break. Kenning went close with a free-kick before Quinney notched the winner. The same player, pushing forward more and more, nearly added his second when he dribbled round Goodwin and shot into the side netting.

Borough keeper Keith Ball made a tremendous save ten minutes from time when he blocked a Roger Smith shot after Webster had split the Nuneaton defence.

Borough Ask To Use Floodlights

Nuneaton Borough have applied for permission to stage four matches under the Manor Park floodlights. Three of them are against teams involved in the Southern League championship and the other is in the final of the West Midlands League (First Division) Cup.

Club Secretary John Evans has written to the Department of the Environment for licences to use the lights. But there is growing speculation inside football that the floodlights ban, imposed during the energy crisis, may be lifted.

Folkestone v Nuneaton Borough 23-03-1974

Folkestone: Bowley, Bentley, Rogers, Crowley, Pearce, Shovelar, Watson, Pointer, Whittington, Woods, Howell. **Sub:** Hogg.

Borough: Ball, Stephens, Newton, Lewis, Branston, Baxter, Goodwin, Owen, Vincent, Turpie, Briscoe. **Sub:** Keeley.

Borough made the journey to Kent to play Folkestone in a Southern League Premier Division game.

Borough stretched their unbeaten Southern League run to nine games, moved into the top half of the table – and discovered a winger. They travelled home with their 15th point out of 18 – form that even the championship chasers cannot match. And

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youngster Steve Briscoe, making his Premier Division debut, hit the winner with eleven minutes to go.

Briscoe blasted a Bobby Vincent pass into the roof of the net – after missing a golden chance 20 minutes earlier. He froze as another Vincent pass went across a gaping goalmouth, but the winner made amends. Briscoe added a new dimension to the Borough front line and maintained the potential he has shown with the Reserves.

Briscoe's winner added another chapter to Borough's success story – a run that has lifted them from skid row into the champagne set. But the player who stole the man of the match honours was Bobby Vincent, whose unpredictable skills had Folkestone – and often his own team-mates – in a daze. Vincent does everything “wrong”. Holds on to the ball when he should lay it off and squeezes himself in – and out – of tight corners. But he has the precious gift of being able to do the unexpected at the right time. Both of Nuneaton's goals were products of this.

The first, after 39 minutes, came when he collected a throw in and left two defenders chasing thin air before hitting the ball into the middle. Joey Owen nodded it square to Bob Turpie and Borough's leading scorer looped a header over goalkeeper Keith Bowley. Folkestone equalised nine minutes into the second half after some magical moments from ex-Walsall winger Tommy Watson.

He threatened to tear the Borough defence apart in the opening stages after the break and sent over the cross for Eddie Woods to score. Woods, who had posed problems in the air for goalkeeper Keith Ball, headed it over the keeper as he came out.

But Watson faded, Nuneaton hit back and the Kent club could never match the enthusiasm this Borough side has for the game. They were too powerful if at times not creative enough in midfield and held Folkestone despite the airborne threat from Woods and lanky Eric Whittington. Dave Lewis was always involved in the middle of the park, Joey Owen worked tremendously hard in his new role and Bob Turpie caused problems up front. And Bob Newton had perhaps his best game of the season at left-back.

Nuneaton Borough v Weymouth 25-03-1974

Borough: Ball, Stephens, Baxter, Branston, Newton, Owen, Lewis, Goodwin, Vincent, Turpie, Briscoe. **Sub:** Keeley.

Borough welcomed Weymouth to Manor Park to play a Southern League Premier Division game.

In-form Bobby Vincent added another set of statistics to Borough's success run with a 60th minute match-winning penalty. Vincent was brought down by Weymouth defender Tony Hobson and slammed the ball into the net from the penalty spot. It was his sixth goal in six Southern League games, his second successful spot kick – and it gave Nuneaton their 17th point from ten matches.

And it also pushed the Manor Park side closer to a club record unbeaten run in the most remarkable transformation of the season. But Weymouth, the best side they have met this season, pushed Borough all the way in an entertaining incident-packed clash. The Dorset side protested at the penalty decision and had three players booked in the final stages.

Fiery full back Brian Lawrence and midfielder man Bob Brown went into the book for rash tackles and player-manager Graham Williams had his name taken for arguing.

Nuneaton dominated the first-half attacking play when the Dorset side packed midfield and organised themselves well in defence. Vincent had a shot smothered by goalkeeper John Clarke and wasted a chance after a glorious crossfield ball from winger Steve Briscoe. And Weymouth survived a confident penalty appeal when Bob Turpie was flattened by Lawrence as he tried to move on to a Vincent pass.

Yet Weymouth were dangerous when they broke out of defence and often stretched a Nuneaton rearguard in which Bill Baxter showed all of his skill and experience. After the break the visitors became more adventurous and evened up the play. Alan Bimson had a shot blocked on the line and Ian Goodwin rescued Borough when Bimson beat Joey Owen and Kirk Stephens and pulled the ball back across the middle.

There was nothing in it until the penalty nosed Nuneaton in front – after more pressure from Weymouth. But there was plenty of action for the 1,300-plus crowd as both sides maintained a tremendous pace. In the end, the penalty separated two teams who staged a battle that was a fine advertisement for Southern League soccer.

There is still a lot of soccer left at Manor Park this season – with all of the teams in the title race yet to come. They had better watch out. For Nuneaton Borough in their present frame of mind are a match for anyone.

Nuneaton Borough v Chelmsford City 30-03-1974

Borough: Ball, Stephens, Newton, Owen, Branston, Baxter, Goodwin, Vincent, Turpie, Lewis, Briscoe. **Sub:** Mackay.

Chelmsford: Carrick, Coakley, Eddie, O'Kane, Delon, Oakes, Grant, Peterson, Dunwell, Tomkins, Lewis. **Sub:** Taylor.

Borough welcomed Chelmsford City to Manor Park for a Southern League Premier Division match.

Borough's eleven match Southern League success run left championship seekers Chelmsford in its wake. Bewildered City struggled to stay in their slipstream as Nuneaton carried themselves to the brink of a new club unbeaten record. And they did it in style. Make no mistake about that. Chelmsford were lucky to be let off so lightly.

The Essex side journeyed to Nuneaton with the best away record in the Premier Division – and left in a daze. Beaten by a Borough side that could have doubled the scoreline when City folded in the second half. Bob Turpie turned in a man of the match display with two superbly taken goals and

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Nuneaton Borough v Kettering Town 01-04-1974

Borough: Ball, Stephens, Baxter, Goodwin, Newton, Lewis, Owen, Mackay, Vincent, Turpie, Briscoe. **Sub:** Keeley.

Bobby Vincent hit his seventh goal in as many games. Turpie threatened to run riot against Bedworth-born Dennis Oakes, a former team-mate of his at Peterborough. He hit the bar when he seemed certain to score and had the City defence in all kinds of trouble after the break.

Vincent did well alongside him and Joey Owen made an enormous contribution from midfield. Owen found a new role – playing in between Dave Lewis and Ian Goodwin in the middle of the park. He was there to add support to the front runners, a position that called for tremendous effort – but Owen did not shirk his task.

Nuneaton were in front after just 90 seconds when Turpie slammed a shot past Willie Carrick from a Bob Newton centre. The Manor Park side then made defensive errors that could have been punished by better finishing as City tried to hit back. But fear and caution do not figure in Nuneaton's make-up these days.



Goal hero Bob Turpie turns in between Chelmsford defenders Paul Delea and Dennis Oakes and shapes up for the shot that gave Borough the lead after 90 seconds.

Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune

Bill Baxter pulled the back four together, they kept going forward, and Vincent grabbed the second goal after 15 minutes. His header, from an Owen centre, hit the woodwork and went in after goalkeeper Carrick, unsafe in the air, had failed to cut out the cross. That signalled the end for the visitors and it was just a question of how many Nuneaton could get. But the second highest Saturday crowd of the season had to wait until the 60th minute for the third goal.

Vincent, often accused of holding the ball, released a pass into Turpie's path and Borough's top scorer hammered a shot on the run past Carrick. Skilful Vincent set up more chances for Turpie in the final half-hour and the two have built up an understanding that promises more goals between now and the end of April. And in winger Steve Briscoe they have found a youngster who is full of potential.

Borough welcomed Kettering Town to Manor Park for a Southern League Premier Division game.

Bubbling Borough destroyed Southern League champions Kettering and celebrated with champagne. They cracked two bottles of Moët and Chandon that have been gathering dust since the glory days of 1967. Because last night Nuneaton turned back the clock, reached out and grabbed some of the glory that has escaped them – and won back their pride.

At the end of the four goal rout hundreds of young fans invaded the pitch and the crowd gave the side a standing ovation. And what a crowd – 2,667 fans turned up to bring Manor Park back to life and prove what everyone has always known – that the people of Nuneaton want a football team.

Bobby Vincent hit two goals and Bobby Mackay and Steve Briscoe notched the others. All of them played well. There was not a player who did not give everything as Borough equalled their club record unbeaten run. But one man stood tall, head and shoulders above everyone – Billy Baxter, who was supreme in the heart of the Borough back four and turned in one of the finest individual displays seen on the ground. The ex-Ipswich defender oozed class and confidence and has taken on a new lease of life.

The first-half gave few glimpses of what was to come as the sides fought an end to end battle. Kettering pushed players forward and had a brief spell in command before Bobby Vincent opened the flood gates almost on half-time. He bravely flung himself at a Joey Owen cross and tucked a header past goalkeeper Gordon Livsey for a spectacular goal.

Five minutes into the second half youngster Steve Briscoe, the discovery of the season, headed a second. It started with a free kick and Briscoe nodded the ball into the net from a Dave Lewis cross. The fans applauded everything – even the gate when it was announced. But there then followed a spell during which Kettering made their last brave bid to stay alive.

That was when Baxter came into his own and the Poppies had no-one in midfield to match the Lewis, Owen and Mackay trio. Owen had another tremendous game in his supporting role behind the front runners and but for Baxter he would have been man-of-the-match. Mackay increased Nuneaton's lead ten minutes from the end. Vincent pulled the ball back across the middle, Turpie dummied the defence – and Mackay beat Livsey just inside the box.

The final exciting moment in a night to remember came in the 87th minute – with another superb goal. Owen made it with a burst of speed that stranded the Kettering defence. He hit the ball back into the goalmouth – and Vincent headed the ball into the roof of the net.

Vincent Top Scorer In Southern League

Bobby Vincent, who led the premier division goals list when he was signed from Atherstone last November, is back at the top. His two goals against Kettering on Monday took his tally to 19 – one more than Grantham's top scorer, Ernie Nixon.

Nuneaton Borough v Bedworth United 03-04-1974

Borough: Robinson, Stephens, Goodwin, Newton, Ritchie, Hood, Owen, Mackay, Vincent, Turpie, Briscoe. **Sub:** Rook.

Bedworth: Garnell, Hambridge, Thomas, Lyons, Harkus, Shepherd, Hall, Healey, Karacinski, Eades, Phelps. **Sub:** Whitehead.

Borough welcomed Bedworth United to Manor Park to play a Midland Floodlit Cup game.

Bobby Vincent rescued Borough's Midland Floodlit Cup hopes with a 55th minute match winner. He scored with a well-placed header from a Bob Turpie corner to keep them in with a chance of a place in the final. Both sides struggled to put passes together in a match that lacked atmosphere and excitement. Bedworth packed midfield to curb Nuneaton's attacking style and United's well organised defence kept the Borough forwards at bay.

Chances were few and far between, although Borough full back Gordon Ritchie headed off the line from Trevor Shepherd and Bobby Mackay rattled the bar from 25 yards. And Brian Robinson, back in goal for Borough, made a fingertip save to touch a shot from David Eades for a corner.

Eades was only a yard away from an Ian Goodwin back pass in the second half, but Vincent's goal wrapped up the match. Youngsters Ritchie and John Hood both did well for Borough, particularly Ritchie who was sound and skilful at number three.

Nuneaton Borough v Atherstone Town 07-04-1974

Borough: Robinson, Stephens, Baxter, Branston, Newton, Lewis, Owen, Mackay, Vincent, Turpie, Briscoe. **Sub:** Randle.

Atherstone: Johnson, Kavanagh, G. Smith, Preston, R. Smith, Harper, Quinney, Kiernan, Flannagan, Franklin, Webster. **Sub:** Mellor.

Borough welcomed Atherstone Town to Manor Park for a Midland Floodlit Cup game.

Relaxed and confident, Borough overpowered Atherstone in a three goal first half, to move into the final of the Floodlit Cup. And all three goals were gems – the kind that would have killed off any side. The first was scored after 20 minutes by former Adders' skipper Dave Lewis.

Bill Baxter set it up with a glorious pass as Atherstone moved out too slowly from a half cleared corner. He caught them square and Lewis ran through to slam the ball past David Johnson as the keeper tried to narrow the angle. The second, from Bob Turpie in the 39th minute, was one to remember. Bobby Vincent forced his way past Mick Preston, beat Gerry Kavanagh and hit a high high cross for Turpie to score with an acrobatic volley.

Adders were again guilty of bad defensive play, but Turpie hit the ball with ferocious power – and then blew a kiss to the crowd. And the third goal, almost on half-time, rolled back the years for Bill Baxter and demonstrated his class. He took a free kick just outside the Adders' penalty area, spotted an opening over the Atherstone wall – and chipped the ball into a hole the size of a bucket.



Airborne Bob Turpie meets the ball in mid-flight to volley in Borough's second goal.

Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune

Atherstone tried hard to hit back in the second half, but by that time the difference between the two sides had turned into a gulf. They had neither the striking power nor the midfield flair to bridge the gap. And they are missing Mike Kenning, now 12,000 miles away in South Africa. Barry Franklin worked tremendously hard without support, but there are flaws in defence that manager Gil Merrick has to plug to avoid further trouble.

Borough, on the crest of a wave, had much more quality in their side – the most obvious difference between the teams. They had players like Bill Baxter, Bobby Vincent, Bob Turpie and Steve Briscoe – and the terrific enthusiasm they have gathered during their unbeaten run.

Nuneaton Borough v Dartford 08-04-1974

Borough: Ball, Stephens, Baxter, Branston, Newton, Goodwin, Owen, Mackay, Vincent, Turpie, Briscoe. **Sub:** Hood.

Borough welcomed Dartford to Manor Park to play a Southern League Premier Division match.

Borough clawed their way back from the jaws of defeat to set a new club record on a night of colour and controversy. Ian Goodwin and Bobby Vincent netted late goals after Dartford had taken the lead with a penalty and a gift. But Nuneaton will always claim they should have had a goal after a Geoff Hurst style shot from Joey Owen in the 52nd minute.

Owen struck the shot with ferocious power and it thudded down off the bar – or the underside of the net. Inquests still raged long after the game. "It was a goal," said Owen. "Ask their players." Ernie Morgan, manager of the league leaders

and Wembley finalists Dartford, backed up Owen's theory. "I'm inclined to think that it hit the underside of the net because it was slow coming out," he said.



Bobby Vincent, top scorer in the Southern League Premier Division, soars above Dartford goalkeeper John Morton and centre-half Les Burns to win the ball in the air.

Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune

The game itself, though, was bigger than one incident and provided one of the most exciting finishes seen at Manor Park in years. Magnificently supported by a near 4,000 crowd, Nuneaton came back from the dead against the impressive, well organised Kent side. The crowd lifted them and almost cheered them to victory in a grandstand finale. But things looked black when Dartford went ahead from the penalty spot after Kirk Stephens hauled down winger Ken Halliday. Les Burns, a human tank of a centre-half blasted home the spot kick.

That was in the 37th minute and seven minutes later Dartford keeper John Morton made a brilliant save to touch a shot from Ian Goodwin on to an upright. Nuneaton still struggled to find their game as hard running unselfish team work from Dartford threatened to stifle their hopes. The Owen incident inflamed the crowd. Bob Turpie had a penalty appeal turned down – and Dartford increased their lead.

Kirk Stephens, whose consistency has been above reproach during Borough's unbeaten run laid the goal on a plate with a suicidal back pass – over his head. It landed at Halliday's feet and he snapped up the chance as Keith Ball tried to repair the damage. Most sides would have died and the tragic blow

followed one of Borough's best periods of the game. But they summoned up their last ounce of character and courage – epitomised by Stephens, who refused to allow his blunder to ruin his game.

Bobby Vincent brought out a fine save from Morton. And, in the 73rd minute, he put the Manor Park side back in the match. Terry Branston played a perfect pass through to Vincent's feet. He turned outside Burns and hammered a fierce angled drive into the net. Four minutes later Borough were level. Vincent sent over a cross, Turpie put in a challenge – and Goodwin scored with his left foot.



Ian Goodwin shoots home Borough's 77th minute equaliser on the night that Manor Park came back to life.

Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune

Dartford then had to show their character and composure – and they pulled themselves together like champions to stem Nuneaton's final assault.

Telford United v Nuneaton Borough

13-04-1974

Telford: Weir, Harris, Croft, Ross, Fairhurst, Morris, Wilson, Fudge, Bentley, Hawkins, Clark. Sub: Lang.

Borough: Robinson, Stephens, Newton, Owen, Branston, Baxter, Mackay, Vincent, Turpie, Goodwin, Briscoe. Sub: Keeley.

Borough made the journey to the Buck's Head to play Telford United in a Southern League Premier Division game.

Borough shook off the shock of a fourth minute goal and fought back to save their unbeaten run. But they were by far the better side for much of the game and made Telford struggle in the second half.

The Shropshire side went ahead when Bill Baxter tried to clear, hit the ball against Mickey Fudge and the rebound left the Telford striker clear. He chipped the ball over Brian Robinson's head – and Nuneaton's long unbeaten run looked in jeopardy.

But they hit back with a 30th minute equaliser, superbly set up by Bob Turpie, whose pass cut out three defenders for Bobby Vincent, who made no mistake to score his 21st Southern League goal of the season. Telford then survived a goalmouth scramble. Vincent had a header forced out and Turpie's shot was blocked on the line

Borough were the better all round side after that. Strong at the back, solid in midfield and with more flair up front. Bob Newton had a point blank range shot blocked by goalkeeper Phil Weir, but Turpie missed a chance on his right foot.



Atherstone Town v Nuneaton Borough 15-04-1974

Atherstone: Johnson, Kavanagh, Russell, G. Smith, Preston, Kiernan, Quinney, R. Smith, Franklin, Webster, Bates. Sub: Flannagan.

Borough: Robinson, Vaughan, Newton, Owen, Branston, Baxter, Mackay, Vincent, Turpie, Goodwin, Briscoe. Sub: Keeley.

Borough made the journey to Sheepy Road to take on Atherstone Town in a Southern League Premier Division game.

Borough's unbeaten run survived by five dramatic seconds in the heated atmosphere of Sheepy Road. The Manor Park side were only spared defeat by the referee's precise timekeeping.

Kiernan and Bates combined on the left touchline. The former Kettering skipper worked his way to the box, crossed the ball and big Steve Quinney rose to head what would have been the death knell of Nuneaton. Quinney was elated, mobbed by his team-mates – but his joy was short lived as the referee had blown his whistle and signalled the end of the game.

Whatever the pros and cons of the case, if Atherstone had been allowed the goal it would have been an injustice. Because no side really deserved to come away with both points in a game which bubbled over as tempers frayed, but the skills failed to overcome the tremendous tension. The highlights of the match were three disallowed goals.

Borough began as if their lives depended on the result. They went at Atherstone for the first 20 minutes. And in the tenth minute they seemed to have been rewarded as full-back Bob Newton burst through and went by a string of Atherstone defenders to plant an unstoppable drive past keeper Johnson. But the referee disallowed the goal.

Goodwin and Turpie went close before Turpie had a golden chance when Graham Smith stumbled. But he completely mis-hit his shot. Turpie forced Johnson to save again before Newton cracked a shot against the foot of the post as Nuneaton looked certain to score. As the half wore on Atherstone came into their own, although they never really threatened Borough's defence, well marshalled by Bill Baxter.

Owen and Vincent went close for Borough while Baxter headed off the line from a Franklin corner. Quinney headed a Branston effort off the line from an Owen cross with Johnson beaten. In the 85th minute Owen found Vincent with a long ball. He laid it on for Turpie to crash the ball home. But Vincent had fouled Johnson in the process.

Nuneaton Borough v Grantham Town 16-04-1974

Borough: Robinson, Stephens, Baxter, Branston, Newton, Goodwin, Owen, Mackay, Vincent, Turpie, Briscoe. Sub: Keeley.

Borough welcomed Grantham Town to Manor Park for a Southern League Premier Division match.

Ian Goodwin raced almost two thirds of the the pitch to keep Nuneaton Borough's unbeaten Southern League run alive. The former Brighton skipper, who has grown in stature

during the club's record breaking 16 match revival, set up the chance for Bobby Vincent to shoot them into a 58th minute lead. Two minutes from time Brent Horobin, the Grantham winger, lobbed an equaliser through a Borough defence that was completely confused. Everyone missed Horobin's lob in a chaotic goalmouth scramble – and Grantham gained a valuable point in their bid for second place honours.

More than 2,800 Borough fans saw an anxious-to-please home side struggle to break through a team bent on defence. Grantham were determined to give nothing away, but only the final two minutes denied Borough a win. Grantham, who have earned themselves a reputation for attacking football, were forced into a defensive situation for long periods.

Borough were unable to capitalise on the visitors' negative outlook and Grantham stifled Nuneaton's attacking flair. Credit though, Terry Bly's team, who were the last side to beat Borough, as they organised themselves well.

Borough's goal was a testimony to attacking play. Goodwin took the ball from near his own penalty area, ran to the edge of the Grantham box, and slipped a pass to Steve Briscoe, who pushed over a first-time centre for Bobby Vincent to score. Borough held the initiative until near the end of the game – until Grantham grabbed the equaliser in a final assault.

Grantham won a corner and Dennis Benskin put the ball across, and Horobin's shot curled into the net. The goal shattered Borough to such an extent that it put a game they should have won, completely out of their reach.

Nuneaton Borough v Yeovil Town 20-04-1974

Borough: Robinson, Stephens, Newton, Owen, Branston, Baxter, Mackay, Vincent, Turpie, Goodwin, Briscoe. Sub: Keeley.

Yeovil: Clark, Irwin, Smith, Verity, Cotton, Dixon, Housley, Pickett, Plumb, Briggs, Clancy. Sub: Harrison.

Borough welcomed Yeovil Town to Manor Park to play a Southern League Premier Division game.

Nuneaton Borough, who have scaled new heights this season, climbed another mountain. Fashionable Yeovil were added to their impressive list of victims as they stretched their league unbeaten run to 17 games. Sadly, though, there is no championship on the horizon – the run started too late for that. Had it been launched earlier, the club's fight against relegation could have developed into a title assault.

Borough looked as if they were destined not to score and chances were missed. A Vincent shot went through the back of the net and was acclaimed by players and fans, but ruled out by the referee. In the end it did not matter as Nuneaton overpowered Yeovil in the second half and cruised home. And, to their credit, Borough refused to let it upset them.

Ian Goodwin headed Borough in front after 68 minutes, Bobby Vincent netted the second and Bob Turpie was on target with the third. All three goals were gems – and Yeovil were fortunate to escape a real hammering. Powerful Goodwin, who has taken

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over from injured skipper Dave Lewis as the midfield driving force, made the vital breakthrough from a Turpie corner. And Vincent's goal, seven minutes later, was one for memory lane – superbly set up and arrogantly taken. Joey Owen hit a 40 yard crossfield pass out to Steve Briscoe, who beat Cec Irwin to the line and pulled it back into the middle. Vincent turned past centre-half Tony Cotton and then beat goalkeeper John Clark to score after a few moments of magic.



The goal that got away – through a hole in the back of the net. Bobby Vincent's shot (arrowed) has clearly beaten Yeovil keeper Clark, but it went under the net.

Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune

Bob Turpie then crowned Nuneaton's display with a goal as cheeky as Vincent's was arrogant. He calmly switched the ball from his right foot to his left – and hammered it into the net. Borough have four matches left to preserve their unbeaten run until the end of the season. They can finish in the second highest position in their history and have put the club back on the premier division map after years in the wilderness. And the run has rekindled hope for the future of a club that has so often lived in the past.

Borough To Apply For Football League

Nuneaton Borough are among seven clubs who have applied for membership of the Football League next season. Their application has gone in, along with five others from the Southern League and one from the Northern Premier League. Last year Borough got their first vote in five attempts.

The clubs who have applied are: Borough, Chelmsford, Kettering, Telford, Yeovil, Cambridge City and Wigan Athletic.

Margate v Nuneaton Borough 22-04-1974

Margate: Bowtell, Summers, Butterfield, Sawyer, Breach, Clewlow, Baber, Clayton, Hold, Brown, Walker. **Sub:** Houston.

Borough: Robinson, Stephens, Newton, Owen, Branston, Baxter, Mackay, Vincent, Turpie, King (Keeley), Briscoe.

Borough made the journey to Hartsdown Park to face Margate in a Southern League Premier Division game.

Borough's record run of 17 Southern League games without a defeat was brought to an abrupt end then they paid the penalty for a slack start. Two down after only 22 minutes they never struck their best form until the closing stages when the issue was beyond doubt. Eight minutes from time top marksman Bobby Vincent headed home from close range during a goalmouth melee following a right wing corner, although he had missed a far easier chance shortly before.

A bad back pass from Walker put Vincent completely in the clear on the edge of the box but Steve Bowtell blocked his shot. Although well served at the back by the dominant Bill Baxter and Terry Branston, Nuneaton never really recovered from the shock of falling behind after only three minutes.

The entire back division watched as John Hold beat Robinson to a long through ball on the left hand side of the penalty box and his low cross was steered into the empty net by the waiting Walker, the former Borough player. In the 22nd minute Margate went further ahead when Robinson needlessly pulled down Hold just inside the area and Walker rammed in the penalty. Margate, desperately striving to pull away from the relegation zone, had a definite edge in the opening half but lost their poise after the break.

With Joey Owen always in the thick of it in midfield, Nuneaton fought back doggedly to get on terms but their chances were cut to a minimum in the face of some uncompromising defensive work by Margate. Wingers John Baber and Walker were always menacing for Margate and from one of the former's centre in the 76th minute Hold volleyed in number three with the Borough rearguard caught spreadeagled.

After Vincent had clipped the arrears for Nuneaton the seashiders were content to re-inforce their defence and so chalked up only their second home league win of 1974.

Nuneaton Borough v Burton Albion 24-04-1974

Borough: Robinson, Stephens, Baxter, Branston, Newton, Owen, Goodwin, Mackay, Vincent, Turpie, Briscoe. **Sub:** Keeley.

Borough welcomed Burton Albion to Manor Park to play the Midland Floodlit Cup final first leg.

Steve Briscoe gave Borough a precarious lead. He headed home an Ian Goodwin centre past shaky Bob Wesson in the 31st minute of an untidy game. Wesson managed to get to the ball, which reared off the bone hard pitch, but only succeeded in pushing it against the inside of the post.

But Borough should be going to Eton Park for the second leg with a much wider lead. They were a better side than promoted Albion – but missed the sort of chances they have been putting away. Bobby Vincent should have had his name on the score sheet, shooting wide from six yards. Ian Goodwin tossed away a gilt edged chance from a Bob Turpie return pass in the closing minutes. And Bob Newton smacked a second half shot against the foot of a post from 20 yards.

Three players were booked – Bobby Mackay, Bobby Vincent and Burton midfielder John Beresford. Others were fortunate to escape as the game deteriorated in the second half – with Nuneaton the biggest culprits.

They committed a string of fouls, most of them needless, because Albion seldom posed any danger to their defence. Burton defender Peter Shone went off in the 65th minute with a broken nose after being caught by Briscoe's elbow after a power drive from Bob Turpie had slammed into his face.

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Mackay finished the game with a leg injury – and Burton escaped with a one goal deficit which, at least makes the second leg more interesting.

Nuneaton Borough v Barnet 27-04-1974

Borough: Robinson, Stephens, Newton, Owen, Branston, Baxter, Mackay, Vincent, Turpie, Goodwin, Briscoe. **Sub:** Keeley.

Barnet: McClelland, Lye, Bibby, Tom, Embery, Court, Moss, Eason, Francis, Silkman, George. **Sub:** Ferry.

Borough welcomed Barnet to Manor Park for a Southern League Premier Division game.

Borough fought back the end of the season blues to beat Barnet with a 33rd minute Bobby Vincent penalty – but were more dominant than the scoreline suggests. Poor finishing enabled the North Londoners to escape with a single goal defeat, although Borough could have thrown it away.

Steve Briscoe clearly handled in the 72nd minute, but the referee waved aside Barnet protests. It looked more of a penalty than the handling offence by Steve Tom that gave Vincent his match winner. Vincent collected another booking – his ninth of the season – and three other players had their names taken. He was joined in the book by team-mate Joey Owen and Barnet's Barry Silkman and Dennis Francis.

Borough twice hit the woodwork and missed a string of chances, particularly after the break. Much of their football lacked drive and authority, but they could have been in front before Vincent's spot kick winner, but for a lack of sharpness in the box and good goalkeeping from Jack McClelland, who kept his side in the game.



A Vincent shot beats McClelland but rebounds back into play off a post.

Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune

Dennis Francis, who recently moved to Underhill from Amateur Cup winners Bishop's Stortford, went close to an equaliser early in the second half. Nuneaton should have wrapped up the game after the break. Vincent and Briscoe both hit the woodwork and Bob Turpie had a goal ruled out for offside and McClelland flung himself across his line to make a superb one-handed save after Vincent had beaten Ben Embery.

Brian Robinson in the Borough goal had comparatively little to do before Barnet launched their final assault. Nuneaton's defence had a few anxious moments, although they stood firm. They fell below the standards they have set since

January and most of their problems were self made. But the win gave them their 29th point from 19 games – the best record in the Southern League premier division.

Chelmsford City v Nuneaton Borough 29-04-1974

Borough: Robinson, Stephens, Newton, Owen, Branston, Baxter, Mackay, Vincent, Turpie, Starkey, Keeley. **Sub:** Briscoe.

Borough made the journey to New Writtle Streets to play Chelmsford City in a Southern League Premier Division game.

Battling Borough lost for only the second time in 20 premier division games – but gained a whole host of new friends. Chelmsford players, officials and fans were full of praise for the Manor Park side's display. Borough lost to a 57th minute goal from City winger Terry Price after missing chances before the break. They dominated the first half and Bobby Vincent went desperately close. He had one shot deflected, hit a post – and was twice thwarted by fine saves from goalkeeper Laurie Taylor.

During Nuneaton's purple patch, Chelmsford were restricted to long range efforts, although Brian Robinson pulled off one brilliant save from full-back Tommy Coakley. The keeper also beat out a powerful header from Joe Dunwell, but Chelmsford had the escape of the first half. Joey Owen, full of running in midfield for Borough, ran on to a back header from Turpie and unleashed a full blooded volley – and Turpie was unable to get out of the way.

The second half opened with a spectacular save by Robinson from Frank Peterson and a Mick Keeley shot was hacked off the line. But City then began to get more control, inspired by Price, who deserved his 57th minute match winner. He gave Robinson no chance after a Dunwell shot had hit a Nuneaton defender on the heel and landed at his feet. Two more Price efforts were cleared before Borough hit back strongly in a bid to save the game, only to see another Vincent drive superbly saved by Taylor.

With four minutes to go Steve Briscoe replaced Owen – but Nuneaton were left to reflect on their first half chances and City moved into second place in the Southern League. The most disappointing note from their point of view was the crowd of 978 – the lowest at New Writtle Street in 15 years.

Burton Albion v Nuneaton Borough 03-05-1974

Borough: Robinson, Stephens, Newton, Owen, Branston, Baxter, Mackay, Vincent, Turpie, Goodwin, Briscoe. **Sub:** Keeley.

Borough made the journey to Eton Park to play Burton Albion in the Midland Floodlit Cup final second leg.

Borough held on to their first leg lead to win the Midland Floodlit Cup. They were seldom troubled by premier division bound Albion in a disappointing game and rarely had to lift themselves. Much of the match was drab and unimaginative, but Nuneaton always looked a cut above the Staffordshire side. Burton seldom threatened to cut the deficit against

Nuneaton Borough 1970-1979 – Part 1



a strong Borough defence in which skipper Bill Baxter was outstanding. Baxter strolled through the match like the class player he is and won the individual honours.

But he almost gave Albion a goal early in the second half when he tried to play a header back to Brian Robinson. It fell short and let in Barry Brown, who failed to take advantage of a gilt-edged opportunity. That was one of the few times Albion looked like making a game of it, although Nuneaton were far below their best. Burton missed top scorer Bill Naylor, who has been out injured for the last few weeks.

Even playing badly, Nuneaton had too much strength and expertise for the home side, although they made hard work of an easy job. Goalkeeper Bob Wesson clutched a left foot shot from Bob Turpie after a half-clearance and also saved from Bobby Vincent and Bob Newton.

Much of the match, however, was poor with little to rouse the 1,000 crowd on a windy, rain-swept night. Borough's promise to end the season in style never materialised – it did not have to. Burton were unable to sting them into action. The home side badly needed an early goal to set the game alight, but Baxter almost played their front runners on his own.



Bobby Mackay takes a drink from the Floodlit Cup as Borough players celebrate their 1-0 aggregate win over Burton at Eton Park.

Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune

Tonbridge v Nuneaton Borough 01-05-1974

Borough: Robinson, Stephens, Baxter, Branston, Newton, Starkey, Goodwin, Mackay, Vincent, Turpie, Keeley. Sub: Briscoe.

Borough made the journey to Kent to play Tonbridge in a Southern League Premier Division match.

Jaded Borough rounded off a memorable Southern League season with a performance they will want to forget. They tarnished their bright new image in a goalless draw that gave Tonbridge the point they needed to avoid relegation. It was a sad epilogue. A sub-standard end of the season match, riddled with bad play and mis-placed passes.

Nuneaton lacked urgency and drive, particularly in the middle of the park. Tom Starkey and Bobby Mackay did not get to grips with their game and Ian Goodwin was left with too much to do. Without Dave Lewis, Nuneaton always lack drive – and it was never more evident than last night.

Goodwin almost scored with a spectacular overhead kick in

the 20th minute that brought a fine save from Ian Seymour. Brian Robinson was almost redundant – although he was beaten by a 25 yard drive from Barry Smith seven minutes from half-time. The shot slammed against the bar and the Borough keeper saved from Len Davey, who had followed up for the rebound. Davey was the Kent club's most lively forward, but his threat died along with the game.

Borough gave nothing away. Their defenders, particularly Kirk Stephens and Bill Baxter, took what honours were going. Tonbridge made it quite clear from the outset that they had travelled for a point – and the Manor Park side were not good enough to stop them from getting it. Mick Keeley had a glimpse of a chance in the final seconds with a header he chose to glance across goal when he could have scored.

Tonbridge full-back Paul Flood was booked ten minutes from time after a tackle on Keeley. Almost from the start, it was clear that Borough were not going to stage a gala ending to the season. The party was over ten days ago when they lost their unbeaten run at Margate.

They still finish with just two defeats in their last 21 Southern League matches – a tremendous record. What a pity it had to end on such a poor note.

Top Shot Vincent

Worcester City striker John Inglis failed in his bid to overhaul Borough's Bobby Vincent in the Southern League goal charts. Inglis scored twice in last night's 2-2 draw with Maidstone, which gave him a tally of 24 – one behind Vincent.

Nuneaton Borough v Hereford 07-05-1974

Borough: Knight, Stephens, Baxter, Branston, Newton, Goodwin (Starkey), Owen, Mackay, Vincent, Turpie, Briscoe.

Borough welcomed Hereford United to Manor Park to play a friendly match.

Elegant Bill Baxter, whose trophies include a Football League championship medal, headed Borough into a 76th minute lead against Hereford with a glorious goal. The ex-Ipswich defender scored from a Bob Turpie corner in an often half pace, but always interesting friendly. But the Third Division side showed their class with an equaliser from substitute John Ritchie, only four minutes later. Ritchie, a recent four figure capture from Arsenal, hammered the ball past Borough guest goalkeeper Bob Knight.

Knight, recently released by Worcester City had no chance with the shot, but showed his experience in a shop window performance. Hereford had an early Brian Evans goal disallowed and Tom Starkey headed a chance against the bar in the second half. Bob Turpie celebrated his Player of the Year award with a skilful performance alongside disappointing Bobby Vincent.

Borough's midfield men were never able to supply the service that has made Vincent top scorer in the Southern League

premier division. But a dust bowl of a pitch and the end of season atmosphere reduced both sides' competitive spirit, although the game improved in the second half.

Turpie Wins Player Of The Year Award



Bob Turpie receives the Borough Player of the Year award from Hereford United manager Colin Addison before the friendly game against Hereford. Looking on is director Greg Thompson.

Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune

Owen Cracks Collar Bone

Joey Owen, Nuneaton Borough's expensive midfield player, has ended the season with a cracked collar bone. He collected the injury in the friendly against Hereford United.

Lincoln Release Branston

Terry Branston has been officially released by Lincoln City after four months on loan to Nuneaton Borough. The Fourth Division club have given Branston a no string attached transfer and he is now a free agent. But that does not necessarily mean he will re-join Nuneaton Borough for the start of next season.

Said manager Geoff Coleman: "There will be a lot of players on the market this summer and we will have to wait and see. Terry may decide he wants a job as a player-manager somewhere."

Borough Resign From Floodlit Cup

Nuneaton Borough have resigned from the Midland Floodlit Cup – the trophy they won at the end of the season. Falling gates and an already crowded fixture list have prompted the board's decision to quit the competition.

Briscoe Signs Professional Forms

Steve Briscoe, Nuneaton Borough's exciting young winger, has signed professional forms and plays his final game as

an amateur in the Reserve side's West Midlands League Cup final at Telford tonight. Briscoe joined Borough last December from Midland Combination side Knowle Town and had previously been on trial at Walsall. He won a place in the Southern League side in March and played eleven premier division matches.

Keeley To Join Brakes?

Mick Keeley, Nuneaton Borough's skilful front runner, is all set to leave Manor Park – for the second time. He is wanted by his former Rugby Town team boss Jimmy Knox at AP Leamington and the clubs have already agreed a fee.

But the decision rests with powerfully built Keeley, who launched his professional career with Nuneaton and then returned after a spell at Rugby.

Another player who may be on his way out of Manor Park is goalkeeper Brian Robinson, who has rejected new terms that have been offered. Borough will circularise all Southern League clubs that Robinson is up for sale.

Southern League Premier Division 1973-74

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Dartford	42	22	13	7	67	37	57
Grantham	42	18	13	11	70	49	49
Chelmsford City	42	19	10	13	62	49	48
Kettering Town	42	16	16	10	62	51	48
Maidstone United	42	16	14	12	54	43	46
Yeovil Town	42	13	20	9	45	39	46
Weymouth	42	19	7	16	60	41	45
Barnet	42	18	9	15	55	46	45
Nuneaton Borough	42	13	19	10	54	47	45
Cambridge City	42	15	12	15	45	54	42
Atherstone Town	42	16	9	17	61	59	41
Wimbledon	42	15	11	16	50	56	41
Telford United	42	12	16	14	51	57	40
Dover	42	11	17	14	41	46	39
Tonbridge AFC	42	12	15	15	38	45	39
Romford	42	11	17	14	39	52	39
Margate	42	15	8	19	56	63	38
Guildford City	42	13	11	18	48	67	37
Worcester City	42	11	14	17	53	67	36
Bedford Town	42	11	14	17	38	51	36
Folkestone	42	11	12	19	56	65	34
Hillingdon Borough	42	9	15	18	44	65	33

Gresley Rovers — 1st Qualifying Round

Borough welcomed Gresley Rovers to Manor Park for a 1st Qualifying Round FA Cup tie.

Borough: Robinson, Stephens, Bridgett, Lewis, Jones, Newton, Stewart, Harris, Keeley, Franklin, Flannagan. Sub: Turpie.

Gresley: Middleton, Fitchett, Fairbrother, Sharpe, King, Greaves, Raven, Liddle, Leeson, Walker, Cowlshaw. Sub: McAughthrie.

Borough coasted into the second qualifying round in a tie that was over almost before it began. Gresley were cut down to size by an early goal from Len Harris and always struggled. But Borough's caretaker manager Geoff Coleman refused to allow the ease of the win to cloud his judgment.

He said: "I felt the match ended when Len Harris scored that goal and I was pleased with the result, but not with the performance."

Borough were more relaxed, always confident – and often carefree, against weak opposition from the East Midlands Regional League outfit.

Borough failed to exploit the time and space Gresley gave them. They over-elaborated their attacks against a team they could have hammered out of sight.

Gresley were weak. Never in the same class as Nuneaton, and all hope of a



Gresley goalkeeper Keith Middleton gropes at thin air as Len Harris's 25 yard blockbuster flashes past him for Borough's first goal in the fourth minute. Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune

shock result drained from them after the early goal.

Bob Newton and Mick Keeley added the other goals that confirmed Borough's triumph. But by that time Gresley were on their knees – killed stone dead by the Len Harris 25 yarder. The old failings were there in front of the net and in midfield. Yet all wins must inspire some confidence – whatever the opposition. And Geoff Coleman must be a much happier man.

Hednesford Town — 2nd Qualifying Round

Borough welcomed Hednesford Town to Manor Park for a 2nd Qualifying Round FA Cup tie.

Borough: Allsopp, Stephens, Newton, Baxter, Jones, Harris, Flannagan, Lewis, Franklin, Keeley, Starkey. Sub: Turpie.

Hednesford: Baldwin, O'Dowd, Tipping, Ellement, Mansell, Bottomer, Ellery, Dennison, Richards, Payton, Lisseman. Sub: Maddocks.

Bob Turpie emerged from the shadows to keep Borough in the FA Cup. He replaced tired Tom Starkey, who had played well, in the 70th minute.

Three minutes later he wrote a happy ending to another chapter of misses from the home side. Turpie introduced a threat to the Hednesford defence where they had previously been untested – in the air.

He varied the Borough attack and caught the Midland Leaguers unaware. And his well placed header from a Kirk Stephens cross settled a tie in which both sides tossed chances to the winds.

The move that led to the match winner



Mick Keeley plants the ball into the net for Borough's third goal in the closing minutes of a one-sided FA Cup tie. Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune



Bob Turpie flings himself forward to glance the winning goal into the Hednesford net.

Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune

fail to stamp any authority on the tie and his front runners struggle.

Highgate did not take Nuneaton apart – Borough collapsed. Even players like Dave Lewis, Bob Newton and Kirk Stephens, normally so dependable, lost their way. Stephens had a nightmare against Highgate's hat-trick hero Bobby Hope. He was caught going forward and left gaps which Hope cashed in on.

But Stephens must not be allowed to shoulder all of the blame. Players like Bill Baxter could have done more.

Highgate were not "giant killers" there were no giants in blue and white to topple. Borough were bankrupt of ideas and robbed of their fight in a threadbare performance.

Hope gave a warning of things to come when he headed Highgate into the lead after 38 minutes. Brian Robinson, his injured knee suspect, struggled to get off the ground.

Bob Turpie equalised in first half injury time and Newton missed a glorious chance seconds later. A Phil Mullen pass gave Hope his second as the Nuneaton defence began to disintegrate and Hope hit his third as the Manor Park side went from bad to worse.

Ex-Atherstone forward Mullen notched the fourth from a Hope pass eleven minutes from time – to send the fans streaming out of the ground.

was started deep in the Nuneaton half by Bill Baxter, who had a solid debut alongside Alan Jones. Baxter's vast experience made up for his obvious lack of match fitness.

Nuneaton did most of the attacking, but Hednesford had openings. Keith Ellery and Peter Lisseman should have scored in a confused Borough box just before half-time. And stand-in goalkeeper Mike Allsopp made two brave second half saves. He twice raced from his line to save at the feet of Ellery and centre-forward Tony Richards.

Borough's chances were more clear cut. Len Harris and John Flannagan both went in behind the Midland Leaguers' defence to lay the ball on a plate for Barry Franklin and Dave Lewis.

Franklin fluffed another clear cut opening. Lewis had a shot headed off the line and one from Kirk Stephens was pushed over the top by goalkeeper Peter Baldwin for a brilliant save.

Baxter almost crowned his first match with a goal from a header which flew inches over the top. Despite Borough's long attacking spells, they always had problems.

Highgate United – 3rd Qualifying Round

Borough welcomed Highgate United to Manor Park to play a 3rd Qualifying Round FA Cup tie.

Borough: Robinson, Stephens, Bridgett, Newton, Jones, Baxter, Stewart, Franklin, Keeley, Lewis, Turpie. Sub: Starkey.

Highgate: M. Williams, Mason, Butlin, Tittley, Bryan, Pash, B. Williams, James, Smith, Mullen, Hope. Sub: Clive.

Borough tumbled out of the FA Cup, sadly without honour – and without an excuse. Unable to match Highgate's all round effort, they threw the game away with a feeble performance and some terrible defensive errors.

Too many flaws appeared at the same time and they were simply not good enough on the day. Chairman Ken Peal admitted it when he described the defeat as "predictable." But Peal, who has done much to transform the atmosphere at Manor Park in a few short weeks, added: "Now we can find out who our true fans are."

Coleman saw his defence, the very foundation of his rebuilding plans, fall to pieces. He watched his midfield men



Fresh hope for Borough, as Bob Turpie's goal in first-half injury time puts them back into the game – but they crumbled in the second half.

Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune

Bilston Town — 3rd Qualifying Round

Borough made the journey to Bilston Town to play a 3rd Qualifying Round FA Trophy tie.

Borough: Robinson, Stephens, Branston, Jones, Newton, Lewis (Bridgett, 75), Baxter, Flannagan, Starkey, Gore, Turpie.

Borough returned from a dangerous expedition deep into the heart of the Black Country with the Non League Cup hopes still intact. They trod warily through a jungle of confused play in an evenly fought first-half.

Nuneaton were denied a win by an incredible miss, a slice of luck and a brilliant save. Back to form Bob Turpie held his head in disbelief in the 70th minute. Somehow, Bilston keeper John Hale managed to reach his point blank range shot and force it over the top.

Ten minutes later a header from teenager John Gore hit a Bilston defender on the line and was scrambled away. And, in injury time, Bob Newton shot over from under the bar after John Flannagan and Ray Bridgett had done the spadework.

They were Nuneaton's outstanding chances in a game that was evenly balanced up to half-time. Borough struggled to put their game together before the break and were fortunate to have Terry Branston, Alan Jones and Bill Baxter in their side.

Branston and Jones curbed the threat of Bilston's twin strikers Alan Sharp and Roger Cope. They chased long balls out of defence and Cope looked a potential match winner.

Baxter used his vast experience in the midfield mud where he controlled the pace of the match. He was sometimes caught in possession, but his positional play and distribution held the side together.

Brian Robinson made a tremendous one handed save from Bilston's Trevor Wells and Cope went close as the home side thumped balls down the middle. Both sides were more hopeful than

positive and the defences held the upper hand. Alan Gray and Len Morton, central defenders in a hard tackling Bilston back four, made things difficult for the Nuneaton front runners and there was nothing in it.

But Nuneaton gradually improved, simplified their strategy and were on top after the break. They had 17 shots at goal to Bilston's 10 – six of them from busy Turpie. Yet Bilston still carried the threat of a breakaway goal and Cope challenged Robinson and headed over the bar.

The Manor Park side must now be odds on favourites to win the replay. Queen Street on a damp, dismal December afternoon is no place for teams who are not prepared to fight and Borough must feel they have done the hardest job.

Bilston Town — 3rd Qualifying Round Replay

Borough welcomed Bilston Town to Manor Park to play a 3rd Qualifying Round FA Trophy tie.

Borough: Robinson, Stephens, Branston, Jones, Newton, Lewis, Baxter, Flannagan, Turpie, Gore, Starkey. Sub: Bridgett.

Bob Turpie blasted Borough into the

first round of the Non League Cup – after a moment of magic from teenager John Gore. He cut inside, beat two Bilston defenders along the line and bewildered the others before setting up the chance.

But Borough left it late. There were only three minutes of normal time left when Turpie notched his fifth goal in six games. Borough found Bilston difficult to play against and made hard work of what should have been an easy task.

Tom Starkey and John Flannagan both hit the bar and Gore had what looked a certain goal kicked off the line. Yet when Starkey shot Nuneaton in front after 52 minutes it looks all over for the West Midlands Leaguers. Starkey fired high into the net after Bilston's keeper John Hale had failed to hold a shot from Terry Branston.

Hale had a fine game – one of his saves from Dave Lewis was magnificent. But that did not alter the fact that Borough should have been well in front by half-time. They struggled in midfield where Dave Lewis had to support below form Bill Baxter. Up front they missed the Joey Owen-Bobby Vincent partnership which was so exciting against Yeovil.



It looks a certain goal as teenager John Gore hits the ball towards an empty net – but defender Len Morton came from nowhere to force the ball off the line. Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune

And they ran into trouble when Roger Cope equalised for Bilston ten minutes after Starkey's goal. Brian Robinson watched a 40 yard ball from Bilston forward John Cooper loop towards his goal. He checked himself to take it – and was bundled into the net as Cope ran in to score.

Cooper shot wide for Bilston and Borough had to rely heavily on Alan Jones as the visitors lifted their game. Jones worked tremendously hard in the heart of the defence alongside an often lethargic Branston.

Turpie had a penalty appeal turned down before Gore's magical dribble set up his match winner to give Borough an away tie at Kettering in the first round.

Kettering Town — 1st Round Proper

Borough made the journey to Rockingham Road to play a 1st Round FA Trophy tie.

Kettering: Livsey, Ashby, Goodall, Myton, Suddards, Peck, Dilsworth, Clayton, Cleary, Kiernan, Pawley. Sub: Hawkesby.

Borough: Robinson, Stephens, Bridgett, Baxter, Branston, Jones, Newton, Owen, Turpie, Lewis, Flannagan. Sub: Starkey.

Brilliant Brian Robinson earned himself a place in Borough's hall of fame – with two sensational penalty saves inside a minute. And he was upset that he failed to stop Kettering's third spot kick,

scored by his ex-Bedford team-mate George Cleary in the 49th minute.

Robinson's two moments to remember happened just before half-time when he stood between Borough and defeat. He pushed a 43rd minute penalty from Kettering full-back Roger Ashby around the post – and did the same with one from Eddie Dilsworth 60 seconds later.

Robinson conceded the first after a bad back pass from Alan Jones, the second was given against Joey Owen for pushing, and Jones gave away the third when he brought down Roy Clayton.

Robinson's heroics earned him the glory, but the Manor Park side also owed a lot to Bob Turpie, Bill Baxter and John Flannagan. They inspired the side to a magnificent second half come-back that almost brought them a shock win.

Turpie, playing better than ever, equalised in the 56th minute with a superbly set up goal that made his day off work worthwhile. Dave Lewis played a ball into the middle, Turpie swept it out to Flannagan and the winger sent over a perfect chip for Turpie to head past bewildered Kettering keeper Gordon Livsey.

Flannagan had another tremendous game at outside left – and often at left back – and Baxter was supreme in the middle of the park. Playing deeper than usual, he was the anchor man who

held the side together when Kettering threatened in the first half hour.

Some of his control and distribution rolled back the years and his one black spot was a harsh second half booking – the first of his career. Terry Branston and Owen also had their names taken as Borough rattled the Southern League champions.

Borough could have won in the closing stages. Owen and Turpie both had chances and Lewis had successive shots blocked by Livsey before rolling semi-conscious into the net. Borough now face a replay at Manor Park and have only to show their away form to earn a place in the last 32.

Kettering Town — 1st Round Proper Replay

Borough welcomed Kettering Town to Manor Park to play a 1st Round Proper FA Trophy tie.

Borough: Robinson, Stephens, Bridgett, Baxter, Branston, Jones, Newton, Owen, Turpie, Lewis, Flannagan. Sub: Starkey.

Kettering: Livsey, Ashby, Goodall, Atkinson, Suddards, Peck, Dilsworth, Clayton, Cleary, Hawkesby, Pawley. Sub: Myton.

Borough and Kettering contested a magnificent, all action Non League Cup replay that rolled back the years.

Cup fever returned to success starved Manor Park in an FA Trophy replay that throbbed with incident for two thrilling hours. And the fans loved every minute of the best match seen on the ground in years.

On chances, Nuneaton should have won, yet the Poppies could have settled the tie in extra time. It was that sort of game. Always in the balance – a real cliff hanger.

Bob Turpie put Borough in front after 23 minutes and Eddie Dilsworth equalised three minutes later. Joey Owen could have won the match early in the second half and both sides survived goalmouth scrambles. Alan Jones had a fine game alongside Terry Branston in the Nuneaton defence, a performance that



Goal hero Bob Turpie is frozen by the camera in full flight as he heads the equaliser that kept Borough in the Non League Cup.

Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune



Turpie on target again. The Borough striker pushes home a shot which gave Nuneaton the lead.

Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune

shackled Roy Clayton, one of the top strikers in the Southern League.

Kettering goalkeeper Godon Livsey pulled off three spectacular saves and Turpie was a constant menace to the Poppies' defence.

But both sides gave every ounce of effort in a tremendous match that neither side deserved to lose.

Kettering Town — 1st Round Proper 2nd Replay

Borough made the journey to KetteringTown to play a 1st Round Proper FA Trophy tie.

Borough: Robinson, Stephens, Branston, Jones, Bridgett, Lewis, Baxter, Newton, Owen (Starkey, 69), Turpie, Flannagan.

Borough's five hour Non League Cup marathon ended in disappointment at Rockingham Road. They went out to a 22nd minute goal when Brian Robinson failed to cut out a left wing cross and gave Poppies' full-back Roger Ashby a free header. Terry Branston had a goal disallowed six minutes later for handball. But Nuneaton could have few complaints about a scrappy tie.

They failed to maintain the form they showed in the two previous matches and were always second best to the league champions. Kettering, generalled by player-manager Ron

Atkinson, were technically superior to Borough and the game lacked the thrills and frills of the first two games.

The Poppies were average, Nuneaton were mediocre and the football was poor. Borough struggled to put their game together. They waited for things to happen while Kettering at least tried to play positive football.

Strikers Bob Turpie and Joey Owen were held up front by Trevor Peck and Sean Suddards. They were rarely able to wriggle clear, although half-fit Owen

did create a first-half chance which he shot wide.

Nuneaton struggled in the middle of the park where Bill Baxter was sadly off form. None of Borough's midfield players matched the skill of Kettering's John Hawksby, their best player. The Manor Park side's top performance came from full-back Kirk Stephens, who outshone his struggling team-mates – particularly in the second half.

Four players were booked – Trevor Peck, Ron Atkinson and Hawksby and Alan Jones, late in the game. Yet there was none of the full blooded, all action excitement that hallmarked last Saturday's second meeting between the sides.

The goal was a tragedy for goalkeeper Brian Robinson, whose penalty save heroics kept Borough alive in the original match. Stephens was penalised out on the left hand side and Robinson was caught in "no man's land" from the free-kick.

It was a winner in keeping with the game – an anti-climax and a deep disappointment for the Manor Park outfit. They have picked themselves up in recent weeks and now have to do it again.



Brian Robinson misses a left wing cross, Kettering full-back Roger Ashby gets his head to the ball and Borough are out of the Non League Cup.

Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune



Nuneaton Borough 1973-74

Back: Charlie Sorbie, Bob Newton, Dave Lewis, Ray Bridgett, Mick Allsop, Roger Bray,
Alan Vaughan, John Gill, Stan Marshall (trainer).

Front: John Flanagan, Barry Franklin, Kirk Stephens, Bob Turpie, David Pleat (manager), Adrian Stewart,
Len Harris, Mick Keeley, Alan Jones

Southern League Premier Division: Fixtures, Results & Scorers- 1973-74

Nuneaton Scores First

Date	Opposition	Venue	Competition	Score	Scorers	Attendance
07.28	Altrincham	H	PSF	0-1		
07.30	Stafford Rangers	H	PSF	0-2		
08.01	Bedworth United	A	PC	0-1		
08.04	Altrincham	A	PSF	1-1	Franklin	
08.06	AP Leamington	H	PSF	0-0		
08.11	Guildford City	H	L	1-1	Franklin	1722
08.18	Cambridge City	A	L	0-1		1221
08.22	Burton Albion	A	SLC1-1L	2-1	Keeley, Franklin	2196
08.25	Maidstone United	A	L	1-2	Flannaghan	1268
08.27	Burton Albion	H	SLC1-2L	1-0	Franklin	1179
09.01	Bedford Town	H	L	0-0		1280
09.03	Worcester City	H	L	2-2	Franklin, Newton	1249
09.08	Kettering Town	A	L	1-4	Franklin	2464
09.15	Gresley Rovers	H	FAC1Q	3-0	Harris, Newton, Keeley	1246
09.17	Folkestone	H	L	3-0	Franklin (2), Harris	1062
09.22	Barnet	A	L	0-1		960
09.26	Weymouth	A	L	0-4		1560
09.29	Maidstone United	H	L	0-0		1081
10.01	Redditch United	H	BSC1	1-1	Starkey	620
10.06	Hednesford Town	H	FAC2Q	1-0	Turpie	1421
10.13	Worcester City	A	L	2-2	Franklin, Branston	880
10.15	Redditch United	A	BSC1	2-0	Starkey (2)	
10.20	Highgate United	H	FAC3Q	1-4	Turpie	1307
10.22	Tamworth	H	MFC	1-0	Branston	751
10.27	Romford	H	L	1-1	Starkey	1142

Nuneaton Borough 1970-1979 – Part 1



Southern League Premier Division: Fixtures, Results & Scorers- 1973-74

Nuneaton Scores First

Date	Opposition	Venue	Competition	Score	Scorers	Attendance
10.29	Merthyr Town	H	SLC2	1-1	Branston	825
11.03	Dartford	A	L	1-3	Lewis	1358
11.10	Tonbridge	A	L	1-1	Newton	811
11.12	Merthyr T	A	SLC2r	1-0	Turpie	
11.17	Telford United	H	L	1-0	Turpie	1088
11.24	Cambridge City	H	L	2-2	Lewis, Vincent	1002
12.04	Bilston Town	A	FAT3Q	0-0		400
12.08	Yeovil Town	A	L	2-2	Vincent, Turpie	1879
12.10	Bilston Town	H	FAT3Qr	2-1	Starkey, Turpie	318
12.15	Hillingdon Borough	H	L	0-2		1001
12.22	Wimbledon	A	L	1-1	Turpie	643
12.26	Atherstone Town	H	L	1-1	Branston	1985
12.29	A.P.Leamington	A	BSC2	0-1		
01.01	Grantham Town	A	L	1-2	MacKay	1900
01.05	Dover	A	L	2-1	Turpie (2)	620
01.12	Kettering Town	A	FAT1	1-1	Turpie	1961
01.19	Kettering Town	H	FAT1r	1-1 aet	Turpie	1677
01.20	Telford United	A	SLC3	1-1	Turpie	1701
01.24	Kettering Town	A	FAT1r2	0-1		1692
01.27	Telford United	H	SLC3r	1-0	Randle	1343
02.02	Hillingdon Borough	A	L	2-2	Flannaghan, Baxter	609
02.03	Tamworth	A	MFC	5-2	Owen (2), Vincent, Briscoe, Starkey (p)	484
02.09	Wimbledon	H	L	0-0		1262
02.16	Bedford Town	A	L	1-0	Turpie	822
02.23	Dover	H	L	3-2	Vincent (2, 1p), Lewis	1314
02.24	Grantham Town	A	SLCQF		Lewis	1755
03.03	Guildford City	A	L	1-0	Vincent	185
03.03	A.P.Leamington	H	SLCSF	0-3		1817
03.09	Romford	A	L	1-1	Vincent	598
03.16	Margate	H	L	4-0	Newton, Owen, Vincent, Turpie	1104
03.17	Atherstone Town	A	MFC	0-1		1817
03.23	Folkestone	A	L	2-1	Turpie, Briscoe	813
03.25	Weymouth	H	L	1-0	Vincent (p)	1328
03.30	Chelmsford City	H	L	3-0	Turpie (2), Vincent	1408
04.01	Kettering Town	H	L	4-0	Vincent (2), Briscoe, MacKay	2667
04.03	Bedworth United	H	MFC	1-0	Vincent	469
04.07	Atherstone Town	H	MFC	3-0	Lewis, Turpie, Baxter	1065
04.08	Dartford	H	L	2-2	Vincent, Goodwin	3814
04.13	Telford United	A	L	1-1	Vincent	1305
04.15	Atherstone Town	A	L	0-0		1576
04.16	Grantham Town	H	L	1-1	Vincent	2859
04.20	Yeovil Town	H	L	3-0	Goodwin, Vincent, Turpie	1721
04.22	Margate	A	L	1-3	Vincent	515
04.24	Burton Albion	H	MFCF1L	1-0	Briscoe	1222
04.27	Barnet	H	L	1-0	Vincent (p)	1235
04.29	Chelmsford City	A	L	0-1		978
05.01	Tonbridge	H	L	0-0		1235
05.03	Burton Albion	A	MFCF2L	0-0		1025
05.07	Hereford United	H	F	1-1	Baxter	

KEY: L = Southern League Premier, FAC = FA Cup, FAT = FA Trophy, SLC = Southern League Cup, BSC = Birmingham Senior Cup, MFC = Midland Floodlit Cup, PSF = Pre Season Friendly, F = Friendly, PC = Presidents Cup



1974-75

Mackay Can Leave

Bobby Mackay, Nuneaton Borough's Scottish midfield player, has been told he can leave Manor Park. He asked for a rise after being offered the same terms as last season – and got a shock. "We couldn't agree," said manager Geoff Coleman. "Although he was offered what I consider to be a reasonable contract. So I have told him he can go. No-one is going to hold a gun at my head."

Borough's National League Efforts Fail

Nuneaton Borough's delegation left the Southern League annual meeting in a grim mood. Their bid to renew interest in the idea of a National League for semi-professional clubs failed, despite a superb speech from secretary John Evans. The club representatives applauded his points, but did not raise their hands in support when the crunch came.

And their attitude led to a sweeping condemnation of the whole set-up of the league from Borough chairman Ken Peal. "They tell us that this is the best league outside the Football League, but there is an apparent lack of forward thinking," he said. Borough wanted the management committee to renew its efforts to form a National League outside the Football League and explore the possibility of widening discussions to bring in other leagues. But the plea was bulldozed aside when Southern League chairman John Nash mentioned the Football League's "flat refusal to have anything to do with the idea."

Borough's Pre-Season Tour

Borough will launch their build-up to the new season with two match trips to Scotland. They go north of the border in early August for a five day tour that will take in games against East Stirling and Albion Rovers. They will then return home for pre-season friendlies against Banbury United and AP Leamington – also away from home.

Borough To Run Youth Team

Nuneaton Borough will have a youth team next season in the Central Counties Floodlit League and the FA Youth Cup. The decision was given the go ahead and it means the club will operate three sides for the first time since the early sixties.

Southern And Northern Leagues May Go It Alone

Non League soccer has reached a crossroads over the past few days – but could emerge with a bright new future. A week after Nuneaton Borough's plea for renewed efforts for a National League appeared to have fallen on deaf ears there were dramatic developments.

The outcome is that 18 clubs, from the Southern and Northern Premier Leagues have threatened to go it alone. They represent the cream of non-league football from Wigan to Weymouth, all striving for the same aim. And the exciting prospect of a National Super League being formed is stronger than ever. Gateshead, once in the Football League, are

the prime movers of the idea in the north. Nuneaton have sparked off the campaign in the south.

Robinson Complains About Price Tag

Brian Robinson, Nuneaton Borough's unsettled goalkeeper has complained about the price the club has put on his head. He has appealed to the Southern League management committee in a bid to get it reduced. But manager Geoff Coleman said last night: "We feel it is a reasonable figure. If we reduced it we would be giving him away."

Dietmar Bruck Signs For Borough

Borough have signed former Coventry City player Dietmar Bruck – their first close season capture. Bruck can operate at right back or in midfield, the position he will probably occupy at Manor Park.

"He can cover both positions," said manager Geoff Coleman. "But where he plays depends on who else I sign."

Polish born Bruck joined Coventry from school and played a big part in the Sky Blues surge to the First Division. A powerful player with strength in either foot, he played nearly 200 first team games at Highfield Road before moving to Charlton and then Northampton Town.

Tribunal Cuts Robinson Transfer Fee

Borough manager Geoff Coleman was left annoyed over the Southern League's decision to lower goalkeeper Brian Robinson's transfer price tag. The four-man appeal tribunal which sat in Bedford took 75 minutes, after hearing both sides of the argument, to decide that Robinson was worth £500 on the market. This figure was £250 below the manager assessment of the player's value.

Robinson is now set to join newly-promoted Burton Albion.

Oakes Signs For Borough

Bedworth-born Dennis Oakes has signed for Nuneaton Borough, 12 months after the first move to bring him to Manor Park. Oakes is the eldest of four sporting brothers and comes to Nuneaton on a free transfer from Chelmsford City.

Oakes, spent five seasons at Notts County and another two at Peterborough United, and is Geoff Coleman's second close season signing.

Bob Knight Signs For Borough

Goalkeeper Bob Knight is joining Borough on trial after being released by Worcester City. Knight made 365 appearances in his time at St George's Lane. The former Wolves' keeper will have a month's trial at Manor Park after breaking his arm last season, and only having played four matches since January.

Secret Talks On Borough-Bedworth Merger

It has been revealed that secret talks have taken place to discuss a merger between Nuneaton Borough and Bedworth United. But the Bedworth board, anxious to preserve the club's identity, refused point blank to discuss the idea.

Borough chairman Ken Peal said: “Nuneaton and Bedworth councils were about to be merged and we thought the two football clubs could do the same and represent the whole area.” Former United chairman Brian Parsons was called in to act as a mediator and the talks went ahead.

Eighteen Club Committed To National League

Eighteen top clubs have taken a decision that could launch a new era in the history of non-league football. They voted overwhelmingly in favour of a National League – following a lead set by Nuneaton Borough. The idea has been suggested and shelved – and then revived by Borough at the Southern League annual meeting last month.

And the clubs, who represent the most powerful force gathered from the non-league game under one roof, have set the target date for 1975-76. The clubs who took the decision in London yesterday were: Altrincham, Bath, Boston, Cambridge City, Chelmsford, Dartford, Gainsborough, Gateshead, Macclesfield, Morecambe, Maidstone, Northwich Victoria, Nuneaton, Scarborough, Stafford Rangers, Weymouth, Wigan and Yeovil.

Mackay Re-Signs

Bobby Mackay, Borough’s Scottish midfield player has patched up his differences with the Manor Park club and has re-signed, two months after he was told he could find another club. The former Leicester City wing half, who joined Borough from Atherstone last November, failed to agree terms at the end of the season.

Goalkeeper Keith Ball has also signed and club captain Dave Lewis, who has recovered from a cartilage operation, has also decided to stay at Manor Park.

Tom Starkey, who has played as an amateur for the last two seasons has signed professional forms with the club for the coming season.

Borough Set Off To Scotland



Nuneaton Borough journeyed to Scotland for a two match tour that manager Geoff Coleman described as “vitaly important to us.” The trip, the first of its kind organised by the Manor Park club, includes matches against Scottish second division clubs East Stirling and Albion Rovers.

East Stirlingshire v Nuneaton Borough 03-08-1974

East Stirlingshire: Gourlay, Stein, McGregor, Simpson, Dunne, Donnelly, McCulley, Stirling, Feeney, Hulson, Robertson. Subs: Browning, Mullen and Campbell

Borough: Knight, Stephens, Bruck, Oakes, Goodwin, Baxter, Starkey, Turpie, Owen, Lewis, Vincent. Subs: Jones, Briscoe and Newton.

Borough visited East Stirlingshire on their Scottish Tour to play a pre-season friendly match.

Dave Lewis, whose midfield power is vital to Borough’s hopes for the new season overcame one of the most important tests of his career. The Borough skipper returned for this first full-scale match after a cartilage operation forced him to miss the end of last season. And he contributed to an impressive all-out team performance.

Afterwards he said: “Everything went great. I felt a bit of pain when their full-back whacked me early on, but it soon went off and I didn’t feel a thing after that.”

Borough sharpened their competitive edge at the expense of the struggling Scottish Second Division side. Bobby Vincent scored two first half goals that shook the Falkirk based club and he should have had a hat-trick. And Bob Turpie, who had played a part in both of Vincent’s goals, netted the third just before the end. Borough, with all their new signings on view, were by far the better side for more than an hour.

But they eased off in the closing stages and goalkeeper Bob Knight made a string of tremendous saves. Knight, on a month’s trial, staked his claim for a longer contract when he defied Stirling’s attempts to salvage some pride. He spread his huge frame around the goalmouth as tiredness crept into Nuneaton’s play. The other newcomers Dennis Oakes and Dietmar Bruck, also fitted in well on their first public appearances for the Manor Park club.

Albion Rovers v Nuneaton Borough 05-08-1974

Borough: Knight, Stephens, Baxter, Goodwin, Bruck, Oakes, Starkey, Lewis, Briscoe, Turpie, Owen.

Borough visited Albion Rovers for the second of their Scottish Tour matches.

Borough counted their bruises after a hard-fought battle against Albion Rovers, that threatened to develop into an unfriendly “friendly.” Several players from both sides were lectured by the referee as the game simmered on the brink of trouble. Some of them would have certainly be booked – or even sent off – had it been a Southern League match.

But it was just the sort of work out that Nuneaton needed, and they responded with character, tenacity and skill. They dished out as much as they took from a Rovers side which was a big improvement on their Saturday opponents, East Stirling. Borough displayed their defensive qualities in the first-half when they survived shaky moments.

Weary from their busy programme, they had to drag up



every ounce of effort to stay in the game. But they improved in the second half and Albion, by that time, had acquired a healthy respect for Southern League football, were forced to defend. Goalkeeper Bob Knight, the discovery of the tour, had another fine match and added to his impressive list of saves.

Bill Baxter and Ian Goodwin held the back four together – and Dave Lewis worked tirelessly in midfield. He needed more support from Tom Starkey and Dennis Oakes in the first half, although the midfield tightened up after half-time. Up front, they had to work hard against an uncompromising Albion defence and they missed the striking power of Bobby Vincent.

The second half built up to a competitive pitch that would have been a test for any side, let alone one that had travelled 400 miles into strange territory. But Nuneaton's character shone through against the stark backcloth of the grim Coatbridge surroundings.

Manager Geoff Coleman stuck to the same eleven players throughout the match, a promise he made before the game. But he may have to look more closely at his midfield department in the two remaining practice games.

Banbury United v Nuneaton Borough 08-08-1974

Borough: Ball, Stephens, Oakes, Jones, Bruck, Lewis, Mackay, Newton, Owen, Turpie, Vincent.

Borough made the journey to Banbury United to play a pre-season friendly match.

Borough maintained their efficient pre-season form with a sound performance against solid Banbury last night – and competition for places hotted up. Capable Keith Ball, chasing Bob Knight for the goalkeeping spot, turned in a display that inspired confidence. And Alan Jones took over the centre-half berth and emerged as man of the match.

Jones, who has played only half a game since breaking an arm last March, held the defence together alongside Dennis Oakes. They took over from Ian Goodwin and Bill Baxter, both unavailable and demonstrated the strength in depth of the Manor Park squad. Because of them, Borough emerged with their pre-season goals against column still intact.

But manager Geoff Coleman admits there are flaws that still have to be ironed out. He has yet to find the correct balance and blend in midfield, but the foundations are there. Dave Lewis has already made one of the midfield spots his own – the others are still wide open.

Oakes, Tom Starkey, Bobby Mackay, Bob Newton, Ian Goodwin and Joey Owen are all in the running, depending on how Coleman decides to shape his side. Borough had the better chances against Banbury, although they soaked up a lot of second-half pressure. Joey Owen headed wide from a Bob Turpie cross and both Turpie and Mackay had openings that could have won the match.

Borough now have two games – at Leamington and against Racing Club Warwick.

AP Leamington v Nuneaton Borough 10-08-1974

Borough: Ball, Stephens, Baxter, Goodwin, Bruck, Oakes (Newton), Lewis, Mackay, Owen (Starkey), Vincent, Turpie.

Borough made the journey to The Windmill to play AP Leamington in a pre-season friendly game.

Borough damaged their previously smooth pre-season build-up and presented manager Geoff Coleman with a load of problems. Their defence, which had not conceded a goal in three practice matches, was beaten three times in 40 minutes. They again struggled in midfield where they have, so far, lacked authority – and they missed chances.

Bobby Vincent threw away a gilt edged opening when it would have been easier to score – and missed a second half penalty. And they lost £3,000 striker Joey Owen, carried off after 50 minutes after he had twisted an ankle in a pothole.

To make matters worse, two of the players who did the damage were Mick Keeley and Adrian Stewart, both discarded by Nuneaton last season. Stewart had a hand in the first two goals and Keeley netted the third. Leamington scored after just two minutes when Stewart rose high at the far post to head the ball into a packed goalmouth. Keeley knocked it over Keith Ball and Neil Armstrong scored. Six minutes later Armstrong struck again when Ball failed to hold a Stewart shot.

And Keeley snatched a cheeky goal five minutes from the break. He trapped a goalbound header from Brakes' centre-half Roger Brown on the line – and turned it over the line off his thigh. That gave Borough a lot to do and although they tightened up in the second half they never solved their middle of the park problems. They could not find a way through a magnificent Leamington back four in which Brown and Tony Bowden were dominant.

So AP, who twice beat Borough last season, collected the Sir Jack Scamp Trophy, presented by Borough chairman Ken Peal.

National League Talks To Re-open

Top level talks are to be re-opened between the Northern and Southern League management committees about plans for a proposed National League. Southern League chairman Alan Cherry told clubs at a meeting in London that negotiations are to be re-convened.

And Borough chairman Ken Peal, one of the leaders of the National League plan, today hailed the announcement as “a major step forward.” Seventeen of the most powerful clubs from the North and South have already pledged their full support to the idea.

The clubs, who have set up a Watchdog Committee, are due to meet on September 8 to discuss any progress that has been made. A management committee suggestion that only one Southern League club – the champions – should apply for Football League status failed to gain a two thirds majority.

Owen Breaks Bone In Ankle

Joey Owen, Nuneaton Borough's £3,000 striker, will be out of action for at least a month after a cruel injury blow. He caught his foot in a pothole on the AP Leamington pitch – and broke a bone in his right ankle.

Keeper Ball Joins Kidderminster

Nuneaton Borough goalkeeper Keith Ball has signed for Southern League first division side Kidderminster Harriers. The Worcestershire club have paid a small fee for the ex-Walsall and Worcester keeper, who played a part in Borough's unbeaten premier division run last season.

Nuneaton Borough v Wimbledon 17-08-1974

Borough: Knight, Stephens, Bruck, Oakes, Baxter, Goodwin, Mackay, Turpie, Vincent, Lewis, Briscoe. **Sub:** Starkey.

Wimbledon: Guy, Stockley, Bryant, Donaldson, Edwards, Bassett, Lucas, Rice, Connell, Sommers, Mahon. **Sub:** Cooke.

Borough welcomed Wimbledon to Manor Park to play a Southern League Premier Division game.

Borough struggled early on against a Wimbledon side that packed the middle of the park. But once they had overcome their opening day nerves they had too much strength and power for the Dons. Admittedly Borough were aided by a penalty and the harsh sending off of Wimbledon midfielder man Selwyn Rice. But the end produce was only their second win on the opening day for eight years.

Bobby Vincent, top scorer in the Southern League premier division last season, made a flying start. He scored both goals, and went close to a hat-trick with a half volley that grazed the crossbar. The goals were set up by Dave Lewis and Bob Turpie. Lewis forced the spot kick with a powerful run from midfield. He collected a return pass from Vincent and was pulled down by Dons' keeper Dickie Guy.



Wimbledon goalkeeper Dickie Guy goes the wrong way for Bobby Vincent's spot kick and Borough take the lead with the season just 28 minutes old.

Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune

And Turpie, who had a quiet match, created the second with a delicate left foot cross that threw the Londoners' defence.

Wimbledon were reduced to ten men just before half-time when Rice aimed a kick at Turpie from behind. Cambridge referee David Hutchinson, firm, but inconsistent, consulted a linesman and gave Rice his marching orders.

All of Borough's newcomers did well – particularly Dennis Oakes, who had lacked authority in the build-up matches. He balanced up the middle three, although he drifted out towards the end of the match. Goalkeeper Bob Knight recovered from some shaky moments early on and made one second half save from Wimbledon defender Bill Edwards that prevented the Londoners from forcing their way back into the game. And Dietmar Bruck added more strength at left back to a defence that already has solid foundations.

Bobby Mackay was always involved as the central player in midfield and Vincent looked sharp up front, although Turpie and winger Steve Briscoe struggled to stay in the match. Turpie was quiet for long periods and Briscoe, who had a week of treatment before the game, was out of touch. Borough went through a sticky patch early in the second half when everything started to go wrong. They were caught square at the back, gave the ball away in midfield and were in danger of losing their heads. But Wimbledon failed to cash in and Nuneaton pulled themselves together before any damage was done.

Powerful Ian Goodwin and Bill Baxter, who stayed serene and composed, while the others almost panicked, held the back four together and Kirk Stephens turned in the kind of performance everyone has come to expect.

Grantham Town v Nuneaton Borough 19-08-1974

Borough: Knight, Stephens, Baxter, Goodwin, Bruck, Lewis, Mackay (Jones), Oakes, Vincent, Turpie, Briscoe.

Borough made the journey to London Road to play Grantham Town in a Southern League Premier Division game.

Borough lost after being in front, but the plain truth of the matter was that Borough committed suicide. They gave away goals against the best attacking side in the Southern League. Lack of organisation played its part and Grantham, who play the nearest thing to total football in the premier division, exploited the flaws.

Borough were in with a great chance at half-time with the scoreline locked at 2-2 after a see-saw first half. Skipper Dave Lewis put his side ahead after ten minutes from a twice taken free-kick when he found a gap in Grantham's defensive wall. Ten minutes later, Andy Crawford scored the Gingerbread's equaliser from close in after Ian Goodwin and goalkeeper Bob Knight had failed to cope with a right wing cross.

And ten minutes after that Bobby Vincent restored Borough's lead with a free header inside the six yard box from a Dietmar Bruck free-kick. But the Manor Park side's success was again short lived. They had hardly re-started from Vincent's goal when Brent Horobin lashed the home side's second equaliser.

Nuneaton Borough 1970-1979 – Part 1



He cracked a half-volley from a narrow angle into the far corner of the net which gave Knight no chance. Grantham sensed Nuneaton's deficiencies and pushed forward – the only way they know how to play – at the start of the second half. goalkeeper Chris Gardiner pulled off a magnificent save from Bobby Vincent before they went in front for the first time. The ball was only half-cleared by the Borough defence and Horobin played it through to Bob Norris. He ran on and squeezed a shot past Knight from a narrow angle after being challenged by Bill Baxter, who should have done better.

Borough were still in with a chance and Gardiner pulled off another tremendous save, this time from Lewis. But the pressure built up against Nuneaton, who lost their organisation in midfield and the defence started to shake.

Bobby Mackay went off injured and was replaced by Alan Jones, who went on at centre-half with Goodwin pushed forward into midfield. Jones, who must surely rate a place in the side, tried to steady the back four, but it was too late.

Even Bill Baxter, one of the most majestic back four players in the premier division was reduced to a pauper – picking at the left overs as Borough tried to stem the tide. And with twelve minutes left, Grantham settled the game. Benskin shot from just outside the box and the ball was deflected off Jones. Knight, who had the shot covered, was unsighted and could do no more than juggle the ball into the net.

Redditch United v Nuneaton Borough 22-08-1974

Borough: Knight, Stephens, Jones, Oakes, Newton, Bruck, Goodwin, Starkey, Vincent, Turpie, Briscoe. **Subs:** Ritchie, Baxter.

Borough made the journey to Redditch United to play a Birmingham Senior Cup first round tie.

Steve Briscoe dug deep into his source of untapped talent as Borough swept into the second round of the Birmingham Senior Cup. The Borough winger, disappointing in his previous two matches, scored two and set up another. And he had what looked a certain hat-trick goal kicked off the line early in the second half. Nuneaton, reshuffled because of injuries and missing Bill Baxter, who arrived late following a car accident, powered ahead.

The game was just five minutes old when Briscoe moved on to a Bobby Vincent pass, took on the Redditch defence, and scored with a shot into the far corner. Busy Gary Fleet then tried to inspire Redditch and Ken Lawrence equalised after a right wing free-kick in the 24th minute. But Bobby Vincent restored Nuneaton's lead with a 32nd minute shot from the edge of the box – set up by Briscoe. Vincent's half volley went under John Blackwell as the Redditch keeper tried to fling his body at the ball.

From then on it was almost one way traffic. And Redditch, although busy in midfield, could not stem the tide. Briscoe made it 3-1 after 40 minutes with a brave header from a long throw in by Ian Goodwin. And Dietmar Bruck netted his first

goal for the club four minutes from the break after Bob Turpie had made the running. Turpie beat Redditch defenders Brian Taylor and Ralph Puncheon to set himself up for a left foot shot. The ball cannoned off the foot of a post – and Bruck followed up to slam the rebound into the net.

Tom Starkey notched Borough's fifth goal in the 54th minute after Briscoe's hat-trick chance had been kicked off the line by right-back Day. Substitute John Jones replied for Redditch six minutes later with a fierce shot from the narrowest of angles.

The rest of the game was an anti-climax, marred from Borough's point of view when Ian Goodwin was booked 15 minutes from the end. Borough could have increased their lead in the closing stages, but the competitive edge had been knocked off the match by the goal rush.

Redditch had one of the best players on the park in Gary Fleet, whose midfield skills would grace a better side.

Maidstone United v Nuneaton Borough 24-08-1974

Maidstone: Maggs, Sheridan, Barker, Richardson, Priestly, McVeigh, Tough, Finch, Everest, Morton, Hunt. **Sub:** Basey.

Borough: Knight, Stephens, Newton, Bruck, Jones, Baxter, Goodwin, Turpie, Vincent, Starkey, Briscoe. **Sub:** Oakes.

Borough made the journey to Maidstone to play a Southern League Premier Division match.

Borough kept themselves among the Southern League pacesetters with a well-earned win. Bobby Vincent hit the winner in the 84th minute, his fourth goal of the season, to decide a hard-fought, often physical, but always fast-moving match. Borough survived a dangerous moment in the opening minutes when Priestley just failed to connect with an Everest corner as it flashed across the goalmouth.

Borough soaked up the early pressure and soon began to develop their own game with Goodwin and Bruck strong in midfield. Vincent was booked, rather harshly, after what looked no more than an accidental trip on Tough – and Bruck was lectured after a challenge on Richardson in the next minute. Much of the action was still confined to midfield, most of the early threats coming from set pieces.

Borough's defence was sound with Knight in command in the air and Jones and Baxter solid in front of him. Nuneaton began to push the Maidstone defence as half-time approached and Vincent was blocked by a solid tackle from Barker as he shot from a Briscoe pass. Maidstone went close when Marston connected with an Everest cross – only to see his shot scrambled around the post by Knight.

Knight collected a shot from McVeigh which sparked off the second-half and at the other end Maggs pulled off a fine save to push a left-foot drive from Briscoe over the bar. Nuneaton looked the more likely to score and Sheridan kicked off the line after Vincent had challenged to a Briscoe corner. Vincent beat Priestley and Sheridan with a 40-yard burst, only to be caught and hauled down by Sheridan. Two minutes later,

Nuneaton Borough 1970-1979 – Part 1



Turpie flung himself full-length at a hard driven Bruck free-kick and headed wide.

Maidstone missed the best chance of the match when McVeigh shot wide from a glorious position after a left-wing cross from Richardson, before Borough grabbed the winning goal in the 84th minute. Vincent latched on to a Bob Turpie pass and slammed a shot across the goalmouth and in off the far post.

Borough organised themselves well in midfield where Dietmar Bruck and Ian Goodwin provided strength and experience alongside Tom Starkey.

Starkey turned in one of his best displays for the club as the central player in the middle three. Bob Knight spread confidence with a fine game in goal. Bob Newton returned to play well at left back – but the whole side worked tremendously hard. They settled it after 15 minutes and it was touch and go for the rest of the game – until Vincent supplied the killer blow.

Nuneaton Borough v Worcester City 26-08-1974

Borough: Knight, Stephens, Jones, Baxter, Newton, Goodwin, Mackay, Bruck, Vincent, Turpie, Briscoe. Sub: Oakes.

Borough welcomed Worcester City to Manor Park to play a Southern League Cup first round first leg tie.

Powerful Ian Goodwin made a massive contribution to Nuneaton Borough's Southern League Cup hopes. He scored the first goal with a header off the underside of the bar from a Steve Briscoe free-kick in the 22nd minute. And he set up the second for Bob Turpie five minutes from time when he reached the line and pulled the ball back across the middle. But he went off three minutes from the end with a leg injury that could add to the club's already serious injury problems.

Borough struggled to make headway in the first-half against a Worcester side that made their intentions clear. They played a containing game, designed to keep them in with a chance in the second leg at St George's Lane. Player-manager Ron Radford generalised his side from the middle of the park and they packed their defence, trying to hustle Borough out of their stride. It worked for a while as Nuneaton struggled to get their game together, although Vincent had a chance early on. But the Manor Park side eventually made the breakthrough after Bob Newton had been hauled down by Gary Holbrooke.

Briscoe hit the free kick to the far post where Goodwin rose above the defence to head in off the bar. Borough improved after the break and Vincent hit the top of the bar from the edge of the box after beating Neil Merrick and Bobby McEwan. Merrick, all set to join Third Division Bournemouth, struggled to hold Borough's goal a game centre-forward.

City were under pressure as Goodwin surged towards the goal and unleashed a scorching drive that seared wide. And goalkeeper Mark Hingley scrambled a Steve Briscoe header around the post as Borough searched for another

goal. Worcester midfielder Lionel Martin was booked after a tackle on Goodwin – after several players had been lectured by the referee. But it looked as if City would hold out, until Goodwin's effort, strength and determination set up Borough's vital second goal. His cross went to Turpie and Vincent, queueing up to score at the near post. The ball went off Vincent to Turpie, Borough's top scorer in all games last season, and he poked it into the net – for the goal that could make all the difference in the second leg.

Nuneaton Borough v Guildford & Dorking 31-08-1974

Borough: Knight, Stephens, Newton, Bruck, Goodwin, Baxter, Mackay, Turpie, Vincent, Oakes, Briscoe. Sub: Starkey.

Guildford: Spratley, Peters, Summerhill, Finn, Edwards, Chapple, Smith, Wright, Harman, O'Neil, Malley. Sub: Moody.

Borough welcomed Guildford and Dorking to Manor Park to play a Southern League Premier Division game.

Borough did what all teams who hope to win something have to do – they played badly and won. And they moved up with the Southern League leaders, level on points but separated from the top by the four goals they conceded at Grantham. The result added more fire to the conviction within the club that this could be their year. Despite being unimpressive for long periods, they were too good for Guildford in the end.

Goals from Bob Turpie and Bob Mackay wrapped up the points and gave Nuneaton their third 2-0 home win in a row. Guildford goalkeeper Alan Spratley made three spectacular saves to keep the scoreline down to two. But their overall display was below par – and they knew it. Spratley helped to put them on the victory trail with his only mistake of the game in the tenth minute. He failed to cut out a left wing corner from Steve Briscoe and Turpie ran in behind him at the far post to sidefoot the ball home.



Goalkeeper Alan Spratley launches himself into a spectacular dive, but Bobby Mackay's 58th minute header is on its way into the net and Borough are home and dry.

Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune

That upset the Surrey side's plans, gave Borough the initiative – and should have been the signal for them to show their form. Instead they struggled to make more headway and often lacked authority in midfield which was unbalanced by Ian Goodwin's enforced move to centre-half. Goodwin



dropped back to take over from Alan Jones, who failed a pre-match fitness test on an ankle injury.

The ex-Brighton skipper was a tower of strength in the middle of the back four – but how Borough missed his presence in the middle of the park. And the result only served to disguise the fact – it was never as clear cut as the scoreline suggests. Guildford, in fact, almost forced their way back into the game just before half-time and in the early stages of the second half. But Mackay's goal – a header from a Turpie cross in the 58th minute – solved all the problems. Turpie faced a Dietmar Bruck throw-in and showed tremendous skill to get the ball over to where Mackay was unmarked with time and space.

Borough's back four formed the back-bone of the win with Goodwin as a powerful anchor, strong and powerful in the air and on the ground. Kirk Stephens turned in a near immaculate performance at right back, Billy Baxter was cool and unruffled at number six and Bob Newton did well after a shaky start. He struggled early on against Paul Smith, Guildford's best player, but had subdued the winger well before the end.

The front runners all worked hard. Turpie and Bobby Vincent always looked likely to trouble Guildford and Steve Briscoe was always involved. Borough, who have sampled life at the bottom, now have a chance to taste life at the top.

Worcester City v Nuneaton Borough 02-09-1974

Borough: Knight, Stephens, Baxter, Goodwin, Newton, Bruck, Mackay, Lewis, Vincent, Turpie, Briscoe. Sub: Starkey.

Borough made the journey to St George's Lane to play a Southern League Cup first round second leg tie.

Borough battled their way through to the second round in a free-kick strewn clash. Two goals up from the first leg, they defied all Worcester's attempts to break them down in the face of fierce intimidation. The middle of the park became a battleground as the free-kick tally grew – and reached 48 before the final whistle blew.

Ill feeling from the first leg at Manor Park overspilled into the match from the start and Hereford referee Ron Marshall failed to stamp any real authority on the game. Borough were by no means saints, they conceded 26 free kicks to Worcester's 22 – but they were left to count the cost. Bobby Vincent and Steve Briscoe were both booked and midfield man Bobby Mackay limped off after half-an-hour with an ankle injury.

He was tackled from behind by Worcester player-manager Ron Radford, who should have set a better example to his side. Vincent had his name taken for dissent, which will cost him a £5 fine from the club. He had been a marked man from the start and had been flattened with the game only a few seconds old. Player after player was lectured by Mr Marshall, but while the kicking went on, Nuneaton held their lead.

They played it tight, forced Worcester into errors and carried too much know-how for the anxious home side. And one

player stood out like a beacon amid the ugliness and the "needle" – evergreen Billy Baxter, who was magnificent, with a performance that rolled back the years. He had one thing Worcester could not match – class. The ex-Ipswich star, who has made such a massive contribution to Borough's new found success, was everywhere. And his presence inspired a back four that destroyed Worcester's slim hopes of saving the tie. Dietmar Bruck showed his experience in the middle of the park and the whole of the side responded to the challenge.

Worcester, who badly needed an early goal to put them in with a chance, rarely looked like breaking through. Bob Knight, back at the ground where he spent most of his Southern League career, made a couple of fine saves. He pushed a goalbound shot from John Inglis out for a corner and forced a dipping shot from Gary Holbrooke over the top.

Both earned him an ovation from the St George's Lane fans, whose affection for the goalkeeper was clear from the start. But it was not a night for emotion – rather one for grim raw courage and determination.

Chelmsford City v Nuneaton Borough 07-09-1974

Chelmsford: Carrick, Coakley, Gommersall, Pittaway, Loughton, Tomkins, Mills, Barnard, O'Hara, Dunnell, Dilsworth. Sub: Grant.
Borough: Knight, Stephens, Newton, Bruck, Goodwin, Baxter, Starkey, Turpie, Vincent, Lewis, Briscoe. Sub: Oakes.

Borough made the journey to New Writtle Street to face Chelmsford City in a Southern League Premier Division game.

Borough moved to the top of the Premier League, with a calm assurance that has the look of champions stamped on it. Possibly it's a little early for fortune telling, but this Manor Park side have the look of solid success about them. It was the first time since they were promoted eleven seasons ago that they have won at the City Stadium.

In their present mood it's difficult to see many sides arresting them from the winning path. With four wins out of five it is their best opening since the glorious 1966-67 season. Against Chelmsford, always a hard side to overcome, there was little glitter – just an honest desire to graft, persevere and wait for the openings to come. The side is not perfectly balanced yet, but there is a maturing blend of experience and ability.

Chelmsford to begin with, looked impressive, having the territorial advantage. They pressed the Borough defence through Dilsworth, O'Mara and Barnard. O'Mara was particularly threatening early on with a number of headers that went close. But it was the fierce gusting winds that really held the sway, as both sides battled to bring the ball under proper control. Chelmsford dominated play for much of the half but Borough's stout defence, with Baxter, Stephens and Goodwin in control, halted all advances.

And as the half came to a close, Borough's lively three pronged attack of Vincent, Turpie and Briscoe gave the Chelmsford defence some scares before snatching a 42nd



minute lead. A Bill Baxter free-kick was headed down by courageous Dave Lewis for Bobby Vincent to round Pittaway in the box and smash the ball home through a ruck of players for his fifth Southern League goal of the season.

A similar patten emerged after the interval with Chelmsford winning the midfield exchanges but Borough standing firm. And Borough struck from a second free-kick in the 61st minute after Lewis had been roughed up on the edge of the Chelmsford penalty area. Stephens pushed a short ball to Bob Newton who mis-hit his shot. Bill Baxter powered the mis-directed effort back towards the goal and Steve Briscoe helped it home with his head.

From then on the Nuneaton side came into their own and Briscoe, who had several good breaks, and Bruck could have added to the scoreline. Just before the end, however, Chelmsford pulled back a consolation goal when Mick Loughton caught the defence napping with a header from a left wing cross.

Borough, though firm at the back and penetrating up front, lacked something in the midfield department where Lewis once again showed his power. Tom Starkey contributed little.

Nuneaton Borough v Burton Albion 09-09-1974

Borough: Knight, Stephens, Newton, Bruck, Goodwin, Baxter, Starkey, Turpie, Vincent, Lewis, Briscoe (Owen 79).

Borough welcomed Burton Albion to Manor Park to play a Southern League Premier Division game.

Borough took a two point lead at the top of the table after Bob Turpie's 23rd minute goal gave Borough victory. The 2,000-plus crowd waited hopefully for more goals, but Burton proved more than a match and contained Borough for the rest of the game. Once again Borough remained unflappable when openings didn't materialise. They just sat tight and waited.

Borough were jolted early on when Baxter headed out a Brendan Phillips cross only to the feet of John Beresford, who lashed a first-time drive which beat keeper Knight and struck the foot of the post. Stephens and Turpie combined to set up Vincent with a chance, while Lewis had a 25-yard effort saved by former Borough goalkeeper Brian Robinson.

Borough finally got to grips with the game and deservedly went ahead in the 23rd minute thanks to the skills of their skipper Dave Lewis and the subtlety of Bill Baxter. Briscoe was fetched down midway in the Burton half. Lewis took the free-kick and laid a square ball inside to Baxter. Cheekily he chipped a ball over Burton's defensive wall and Lewis ran through to collect it and fire a shot which Robinson only half stopped.

Lewis rounded Robinson from the rebound, pushed a ball across the goalmouth, Vincent missed an open goal and Turpie had a shot cleared off the line by Shone before stabbing home at the second attempt. Borough pressed but Burton were never out of the proceedings. Baxter cleared a dangerous Hogg free-kick and Beresford had another crack at

goal. A minute before half-time Bob Turpie broke on a 40 yard run and after rounding Bill Fairhurst, was crudely halted by the Burton player. Fairhurst was promptly booked.

Both goalmouths had scares just after the break. Vincent missed a sitter from a Turpie corner and Gavin Lang had an equally easy chance from a Wignall flick-on. Turpie, and Briscoe, twice had further chances, but the game only flickered once more before the end when Bill Baxter had a header saved off the line by Hogg.

Borough again lacked purpose in midfield where Bruck and Starkey struggled leaving Dave Lewis with too much to do. But the defence looked as solid as a rock on which Borough are building their firm foundation.

Lewis Agrees To Wear Shin Pads

Dave Lewis, Borough's tough tackling skipper, spurned the use of shin-pads for the last time before the game with Chelmsford. For Dave, the midfield dynamo who always gives 100 per cent was given a pre-match ultimatum by manager Geoff Coleman – wear shin pads or stay on the bench.

Knight Signs

Bob Knight, the only professional keeper on Nuneaton Borough's books, will ease the mind of Geoff Coleman by signing a contract. Until now the six footer was just on a month's trial.

Stourbridge v Nuneaton Borough 18-09-1974

Borough: Knight, Stephens, Newton, Bruck, Goodwin, Baxter, Starkey, Turpie, Vincent, Lewis, Briscoe. Sub: Oakes.

Borough made the journey to Amblecote to take on Stourbridge in a Southern League Premier Division game.

Borough keeper Bob Knight was forced out of the shadows to keep the Manor Park side among the league leaders. For ice-cool Knight, having seen only one goal past him in seven games, tasted some real action in an enthralling game – and emerged the master. Such has been Borough's power this season, with the iron defence, that Knight has just had to mop up tame headers and under-pressure shots.

Borough began stylishly and pressed the home side with a dozen corners in the opening 20 minutes. Vincent had two shots stopped before a five man move ended when a Lewis piledriver was scooped over the bar by second choice keeper Alan Dulleston. But in the next quarter Stourbridge manufactured the best two chances of the half. In the 23rd minute unflappable Bill Baxter prevented debut maker Graham Allner poking the ball with a lunging tackle after Hayward had opened the defence.

Then keeper Knight made the save of the game eight minutes later. He dived to his left in a reflex action to stop an unmarked Hayward header from a Booth cross. With a blank half-time scoreline, Borough pushed in front a minute after

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the break with a goal from youngster Steve Briscoe. A right-side throw-in involving skipper Lewis found Bobby Vincent. He turned inside Pridgeon on the edge of the box and cracked a shot against the bar. Briscoe following up dived to head home. And that looked like being the scoreline until 12 minutes from time when referee Yorke signalled an indirect free-kick 35 yards out from the Borough goal.

While he lectured the culprit Dave Lewis – Stourbridge's John Davies stepped up to power a superlative shot which the unprepared keeper Knight could only help into the net. The composure returned to the Manor Park side in which Bruck in particular, showed skill and a desire to work. Starkey too redeemed his recent form with a non-stop performance. For defender Bill Baxter – the superlatives are endless. His aerial power was magnificent.

Dover v Nuneaton Borough 21-09-1974

Dover: Gambrell, Reynolds, Hall, Fursdon, Brooks, Turner, Wallace, Arnold, Gregory, O'Brian, Simpson. **Sub:** Thornley.

Borough: Knight, Stephens, Newton, Bruck, Goodwin, Baxter, Starkey, Turpie, Vincent, Lewis, Briscoe. **Sub:** Oakes.

Borough made the journey to The Crabble to face Dover in a Southern League Premier Division match.

Bob Turpie headed a 37th minute match-winner as Borough chalked up their fifth Southern League win in six matches at rain-swept Dover. But the Manor Park side survived some close shaves when the Kent club searched for an equaliser in the closing stages of a hard fought game.

In the first half Borough showed some of the qualities that have powered them to the top of the table. Tight at the back, strong in midfield and with effort and skill up front. Dover could not match Nuneaton's approach work built solidly and smoothly from the back four. Bob Knight pulled off a superb save from Bob Arnold and Dover centre-forward Mike Gregory missed a clear-cut chance only seconds before Turpie's goal.

Borough were on top as drizzling rain turned into a steady downpour on a miserable afternoon. Turpie's goal was scored eight minutes from half-time – from a typical Nuneaton attack. Steve Briscoe played a first-time pass to Dave Lewis who pushed the ball forward to Tom Starkey. Starkey swept it out to Kirk Stephens whose first-time cross found Turpie just outside the six yard box.

His glancing header beat goalkeeper Brian Gambrell, hit the foot of the post and rebounded over the line. Borough deserved the lead but lost their composure mid-way through the second half. And Dover hit back with a series of attacks that threatened to panic the Nuneaton defence.

Winger Alan Simpson, the Kent club's most skilful player, shot across the face of the goal and inches outside the far post. Arnold and Gregory both went close and Nuneaton survived an incredible near miss 15 minutes from the end. Their defence was in disarray after a cross from Hall had landed

on the bar and rebounded into play. Arnold, with the goal at his mercy tried to run it in. Knight scrambled across his line, managed to get his fingers to the ball and Stephens was thankful to boot it out for a corner.

Yet Borough should have scored from the last kick of the match when Turpie slid the ball wide with his right foot after Dover had left themselves exposed by their frantic search for an equaliser. Borough's back four again emerged with credit with Ian Goodwin and Bill Baxter the king pins.

Tom Starkey had an excellent first-half as the central player in midfield, a role that makes heavy demands. Kirk Stephens rarely made a mistake at right back and Bob Newton maintained his consistency in the number three shirt. Dave Lewis, still not 100 per cent fit showed signs of a return to form in midfield.

And the front runners did well before half-time, although they struggled when the big boot replaced the confidence of the first 45 minutes. But no-one can take away the fact that Nuneaton have earned their place at the top the hard way. Five of their eight matches have been away from home – yet only one side has managed to beat them.

Barnet v Nuneaton Borough 24-09-1974

Borough: Knight, Stephens, Baxter, Goodwin, Newton, Lewis, Starkey, Bruck, Vincent, Turpie, Briscoe. **Sub:** Owen.

Borough made the journey to Underhill to face Barnet in a Southern League Premier Division match.

Brilliant Bobby Vincent led battling Borough to victory at Barnet and help to tighten their hold on the top of the table. Borough's £10,000 rated centre-forward scored one goal and laid on the other with a fabulous display. And he could easily have had two more as inspired Nuneaton turned in one of their best Southern League performances of the season.

Vincent showed his skill early on when goalkeeper Jack McClelland stopped a shot with his legs and Bob Turpie ran in to blast the ball wide. But Vincent scored after nine minutes when he chested down a stray pass from Gordon Ferry, bewildered Ben Embery and Steve Tom, and unleashed a shot which McClelland touched but could not prevent from going in. Nuneaton had opened like a top-of-the-table side but were rocked back on their heels when Barnet drew level with a penalty.

Bob Newton handled the ball as it came off Barnet striker Bob Moss and full-back Ian Fusedale scored from the spot. It looked a harsh decision, although there were no protests and Fusedale sent Bob Knight the wrong way with his kick. That was the signal for the North Londoners to put Nuneaton under pressure and the Manor Park side went through a ragged spell. They managed to get people behind the ball to blunt most of the attacks, although Knight made a miraculous save from Moss in the 28th minute.

The centre-forward reached a Ricky George free-kick and

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headed the ball down towards the line. Knight was in the right place at the right time. The header rebounded from his body and he dived full length to clutch the rebound. Six minutes later Borough were back in front. Vincent laid a Kirk Stephens free-kick back into the middle where Turpie turned past Embery and squeezed a shot in between McClelland and the post.

The second half failed to live up to the first, but Nuneaton always looked the better side despite some determined attacks from Barnet. They put Borough under pressure when they launched their final bid to save a point – yet the Manor Park side could have increased their lead.

A classic move involving front-runners Steve Briscoe, Vincent and Turpie ended when McClelland pushed a Turpie shot around the post. And Vincent almost crowned a great night for him with a last minute goal. He robbed Embery and shot wide with only seconds left, but by that time both points had been sewn up by this remarkable Nuneaton side.

Nuneaton Borough v Chelmsford City 28-09-1974

Borough: Knight, Stephens, Newton, Bruck, Goodwin, Baxter, Owen, Turpie, Vincent, Lewis, Briscoe. **Sub:** Starkey.

Chelmsford: Taylor, Harris, Tomkins, Pittaway, Loughton, Mills, Price, Gane, Dunwell, Delea, Dilsworth. **Sub:** O'Mara.

Borough welcomed Chelmsford City to Manor Park to play a Southern League Premier Division fixture.

Bobby Vincent, the new goal king of Manor Park, added two more jewels to his crown. The first, that pulled Borough back into the game showed his coolness and confidence in front of goal. And the second – the match winner – was a majestic header from a Bob Turpie free-kick.



Rain sheets across Manor Park, but cannot dampen the skill and confidence of bubbling Bobby Vincent as he shapes up to score Borough's equaliser on the stroke of half-time. Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune

The goals added the glitter to a performance that stretched Borough's unbeaten run to eight games and increased their lead at the top of the table. They had to overcome problems against skilful Chelmsford who tested their character and powers of recovery with a 39th minute goal. It was the first goal scored by any side at Manor Park this season, but the torrential rain played a part.

Eddie Dilsworth drifted inside and unleashed a shot which Bob Knight did well to stop. The ball ran loose, Bill Baxter slipped on the treacherous surface – and Dilsworth poked it home. Borough, who often lack cohesion in the middle of the park, were in trouble – until Vincent appeared on the scene in first-half injury time. Turpie played him clear after a slip by City defender Mick Loughton. He raced goalwards sidestepped Laurie Taylor and slotted the ball home.

Nuneaton with powerful Ian Goodwin outstanding in the heart of the defence, scented victory. They pressurised City in the early stages of the second half, but the Essex side matched them for effort. And they balanced up the play with some skilful approach work from midfield where they always denied Borough control. But matches are not won in the middle of the park – they are decided in the 18 yard box. And in Vincent, Nuneaton have the best in the business.



Bobby Vincent shows why he is so highly rated as he leaps to get his head to the ball for a spectacular match winner in the 71st minute.

Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune

With 19 minutes to go, Turpie was hauled down by Len Tompkins on the edge of the box. Turpie arrowed the free-kick across the Chelmsford box to where Vincent ran in on an angle, soared above the defence and powered a header into the net. That was his eighth premier division goal of the season – and it sealed up the match. Borough's defence denied City any hope of getting back into the game. Chelmsford, in fact, hardly created a chance all afternoon.

Dartford v Nuneaton Borough 12-10-1974

Dartford: Keen, Read, Shovelar, Carr, Burns, Robinson, Light, Henderson, Moy, Mitchell, Halliday. **Sub:** Stevens.

Borough: Knight, Stephens, Newton, Bruck, Goodwin, Baxter, Owen, Turpie, Vincent, Lewis, Briscoe. **Sub:** Mackay.

Borough made the journey to the Watling Street ground of Dartford to play a Southern League Premier Division match.

Borough lost Joey Owen with a leg injury after half an hour and centre-half Ian Goodwin played almost the whole of the second half as a passenger. Goodwin was pushed up



front, struggling with what could prove to be cartilage trouble. Dartford, bottom of the Southern League table, took advantage of the circumstances to register only their second win of the season. Much of the match was grim. The first half contained 29 free kicks, two bookings, two goals – and a penalty miss.

Kirk Stephens went into the book after a tackle on Tommy Henderson and Darts' midfield man Danny Light was cautioned for a dangerous challenge on Stephens. Henderson shot the Kent club in front as the game burst into life in the closing minutes before the break. But Bobby Vincent struck a well-taken equaliser – before Keith Robinson missed a penalty for the home side. The spot kick was given away by substitute Bobby Mackay in an off the ball incident with John Mitchell.

Two minutes into the second half, the Manor Park side went into the lead when Bob Turpie netted from a Stephens' pass. Then there problems really began – after the re-shuffle that followed Goodwin's injury. Dave Lewis went to centre-half and Steve Briscoe was pulled back into the middle of the park – which had already been reshuffled once. Borough lost their organisation and composure and before they had time to pull themselves together Dartford had scored twice and regained the lead.

Henderson made it 2-2 after a goalmouth scramble and Tony Moy put the Kent club in front with the Nuneaton defence all at sea. Those goals came within the space of two minutes and Henderson settled the points when he completed his hat-trick 12 minutes into the second half. Borough managed to pull themselves together in the last half hour to curb Dartford's victory romp.

By that time, though, the damage had already been done – and was too severe to be put right. Nuneaton's confidence had been too deeply affected for them to fight their way back into the match. But they showed enough character in the final half hour to stave off a complete disaster – and the news of the Margate and Kettering defeats helped to soften the blow.

Nuneaton Borough v Grantham Town 14-10-1974

Borough: Knight, Stephens, Oakes, Jones, Newton, Mackay, Lewis, Bruck, Vincent, Turpie, Briscoe. **Sub:** Starkey.

Borough welcomed Grantham Town to Manor Park to play a Southern League Premier Division fixture.

Borough battled their way back to the top of the Southern League in an incident packed match. A crowd of 2,250 saw them avenge their August defeat in a game that simmered from start to finish. Three players were booked – two from Nuneaton – as inconsistent refereeing, personal vendettas and general needle dragged the match down. Fortunately, it survived and attacking football triumphed in the end.

Borough achieved their success without key players Bill Baxter, Ian Goodwin and Joey Owen. But replacements Alan Jones, Dennis Oakes and Bobby Mackay all did well. And

the whole side responded with a magnificent performance, backed by the best fans in the Southern League.

Nuneaton attacked from the start and the visitors almost conceded a penalty when Steve Briscoe was sent sprawling by full-back Jimmy Bloomer. Chris Gardiner made one save to deny Briscoe, and then pushed a power packed shot from the winger on to the post – and clutched the ball on the line.

Briscoe then headed wide, Bob Knight saved from Dennis Benskin and Alan Jones collected a harsh booking as the pace of the game built to fever pitch. Dietmar Bruck cartwheeled to the turf after a tackle from Grantham centre-half Ron Harrison threatened to put him out of the game. And Benskin was then felled in an off the ball incident with Dave Lewis on the stroke of half-time.

It took a penalty to restore some calm into the match – with the second half barely a minute old. Unselfish Bob Turpie, who carried a heavy load for Borough up front, darted to the line and was held on the floor by Harrison. Bobby Vincent stepped up to take the kick in front of a hushed Cock and Bear end. He sent Gardiner the wrong way, punched the air in triumph – and the fans went wild. Borough were back at the top of the Premier Division.

Knight stopped a shot from Ernie Nixon that he could not have known much about and Bob Norris headed outside from in front of the net. That was before Steve Briscoe settled the points 20 minutes from time when he seized on a defensive error. Kirk Stephens made a burst down the right wing. His cross found Gerry Taylor, who played it back to Gardiner.

The keeper allowed the ball to slip through his fingers – and Briscoe ran in to plant it over the line. Grantham made a desperate bid to save the match and Benskin netted from a Norris cross, but the referee ruled the ball had gone out before Norris centred. Briscoe and Norris were both booked in the final ten minutes.

Cousins To Face Each Other In Cup Tie

Cousins Dave Lewis and Mick Preston grew up together in Ansley Common. They played in the same street teams, appeared in the Nuneaton Town boys side and were together with Atherstone Town. But on Saturday they will be on opposite sides – as skippers of the teams involved in the Sheepy Road Cup tie that has captured the imagination of North Warwickshire.

Enderby Town v Nuneaton Borough 22-10-1974

Borough: Knight, Stephens, Newton, Goodwin, Jones (Gore, 37), Oakes, Starkey, Owen, Vincent, Lewis, Briscoe.

Borough made the journey to George Street to take on Enderby Town in a Southern League Cup second round tie.

Borough manager Geoff Coleman dug deep into the resources of his Manor Park squad – and watched them stay in the Southern League Cup. Beaten semi-finalist last season, they

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hit back from behind against Enderby to force a replay. It took a magnificent equaliser from Bobby Vincent a few minutes before half time to keep them in the competition.

He volleyed a right wing cross chest high into the net after Enderby had taken an early lead. But the performance owed its success to the strength in depth of the bunch of players Coleman has gathered at Manor Park. Their character and determination showed through even after they had lost defender Alan Jones eight minutes from half-time. Jones, drafted into the side along with Dennis Oakes, Tom Starkey, Joey Owen and youngster John Gore, went off injured.

He went down with no-one near him and faces more problems from his long standing ankle injury. Ian Goodwin dropped back into the defence alongside Oakes. Owen was withdrawn into midfield and Gore went on up front. Vincent scored only a few minutes after the reshuffle to wipe out a goal from Enderby winger Phil Dearden, who rose unmarked at the far post to head a Jim Burt cross past Bob Knight.

Knight punched a goal-bound shot from Burt over the top soon after the break. And Vincent then beat two defenders only to be flattened just outside the box before Nuneaton produced a late bid to avoid a replay. Enderby goalkeeper Terry Satchwell made a glorious save to push a Gore header round the post from a Briscoe cross. Gore then lifted the ball over the top as Nuneaton put the Leicestershire side under heavy pressure.

But Enderby, who must be among the first division promotion candidates, kept them out and the Manor Park side face another game in their already crowded fixture list.

Fleet For Borough

Nuneaton Borough have stepped in with a bid for Redditch United midfielder star Gary Fleet. The two clubs have agreed on a fee and Fleet will have talks with Borough manager Geoff Coleman. Rated one of the top prospects in Midland non-league circles, Fleet has attracted attention from a number of clubs. But Borough are the first to move in with a definite cash offer for the 22-year-old.

Nuneaton have long admired Fleet, who played against them in the Birmingham Senior Cup earlier in the season.

Weymouth v Nuneaton Borough 26-10-1974

Weymouth: Smith, Lawrence, Williams, Hobson, Miller, Foote, Courtney, B. Brown, J. Brown, Adams, Beer. **Sub:** Walley.

Borough: Knight, Stephens, Newton, Bruck, Goodwin, Baxter, Owen, Turpie, Vincent, Briscoe. **Sub:** Fleet.

Borough made the journey to The Rec to face Weymouth in a Southern League Premier Division game.

No side has emerged as outstanding candidates for the championship – but Weymouth will not be far away. Solid and skilful, they chalked up a competent win to stretch their unbeaten run to eleven games. But for 20 minutes of the

second half it looked as if Borough would save the game and at least share the points. They launched a spell of pressure on the home side's defence that should have brought a goal.

Yet they failed to create the clear cut chances they needed to lift themselves back into the match. Borough fell back on defence, allowed Weymouth to carry the game to them and surrendered the initiative.

It looked as if their tactics would work as they survived the first 15 minutes. But the Dorset side then struck with a goal from top scorer Alan Beer from a ball headed down to him by big John Brown. Shakiness crept into the Nuneaton defence and goalkeeper Bob Knight, unsure in the air, gave them some anxious moments. And Joey Owen, Dave Lewis and Dietmar Bruck failed to make an impression in midfield as Weymouth took control.

A heavy load fell on the back four where Bill Baxter was again superb and they responded to the challenge. They kept Weymouth at bay and Steve Briscoe had a chance of an equaliser just before half-time after a pile-driver from Dave Lewis had been punched out by goalkeeper Dave Smith. Borough were fortunate, though, to be just one goal down at the break and still in the match.

The second half took on a different complexion as the Manor Park side changed the face of the game. They piled on fierce pressure, Briscoe had two more chances, and it was Weymouth's turn to defend. Newcomer Gary Fleet went on for Briscoe after 65 minutes and impressed. He immediately became involved in the game and had to take some rough treatment, dished out by player-manager Graham Williams.

But Borough's fire died as the match moved into its closing stages – and teenager Derek Courtney crushed their hopes with Weymouth's second goal. Courtney, one of the most promising young players on the Southern League scene, hooked the ball into the net from a flick on by Beer.

Beer, wanted by Torquay United, almost provoked another goal in the dying seconds with a back-heel that hit the inside of the post. So Nuneaton lost their third premier division match of the season and dropped two points behind Yeovil at the top of the table.

Nuneaton Borough v Cambridge City 28-10-1974

Borough: Knight, Stephens, Baxter, Goodwin, Newton, Lewis, Owen, Bruck, Vincent, Turpie, Briscoe. **Sub:** Fleet.

Borough welcomed Cambridge City to Manor Park to play a Southern League Premier Division game.

Borough lost their 100% home record and failed in their bid to join Yeovil at the top of the table. But they had enough chances to have beaten Cambridge out of sight. City should have been crushed before half-time and faced one-way traffic after the break.

Borough hit the post and had two penalty appeals turned



down as their approach work threatened to swamp the visitors. Some of their football was the best they have played this season. Unfortunately, they could not match it with finishing and City clung on to survive.

The best chances fell to winger Steve Briscoe. And in the 23rd minute he was guilty of an incredible miss after Bob Turpie had fired a shot against the woodwork. Briscoe ran in on the rebound – only to put the ball wide of an empty goal. City goalkeeper Keith Barker inspired confidence with his immaculate handling of the ball as they packed their defence.

But it was bad work in front of the net rather than good goalkeeping that kept the Cambridge side in the hunt. They had to re-organise their side and played with ten men for ten minutes after full-back Keith Moore had been stretchered off early on. Bobby Vincent was involved in a clash with Barker that could have led to a penalty against the keeper. Briscoe had a shot blocked on the line by make-shift full-back Paul Heffer from two yards out. And Turpie was clearly bundled off the ball by Alan Guild as Borough's search for a goal reached desperation point.

Borough lost skipper Dave Lewis, who was injured with 25 minutes to go – and that paved the way for the home fans first glimpse of newcomer Gary Fleet. Within minutes of going on he had them buzzing with excitement and anticipation. At the price Borough paid, he could turn out to be the bargain of the year. There was a lot that was good about Borough's performance. They did everything well except the most important thing – putting the ball in the back of the net.

One of the most pleasing features of the performance was the improvement in the middle of the park. Joey Owen had one of his best games of the season – and could hold the key to the Grantham cup tie on Saturday.

Borough Could Have New Home

Nuneaton Borough Football Club could have a new home in the 1980s – in a £300,000 municipal stadium. The idea is part of a blueprint for the future, drawn up by the Council's leisure and recreation department.

Borough chairman Ken Peal admitted today that he was: "Quite excited about the idea in principle." But he said: "Obviously we have to know more about it, exactly how it is going to be done and on what terms. At the moment we are playing on a 1930s ground and it would be attractive to play on a 1980 one.

"Manor Park needs a lot of money spending on it, things we will not be able to do unless someone comes along with £1 million – and no-one is likely to do that."

Borough Report £7,000 Loss

Increased wages and travelling costs contributed to a £7,700 loss by Nuneaton Borough Football Club last year. But chairman Ken Peal said before the annual meeting today: "We have speculated to accumulate and signed better players. We could

have done one of two things – spend money to get a better team in the hope we would get it back or stay as we were."

The actual loss on the year ending May 31, 1974 was £7,718, against a loss of £441 on the previous year. Gate receipts went up by £700, but season ticket sales and fund raising income went down...

Vincent Fined And Transfer Listed

Nuneaton Borough centre-forward Bobby Vincent has been fined £10 by the Manor Park club – and placed on the transfer list. Vincent, booked and sent off in the Grantham Cup-tie, was told of the decision last night.

"He let everyone down," said manager Geoff Coleman. "It's time he started thinking about the club and the people he plays with as well as himself."

The centre-forward was involved in the controversial decision that cost Nuneaton a goal six minutes from time. Bill Baxter scored, but Vincent clashed with the goalkeeper. He was sent off and the goal was disallowed.

Borough Can't Meet Hunt's Terms

Former Wolves and Everton player Ernie Hunt watched the Grantham Cup tie from the directors' box. But he is still a long way from signing for Borough. They are still not prepared to meet his terms and asking price – and he is in no hurry to leave Bristol City where he is on contract until next June.

Nuneaton Borough v Barnet

09-11-1974

Borough: Knight, Stephens, Jones, Goodwin, Newton, Fleet, Lewis, Bruck, Vincent, Turpie, Owen. **Sub:** Starkey.

Borough welcomed Barnet to Manor Park to play a Southern League Premier Division match.

Borough completed a great week with a win that put them alongside Yeovil at the top of the league. And Joey Owen ended the worst 12 months of his football career. Troubled by a nagging ankle injury and worried by loss of form he has rarely looked a £3,000 player. But he is beginning to show glimpses of the form that netted him 157 goals for Telford.

Owen scored twice as Borough crushed Barnet to add to the one he netted three days earlier in the Grantham Cup replay. Owen played in the position that made him one of the outstanding young players in the premier division – as a front runner. He was pushed forward to make room for Gary Fleet to come into the side in midfield. That is where he is almost certain to play when Bobby Vincent is dealt with by the FA disciplinary committee.

A superb goal from Fleet in his first full game and another from Vincent made it a happy afternoon for the Manor Park club. Poor Barnet struggling to survive in the premier division, were outclassed for long periods. They were never in with a chance after Owen had headed Nuneaton into a first-minute lead. Vincent, whose transfer listing has provoked

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massive complaints from the fans, scored in the 43rd minute. And Fleet, who could become almost as popular as the centre-forward, notched the goal of the match on the stroke of half-time. Vincent set it up with an arrogant back heel and Fleet completely dummied Barnet defender Ben Embery and chipped the ball into the net as Jack McClelland left his line.

Borough's attacking fire died in the second half as they began to cruise – understandable in view of their superiority and the fact that they had played a gruelling Cup replay 72 hours earlier. And the North Londoners missed a penalty when Billy Holmes, their best player, shot wide after a Barnet player was brought down by Bob Newton. But Barnet struggled to live with Borough and Owen made it 4-0 before Embery cut the arrears with a goal that made a mess of the goal average.

The visitors were fortunate to escape a heavier drubbing as Nuneaton moved to within three goals of Yeovil with a game in hand. Heavy pre-match rain cut the crowd to a disappointing 1,985, three quarters of whom signed the "Keep Bobby Vincent" petition.



Borough fans sign the "Keep Bobby Vincent At Manor Park" petition before the Barnet game. More than 1,400 people signed the protest, sparked off when Vincent was put on the transfer list after being sent off.

Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune

Nuneaton Borough v Bedworth United 11-11-1974

Borough: Pomroy, Stephens, Jones, Oakes, Newton, Starkey, Lewis, Mackay, Vincent, Turpie, Owen. **Subs:** Briscoe and Goodwin.

Bedworth: Garnell, Hambridge, Lyons, Thomas, Harkus, Karcinski, Sweeney, Healey, Shepherd, Pike, Eades. **Subs:** Cox and Farrelly.

Borough welcomed Bedworth United to Manor Park to play a Birmingham Senior Cup second round tie.

Having already beaten Bedford Town and Worcester City,

Bedworth added another scalp to their Birmingham Senior Cup giant killing act. Borough went down to a 59th minute Trevor Shepherd goal that knocked them out and ruined their unbeaten home record.

David Eades cracked a shot against the underside of the bar and Shepherd, Nuneaton's top scorer three seasons ago, followed up to score with a header. The win was a triumph for Gerry Baker's crusade for attacking football and it was fully deserved. Baker, who left Manor Park to become player-manager at United, could hardly conceal his pride.

The tie was a non event for 20 minutes before Bedworth began to get on top. Bob Newton headed a Trevor Pike effort over the top and Steve Pomroy, Borough's teenage goalkeeper, took a cross under pressure from Eades. Bedworth defender Clive Lyons was booked after a challenge on Bobby Vincent and he was followed into the book by his back four partner Bill Thomas, who threw the ball at Joey Owen.

Nuneaton forced their way back into the game before the break. Alan Jones had a shot blocked and Bobby Mackay hit the underside of the bar. Dennis Oakes, who had a good game in the Borough defence, headed out from Tom Sweeney soon after the break. But Sweeney saved United when he kicked a Jones' effort off the line after an Owen corner.

Shepherd then broke the deadlock with what proved to be the winner. Owen drove a shot wide 15 minutes from the end before being booked for dissent while United full back Roger Hambridge was being treated for injury.

Nuneaton often looked a jaded side after their hectic fortnight. The manager drafted in Pomroy, Oakes, Starkey and Mackay, but they struggled to put their game together.

Nuneaton Borough v Enderby Town 14-11-1974

Borough: Knight, Stephens, Oakes, Goodwin, Newton, Starkey, Lewis, Bruck, Gore, Turpie, Briscoe. **Sub:** Jones.

Borough welcomed Enderby Town to Manor Park to play a Southern League Cup second round replay.

Youngster John Gore scrambled a 73rd minute goal to win an untidy game. He forced the ball into the net after a Steve Briscoe shot had been handled on the line by an Enderby defender. It saved Borough the formality of a penalty and gave them a third round trip to Dartford. They could have won earlier, but a combination of poor finishing and good goalkeeping kept the Leicestershire side in the game.

The visitors' goalkeeper Terry Satchwell emerged as man of the match with a string of fine saves. He clutched a header from Dietmar Bruck, pushed a shot from the same player over the top and smothered the ball after Gore had hit the bar.

The game often threatened to bog itself down in the middle of the park, although some of Nuneaton's approach work was good. Enderby outside left Neil Matthams offered the biggest threat to the Borough defence. Quick, strong and skilful, he gave full-back Kirk Stephens a testing time. Skipper Dave

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Lewis did well for Borough, despite being troubled by a back injury, and Bob Turpie showed signs of better form.

But much of the match was poor, although Nuneaton achieved the result they deserved. It was their third game in five days and put them back on an even keel after their Monday night shock defeat by Bedworth United.

Nuneaton Borough v Bath City 16-11-1974

Borough: Knight, Stephens, Newton, Oakes, Goodwin, Jones, Fleet, Owen, Vincent, Lewis, Turpie. **Sub:** Briscoe.

Bath: Allen, Crampton, Scarrott, Smart, Gover, Taverner, Skirton, Edwards, Fairbrother, Tinson, Thomas. **Sub:** Fiocca.

Borough welcomed Bath City to Manor Park for a Southern League Premier Division game.

Borough and Bath thrilled Manor Park's biggest Southern League crowd of the season with a magnificent match. They put their game together after a cautious start – and assembled a classic in a pulsating second half. Refreshing, exciting and full of good football it was a superb advert for all that is good in non-league soccer.

Borough took the points in a win vital to their hopes of pushing for honours this season. But Bath emerged with much credit and were easily the best side to visit Manor Park this season. Better even than Wimbledon, who are tucked behind the leaders and comfortably placed to move to the top. They could have been excused for putting up the shutters, but were solid, skilful and well organised and came at Borough from the start.

It took Borough a while to get over the shock – and a fortunate Bob Turpie goal put the home side in front. Turpie scored in the 32nd minute when he slipped past Colin Taverner and scored with a shot that went in off Roger Smart. That was the signal for Borough to push forward – and set the scene for a see-saw second half. Again driven on by Dave Lewis, who virtually exhausted himself, Nuneaton piled intense pressure on the City defence.

Bobby Vincent should have scored with a header set up by Joey Owen as the game built up to a crescendo. Then, with twelve minutes left, Kirk Stephens popped up with the goal that settled it – his first for the club. It was a moment to remember for the teenage full-back, who has contributed so much to Borough's success this season.

Bath, the only full time team in the Southern League, had wilted before the goal, but were still dangerous on the break. They would have beaten most premier division sides, but not Nuneaton, who simply refused to stop running. Gary Fleet had another fine game for the Manor Park side – what a pity he will have to sit out the Maidstone Cup tie.

Dave Lewis covered every inch of the ground and must now rank among the best skippers the club has had. And Dennis Oakes, so often a stand-in this season, emerged as man of the match. Back in midfield where he replaced injured Dietmar

Bruck, Oakes turned in his best performance for the club. Striker Trevor Tinson took the honours for Bath in the first-half – only good goalkeeping by Bob Knight prevented him from scoring early on.



Kirk Stephens lashes the ball into the net for his first goal for Borough – and the one that clinched the points. Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune

But what is more important than individuals, both teams proved that football can be played without the ugliness that has marred some of Borough's recent games.

Vincent's Career In Doubt

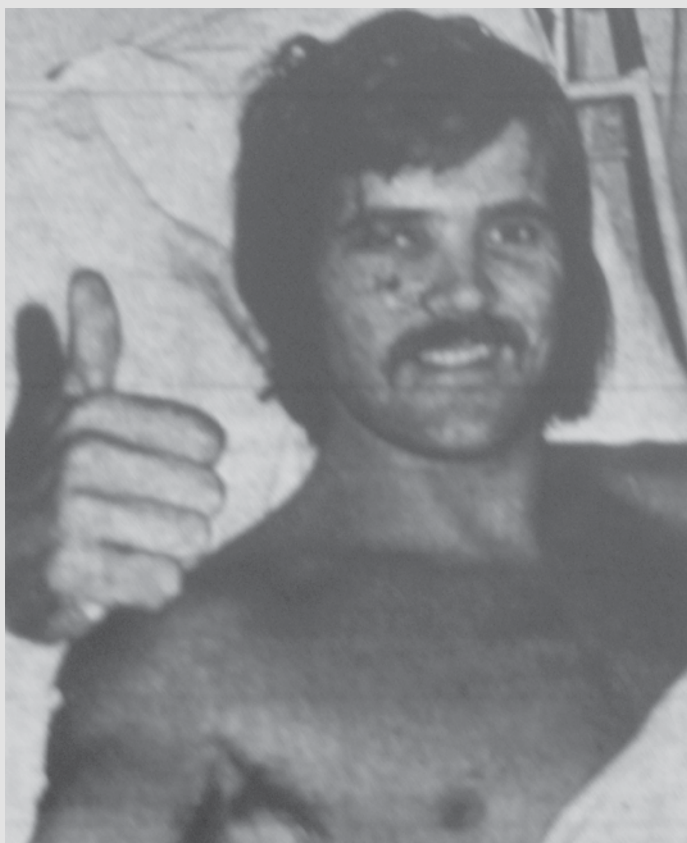
Nuneaton Borough footballer Bobby Vincent is in Leicester Royal Infirmary with serious injuries following a car crash. His right thigh was fractured in three places and it will be months before he knows whether he can play again.

Firemen cut him free from the wreckage of a four car collision on the Narborough Road, Leicester, on Saturday night. With him was team-mate Bobby Mackay who had 14 stitches in his head, but was discharged from hospital yesterday. Vincent also has head injuries and his condition was described today as "fairly satisfactory." A police spokesman said: "Apparently it was a head on collision and it appears that one of the the vehicles crossed the central reservation."

The players were going home from the Borough v Bath City game when the accident occurred near the new Post House Hotel. One of the other drivers, Desham Dulay of Leamington Spa, was slightly hurt, but the others escaped with cuts and bruises. Vincent, Borough's leading goalscorer and rated in the £15,000 price bracket, will be in hospital for at least 12 weeks. "It's a terrible blow," said Borough manager Geoff Coleman.

"All of the sympathy must go out to Bobby Vincent, not to the football club. You can imagine how he feels, lying in a hospital bed at the age of 24 with a triple fractured femur. He will be as low as he can feel for the next six months at least and will need all of the help and encouragement we can give him.

"Bobby Vincent lives for football and the first question he asked when he came round was 'When will I be able to play again?'"



Bobby Vincent faces life with a smile and a thumbs up sign for the fans following his car crash. The Nuneaton Borough footballer broke his right thigh in the accident, but said last night: "I will be back."

Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune

Matthams Joins Borough

Nuneaton Borough have signed winger Neil Matthams from Leicestershire side Enderby Town for a small fee. And manager Geoff Coleman today hinted at more changes at Manor Park to keep the club in the Southern League title chase.

Matthams, an outside left, makes his debut against Stourbridge on Saturday. "He is a strong, skilful player who sets up goals," said Coleman.

Nuneaton Borough v Stourbridge 07-12-1974

Borough: Knight, Stephens, Newton, Bruck, Baxter, Goodwin, Fleet, Owen, Turpie, Lewis, Matthams. **Sub:** Gore.

Stourbridge: Dulleston, Saint, Richards, Pridgeon, Green, Davies, McGrath, Cope, Lawrence, Chambers, Allner. **Sub:** Barton.

Borough welcomed Stourbridge to Manor Park to play a Southern League Premier Division game.

Neil Matthams, the latest of Geoff Coleman's bargain buys, inspired Borough to victory with an exciting debut. Schoolteacher Matthams, bought for £1,000, thrilled the near 2,000 crowd and had a hand in both goals.

Matthams impressed, but Borough owed a lot to Gary Fleet, another £1,000 buy. Fleet, returned to the side after

being cup-tied – and made a tremendous difference. The Wednesbury steel worker inspired confidence with another magnificent midfield performance. His vision, skill and inventiveness makes his price tag look chicken feed. Borough desperately needed a boost to put the club back on an even keel after a traumatic fortnight. They were anxious in the opening minutes, but as soon as they settled and Matthams began to impress there was no doubt about the result.

Indeed, they should have won by a far greater margin and could have been at least four goals up after the first hour. Stourbridge, who have done well in their first season in the premier division, could never match Nuneaton's class. Yet they survived for 41 minutes before Borough netted the goal that made the result a formality.

Missed chances rather than sound defensive play kept them in the game for so long. Matthams, Fleet and Bob Turpie all had chances before Joey Owen netted a superb goal. He came off the Stourbridge defence on to a Matthams' through ball and hit a left foot shot on the turn into the net. That gave the fans a glimpse of the real Joey Owen, scorer of more than 150 goals for Telford United.

Both he and Turpie have struggled in the shadow of Bobby Vincent and Owen, in particular, has not had the service he needs. Owen thrives on the service he can get from a player like Matthams – through balls he can move onto – and will surely get more goals. The second goal, a Bill Baxter penalty was also set up by Matthams, who played a similar through ball to Bob Turpie.

Turpie was brought down by John Chambers and Baxter made no mistake from the spot. Stourbridge tried to hit back early on in the second half, but Borough gradually tightened their grip and never looked in any real danger. The Manor Park side could have increased their lead. Owen hit a half-chance that goalkeeper Dulleston knew little about and easier chances went begging.

Nuneaton Borough v Northwich Victoria 14-12-1974

Borough: Knight, Stephens, Newton, Bruck, Goodwin, Baxter, Fleet, Owen, Gore, Lewis, Briscoe. **Subs:** Peake, Abbot, Wesson.

Northwich: Roberts, Charter, Gannon, Spratt, P. Jones, K. Jones, Shaw, England, Shreeve, Collier, Flexon. **Subs:** Beresofrd, Pierpoint, Devine.

Borough welcomed Northwich Victoria to Manor Park to play a friendly match.

Geoff Coleman's bid to keep his players match fit and break new ground fell flat. Barely 300 people turned up to witness their friendly against unfashionable Northwich Victoria. Some of the Manor Park faithful had taken refuge at nearby Sheepy Road where Atherstone played Yeovil, Borough's top of the table partners.

Those who stayed loyal saw Northwich Victoria, a below average Northern Premier League side, beat a below par Nuneaton team. It proved expensive. Centre-half Ian Goodwin

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was hurt and will almost certainly miss Borough's Southern League Cup trip to Dartford. And the defeat did nothing to enhance Nuneaton's standing in the non-league game.

Northwich went ahead through Shreeve and added another from Beresford before half-time after Bill Baxter had missed a penalty. Dietmar Bruck then scored from the spot before goals from Gannon and Shaw put the Cheshire club into a three goal lead.

Then minutes from time Gary Fleet unleashed a shot that cannoned off an upright, hit goalkeeper Roberts in the face and rebounded into the net.

John Evans Speaks Out About National League

Nuneaton Borough secretary John Evans has accused the Southern League of a short sighted attitude towards plans for a National League. This follows a management committee circular that could block any "Super League" moves for at least a year. The executive has advised clubs not to go ahead with the new league unless it has a definite promotion and relegation link with the Fourth Division.

"They have totally failed to see the significance of the competition in its own right," said Mr Evans. "They see it solely as a stepping stone to the Football League – but it would be the biggest advance in non league football since the setting up of the Northern Premier League."

He and Borough chairman Ken Peal have been two of the key figures behind the idea to put non league soccer on a national footing. Many ambitious clubs in the north and south have already pledged their full support to the idea. And they are currently in the process of lobbying Southern League clubs in a bid to get the two-thirds support needed to call an extraordinary general meeting...

Dartford v Nuneaton Borough 17-12-1974

Borough: Knight, Stephens, Newton, Bruck, Oakes, Baxter, Jones, Briscoe, Turpie, Lewis, Ritchie. **Sub:** Gore.

Borough made the journey to Watling Street to play Dartford in a Southern League Cup third round tie.

A goal by Kirk Stephens earned Borough a replay. Borough, who were beaten 4-2 in a League game in mid-October, were twice behind but showed tremendous character to come back against the reigning Southern League champions. With a high wind and the slope to help them, Dartford made a brisk start with Moy and Mitchell missing good chances before Nuneaton had been allowed to settle.

Then Bob Turpie began to make his presence felt and with Bruck always ready to help out in attack Borough came well into the picture. Dartford, however, should have taken a 16th minute lead when a Baxter mis-kick let Moy through, but the home centre-forward lobbed the ball against an upright.

Dartford got their reward, however, in the 29th minute when a fine Mitchell run ended with Moy gliding the ball in. Within

minutes they almost had another but a long cross from Carr saw the ball bounce off the crossbar to safety. Nuneaton came back well to equalise after 38 minutes when a long ball from Lewis was picked up by Steve Briscoe who went round the goalkeeper before slotting home from an acute angle.

Dartford took the lead again after 57 minutes when winger Halliday scored his first goal of the season, but their joy did not last for long. Fifteen minutes from time with Briscoe, Lewis and Stephens all doing well in swift attacks, Nuneaton grabbed their equaliser through Kirk Stephens, who made amends for an earlier miss as he scored after good work by Briscoe and Lewis had opened up Dartford's defence. The prize for the winners is an away match at Kettering.

Nuneaton Borough v Weymouth 21-12-1974

Borough: Knight, Stephens, Newton, Bruck, Baxter, Oakes, Fleet, Briscoe, Turpie, Lewis, Matthams. **Sub:** Owen.

Weymouth: Smith, Lawrence, Williams, Miller, Hobson, Brown, Courtney, Foote, B. Owen, Adams, Walley. **Sub:** Arnold.

Borough welcomed Weymouth to Manor Park to play a Southern League Premier Division game.

Borough strengthened their claims for Southern League honours with a tinsel bright performance against Weymouth. They emerged from the match level on points with premier division leaders Yeovil, with two games in hand. They were given a massive boost with the news that Wimbledon, the side everyone fears, had lost at Stourbridge. And they put forward their own powerful argument as a team to watch with an impressive win.



Bob Turpie gets above Weymouth centre-half Tony Hobson to head his second goal and restore Borough's lead in the 63rd minute.

Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune

A goal in the dying seconds narrowed the scoreline and made it look much closer than it was. For Borough were always better than the Dorset side as they surged to their fourth league win in a row. There was much to admire in the way they set about beating Weymouth, who are seldom out of the leading six. But two players emerged with top honours in what was, essentially, a fine team performance.

Bob Turpie, worried by loss of form, emerged from his lean

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spell with two goals that should boost his confidence sky high. And Steve Briscoe starred in his new role in the middle of the front three. Briscoe, moved from outside left following the signing of Neil Matthams, showed he could solve a major problem. His pace and courage unsettled the Terras' defence, particularly in the first half hour when Nuneaton were in complete control.

Borough had bad patches just before and immediately after half-time when a side with more striking power could have cashed in. But Weymouth, who have sold top scorer, Alan Beer to Exeter City for £5,000, rarely looked in that class. Borough went into the lead on the half hour when Matthams, again impressive, played Turpie clear. The pass cut out two Weymouth defenders and Turpie lashed in a left foot shot that took a deflection off Ralph Miller.

Weymouth equalised early in the second half through Derek Courtney – a shock goal that followed bad defensive play. That was before Turpie restored the lead with a header from a Joey Owen cross – and another goal from Kirk Stephens. The teenage full-back carried on running as Weymouth failed to cut out an Owen corner and slammed a tremendous shot past goalkeeper Barry Smith.

Smith did much to keep Weymouth in the match for so long. But for him, Turpie would certainly have had a hat-trick and he made a number of brave saves, Weymouth were beaten well before the end – yet managed to score with a gift goal – presented to them by Gary Fleet. He played a suicidal back pass straight to the feet of Courtney, who snapped up the chance for a scoreline that flattered the visitors.

Atherstone Town v Nuneaton Borough 26-12-1974

Atherstone: Withers, Kavanagh, Beard, G. Smith, Kurila, Kiernan, R. Smith, Dyer, Franklin, Webster, Hunt. Sub: Mellor.

Borough: Knight, Stephens, Newton, Bruck, Oakes, Goodwin, Fleet, Briscoe, Turpie, Lewis, Matthams. Sub: Owen.

Borough made the journey to Sheepy Road to take on Atherstone Town in a Southern League Premier Division game.

Atherstone gained full points from the game thanks to the goal poaching ability of top scorer Barry Franklin. Borough attacked for most of the game, but failed to find the goal punch required to earn the points. By contrast Adders, with their only shot at goal, filched the one score that counted.

Both sides were without key players. Bill Baxter was out of the Nuneaton line up through injury, and Mick Preston did not shake off the effects of a chest cold. For Colin Withers it was a nostalgic farewell to Sheepy Road. The ex-Birmingham and Villa keeper was playing his last game and will now only be available in an emergency.

Wind made ball control difficult and the crowd of more than 2,000 had little to entertain them during the first half. Atherstone had the assistance of that wind and failed to get in one on-target shot. Nuneaton were little better and tested

Withers only once when Neil Matthams fired in a ground shot which the keeper confidently fielded. Borough pushed forward from the re-start but could not break a dogged Adders defence. In the opening minute of the second half, Bruck intercepted a Dyer pass, pushed the ball out to Fleet, whose shot was saved by Withers at the expense of a corner.

Matthams floated his kick across goal and Withers was fortunate to get a second chance from a Turpie snap shot. Another corner kick, this time taken by Bruck, set up another opportunity for Turpie after 68 minutes and Kavanagh did well to clear the shot off the line. The only goal of the game came 15 minutes from time and started with iron man John Kurila forcing the ball out of defence before pushing a pass through to Ray Webster.

Wind swung the pass away from Dennis Oakes and Franklin quickly collected, veered to the left, drew Knight and slammed in an accurate left foot shot. After 82 minutes, Owen was brought on for Oakes and he missed the best chance of the game. Turpie and Matthams combined well to give Owen his opening in front of an open goal. Borough fans groaned as Owen mis-hit his shot and the ball passed wide of the net.

Nuneaton Borough v Maidstone United 28-12-1974

Borough: Knight, Stephens, Newton, Bruck, Goodwin, Lewis, Fleet, Briscoe, Turpie, Owen, Matthams. Sub: Ritchie.

Maidstone: Maggs, Sheridan, Richardson, Priestley, Plume, O'Sullivan, McVeigh, Basey, Morton, Down, Finch. Sub: Everest.

Borough welcomed Maidstone United to Manor Park to play a Southern League Premier Division match.

Borough, blown off course on Boxing Day, recovered to beat Maidstone at wind lashed Manor Park. At times, their finishing was as poor as it was in the Atherstone fiasco. But they had the boost of an early goal, the help of a penalty – and then a spectacular effort that settled the match. And in the final reckoning they could have won by at least double the margin.

Briscoe, forced out of the outside left spot by Neil Matthams, has stepped into the breach in the middle of the front three. He may lack the coolness that comes from experience, but his courage is undeniable. His Boxing Day challenge on goalkeeper Colin Withers proved that. It was Briscoe who put Nuneaton in front after seven minutes from a Joey Owen cross. And it was Briscoe who carried the main burden up front as the side hit long balls into the wind for him to chase.

The youngster missed chances, one in the dying minutes that would have been easier to score.

But his contribution was invaluable, as was that of Dietmar Bruck, who scored the second goal. Bruck, strong and composed in midfield alongside Joey Owen and Gary Fleet, scored from the spot after Kirk Stephens was brought down. Stephens, who had another superb game at right back, was demolished by Keith Down in the 47th minute and Bruck blasted the penalty past goalkeeper Johnny Maggs.

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Phil Basey, Maidstone's goalscoring hero when they beat Borough in the Cup, cut the arrears with a wind-assisted 52nd minute goal. He lashed a shot goalwards from a 25 yard angle and the ball went across Bob Knight and swirled into the far corner. Borough then pulled themselves together to dash any hopes the Kent club had of a comeback.



Bob Turpie launches himself into a full length flying dive – but his header hit the post and Maidstone survived. Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune

They kept the ball on the ground to combat the gale and mastered the conditions far better than the Stones. Bob Turpie, who hit the post with a diving header in the first-half and missed at least two more chances, put the result beyond doubt. Bruck pushed him a short, square pass from a free-kick and he unleashed a venomous shot that went in off the inside of the post. Turpie needed the goal after his misses – and Borough needed it to make absolutely certain of their fourth win in five games.

Nuneaton Borough v Kettering Town 01-01-1975

Borough: Knight, Stephens, Lewis, Goodwin, Newton, Owen, Fleet, Bruck, Turpie, Briscoe, Matthams. **Sub:** Oakes.

Borough welcomed Kettering Town to Manor Park for a Southern League Premier Division game.

Kettering full-back Jimmy Loughlan unravelled the mystery of the goal that stunned Manor Park. Borough were trailing to the impressive Poppies with 25 minutes left when Steve Briscoe appeared to punch the ball into the net with both hands. Wellingborough referee Mr Brian Hill allowed the goal. Kettering raised little protest – and the fans stared in disbelief. But after the game, Loughlan admitted: "I headed the ball into the net. It was an own goal."

The incident enabled Borough to salvage a vital point after they had taken a back seat for long spells to the Northamptonshire side. But Kettering's goal three minutes before half-time, followed similar confusion. Right back Roger Ashby sent in a cross, John Pawley connected with a low, glancing header and Roy Clayton appeared to unsight Knight and get the final touch.

But the ball had taken a deflection off Borough centre-half Ian Goodwin before it beat the goalkeeper. The goals were out of character in a close New Year's Day contest between two sides who have their sights firmly set on the Southern

League championship. Borough needed to win to stay level on points with Yeovil Town at the top of the table.

But they never looked happy as composed, well organised and skilful as Kettering denied them space in midfield. And they struggled badly up front against a solid Poppies' back four. Kettering were always the better all round team and must pose a serious threat for the title in the second half of the season.

Chances were few and far between, although Knight did well to claw out a Pawley shot after 25 minutes. Gary Fleet tried to inspire Nuneaton and Joey Owen had a good first-half on the right hand side of the middle three. But the three players who emerged with the honours for Borough were all in the back four – Stephens, Lewis and Goodwin. Lewis and Goodwin formed a formidable barrier in the heart of the defence and Stephens maintained his superb form at right back.

Five minutes after Nuneaton's equaliser, Lewis went desperately close with a power-packed shot from all of 35 yards. And winger Neil Matthams, who had a quiet game, had a shot saved by Gordon Livsey ten minutes from time. Borough, though, created few clear cut chances and Kettering were full value for their point.

Burton Albion v Nuneaton Borough 04-01-1975

Burton: Robinson, Gregg, Mole, Shone, Annable, Sykes, Phillips, Ward, Hickton, Corrigan, Waller. **Sub:** Shaw.

Borough: Knight, Stephens, Oakes, Bruck, Goodwin, Baxter, Owen, Turpie, Briscoe, Lewis, Matthams. **Sub:** Hooke.

Borough made the journey to Eton Park to take on Burton Albion in a Southern League Premier Division game.

Battling Borough are back at the top of the Southern League table – put there by a Steve Briscoe goal. Briscoe added the finishing touch to a performance studded with courage, effort and determination. His 63rd minute match winner leap-frogged the Manor Park side above Yeovil. It was another triumph for the character of Geoff Coleman's injury plagued squad. Down to 11 fit professionals – they responded with a display that dented Albion's magnificent home record.

Unbeaten at Eton Park in any competition since last August, Burton found themselves up against a side that refused to budge an inch. Borough always denied the home side control in midfield and their defence kept a firm grip on Albion's front runners. The game lacked flair. It was often scrappy and contained some of the needle expected from a local derby.

Borough have already shown this season that they have the ability to respond to any challenge when the chips are down. That precious gift has kept them going many times when the odds have been turned against them. None more so than at Eton Park, a ground where Nuneaton sides always seem to do well. Players like Dave Lewis, Dietmar Bruck, Kirk Stephens, Ian Goodwin and, of course, Steve Briscoe, formed the back bone of the victory.



Briscoe's match winner had an element of luck about it – but it was richly deserved. The youngster, leading goalscorer in the absence of Bobby Vincent started and ended the move. He made a crossfield run that carried him past Brendan Phillips and Phil Waller before he played the ball out to Joey Owen. Owen, hemmed in by Phil Annable, laid the ball back to Bruck, whose shot cannoned off defender Steve Shone – and Briscoe ran on to poke it past Brian Robinson.

It was a great moment for Briscoe who had again carried a heavy burden up front for the Manor Park side. And it ended a magnificent 12 months for Borough. For last January, Nuneaton went to Dover and were bottom of the premier division table. Twelve months later, they sit proudly at the top and must be in with a chance of the championship. Just six defeats in 43 premier division games is a record few clubs can match.

Nuneaton Borough v Dartford 06-01-1975

Borough: Knight, Stephens, Baxter, Goodwin, Oakes, Matthams, Lewis, Bruck, Owen, Briscoe, Turpie. **Sub:** Ritchie.

Borough welcomed Dartford to Manor Park to play a Southern League Cup third round replay.

Borough celebrated the anniversary of the start of their success – by turning back the clock. They looked more like the struggling side of 12 months ago as they crashed out of the Southern League Cup. Dartford striker Ken Robinson put paid to their hopes with a 79th minute match winner that rounded off a sub-standard second half.

Tommy Henderson evaded at least three tackles before he set up the chance for Robinson to beat Bob Knight, one of the few Nuneaton players to emerge with credit. For a contest between the reigning Southern League champions and a side challenging for the title it was poor. A strong, blustery wind did much to ruin the tie, but there was no excuse.

The first half promised a hat-full of goals – and produced a load of misplaced passes. Knight twice saved Borough with saves from Alan Payne and John Mitchell and Steve Briscoe headed straight at Dartford keeper Roger Keen from six yards. Tommy Henderson then had an effort stopped by Knight and Bruck missed with a header from point blank range as the catalogue of misses increased.

Keen somehow saved from Bruck, who had been put clear by Briscoe and had decided to try and take the ball around the goalkeeper. And then Danny Light netted for the Kent club, only to be pulled up for offside. Almost on half-time, Bob Turpie shot wide after a scramble in the Darts penalty box – but the scoresheet stayed blank. It seemed only a matter of time before one side would score, but the flow of chances dried up.

And the second half deteriorated. Barren of ideas and often bizarre until Robinson settled the issue. Borough had injury problems, manager Geoff Coleman was again down to 11

professionals and had to re-shape the side. But they have overcome those problems before – that is why they are top of the Southern League. Few players deserved praise, but one that did was youngster Steve Briscoe. He had an outstanding first half when he was involved in almost every attack and was still full of running as the game fell away after the break.

The defeat ended the Manor Park club's cup programme for another year. But they still have that top of the table spot – and cannot perform as badly again.

Manor Park Marina

Manor Park, home of Nuneaton Borough Football Club for more than half a century, could become a giant civic marina. And the soccer club would welcome the idea. For it would mean them moving to a £250,000 municipal stadium, linked with the Pingles complex in Avenue Road.

Proposed plans for the new stadium were announced by the council's leisure and recreation department some months ago. But the possible future of Manor Park was not revealed until today. It is one of six sites within the borough boundary being explored as areas for water sports.

Nuneaton Borough chairman Ken Peal disclosed that regular talks have been held between the club and senior officers of the council. "Terms of our move and what it would cost us have not been discussed," he said. "At the moment it is purely a theoretical exercise. There are a lot of ifs and buts."

Tonbridge v Nuneaton Borough 11-01-1975

Tonbridge: Seymour, Jarman, Prince, Kinsey, Keirs, Crush, Stonebridge, Flood, Putman, Thornburn, Walsh. **Sub:** Hancock.

Borough: Knight, Stephens, Newton, Goodwin, Baxter, Owen, Briscoe, Turpie, Lewis, Matthams. **Sub:** Oakes.

Borough made the journey to Tonbridge to play a Southern League Premier Division game.

Borough demolished Tonbridge's unbeaten home run on Saturday – and plundered both points from the wreckage. And they now sit even more strongly at the top of the table with a clear lead. They moved three points beyond Yeovil from level games and Wimbledon, in such a good position a month ago, may have left themselves too much to do.

Nuneaton battled through on the strength of a fourth minute goal from Steve Briscoe. Tonbridge keeper Ian Seymour pawed at a Dietmar Bruck corner. Bob Turpie hit the ball goalwards – and Briscoe banged it high into the net from a yard out. That put them in a strong position, but they survived an incredible let-off just before half-time. Tonbridge winger Ken Walsh somehow contrived the miss of the season when he lifted the ball on to the bar from three yards out.

The Manor Park side had some bad spells when casual play in the second half almost allowed the Kent club to hit back. By the end though, Tonbridge were a dispirited side. And no two players did more to break the heart of the Tonbridge

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attack than powerful Ian Goodwin and peerless Bill Baxter. Goodwin's massive presence blunted the Tonbridge attack and Baxter's display oozed coolness and class. One of his clearances brought gasps from the crowd. He slipped as the ball bounced at him, did a hand-stand – and flicked the ball away over his head.

Full backs Kirk Stephens and Bob Newton made up the best back four in the Southern League. Behind them, goalkeeper Bob Knight turned in another immaculate display. Knight, who had a fitness test before the game, maintained the impressive form he has shown in the last month. He was never under any great pressure, but what he was called on to do, he did well. Dave Lewis, Joey Owen and Dietmar Bruck were aggressive in the middle of the park.

It was up front where the side struggled and where Briscoe again needed much better support. He harassed the Tonbridge defence and kept up the form that has helped to solve a major problem. Bob Turpie, sadly out of touch these days, could have had two goals in the second half. But he is just a pale shadow of the player who was leading goalscorer last season and appears to have lost his appetite for the game.

Much of the game was scrappy and the second half was played in a patchwork of shadows from the poor Tonbridge floodlights. Generally though, it was another hard-earned win by Nuneaton – even if some of their play lacked the quality expected of a top side. The two points covered their deficiencies and the championship moved one game nearer to Manor Park.

Borough Sign Gary Holbrooke

Nuneaton Borough have snapped up striker Gary Holbrooke from cash troubled Worcester City. Manager Geoff Coleman completed the deal last night – after Holbrooke had taken only five minutes to make up his mind. Coleman sees the signing as an investment in potential and a chance for Holbrooke to establish himself in the Southern League Premier Division.

Nuneaton Borough v Telford United 18-01-1975

Borough: Knight, Stephens, Newton, Bruck, Goodwin, Baxter, Fleet, Owen, Briscoe, Lewis, Matthams. **Sub:** Holbrooke.

Telford: Weir, Harris, Croft, Mallender, Ross, Head, Fudge, Watts, Bentley, Draycott, Hawkins. **Sub:** Garbett.

Borough welcomed Telford United to Manor Park to play a Southern League Premier Division game.

Joey Owen, signed from Telford for £3,000, brought gasps from the crowd with his 85th minute match-winner. Telford defender Ken Mallender failed to clear a long ball and Owen ran on to it. He raced goalwards, cut inside – and curled a shot behind Phil Weir with the outside of his right foot as the goalkeeper moved off his line. It was a glimpse of the real Owen, a player who scored more than 150 goals for Telford before his move to Manor Park.

The Telford fans in the 2,000-plus crowd would have been far from surprised at the way he took the goal. His career at the Buck's Head was studded with such gems. Big Jack Bentley supplied the service and Owen grabbed the goals. Owen's super goal highlighted a performance that must now make Nuneaton red hot favourites for their first Southern League title. Yeovil lost and Wimbledon, the main threat, had their match postponed – they are now seven points behind with four games in hand. And the Dons are involved in cup ties on the next two Saturdays which will leave them with a lot to do.



Goalkeeper Phil Weir dives in vain as Steve Briscoe's shot makes its way into the net – and Borough are back on level terms.

Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune

Borough laid the foundations for the five point gap when they hit back from behind in an exciting first half. Mickey Fudge shot Telford into a first minute lead before Steve Briscoe equalised four minutes later. He lashed a right foot shot across Weir and into the far corner of the net from a chance Owen helped to create.

Borough took over between then and half time, but they missed chances and Telford organised themselves well. The second half failed to live up to the first. Nuneaton still did the most of the pressing, but the game hung in the balance.

There was always a danger that the visitors, with players like Bentley and Fudge in their side, would break and grab a goal. Then Owen settled the points with the goal that meant so much to him – and Borough forged another link in their astonishing chain of success.

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Cambridge City v Nuneaton Borough 21-01-1975

Borough: Knight, Stephens, Baxter, Oakes, Newton, Lewis, Fleet, Bruck, Owen, Briscoe, Matthams. **Sub:** Holbrooke.

Borough made the journey to Milton Road to play Cambridge City in a Southern League Premier Division game.

Borough dragged themselves six points clear at the top of the table with a hard-working performance at Cambridge. Effort was the key note of their display at bitterly cold Milton Road. They bottled up the game so well that City, who beat Yeovil on Saturday, had just two chances at goal in the second half. But they had goalkeeper Bob Knight to thank for a last minute save that denied Cambridge what looked a certain winner.

Martin Murrey hit a shot that the goalkeeper had covered until it took a deflection off Dennis Oakes. Knight twisted his huge frame to get a hand to the ball and force it out for a save that crowned another fine performance. Much of the match was negative and unimaginative after a bright start. Knight managed to get his body behind a shot from Murrey as early as the first minute and Lester Newell headed wide.

City centre-half Roger Crane headed against the woodwork and the goakeeper stopped a shot from Murrey at his second attempt. Borough's only effort at goal during this period was a shot from Steve Briscoe that was taken low by Cambridge goalkeeper Keith Barker. But the Manor Park side's defence soon put up the shutters and formed a solid barrier that frustrated the home team's attempts to force the pace.

Bill Baxter marshalled the rearguard action alongside cool and composed Oakes, in for suspended Ian Goodwin. Full backs Kirk Stephens and Bob Newton played their part, particularly Stephens who had a superb first half. The skill came from Gary Fleet, who prompted and probed in midfield to keep City on their toes. Fleet worried the home side and gave an unselfish performance. Unselfish also described front runners Joey Owen, Steve Briscoe and Neil Matthams who plugged away with scant service.

Dave Lewis and Dietmar Bruck supplied the raw grit and determination alongside Fleet in midfield. Lewis, playing with a dislocated nose, intimidated Cambridge with some fearsome tackles. And Bruck showed his vast experience with another busy and efficient performance. Then Knight pulled off his dying seconds save – to confirm Nuneaton's rating as firm favourites for the championship.

Borough Stand Damaged

Police today called in emergency contractors to Nuneaton Borough's Manor Park ground after large sections of the roof and wall of the Cock and Bear end stand were blown down by high winds. Asbestos sheets – approximately 15 feet square – were ripped from the stand and fell onto the banking. None was blown into Queens Road. Police, however, insisted that contractors be called in to make the structure safe before this afternoon's Southern League game with Margate.

Nuneaton Borough v Margate 25-01-1975

Borough: Knight, Stephens, Baxter, Oakes, Newton, Lewis, Bruck, Owen, Briscoe, Matthams. **Sub:** Holbrooke.

Margate: Bowtell, Summers, Butterfield, Fusco, Clewlow, Sawyer, Rouse, Clayton, Gilbert, Gregory, Walker. **Sub:** Breach.

Borough welcomed Margate to Manor Park to play a Southern League Premier Division game.

Borough's six point lead at the top of the table was whittled down as Nuneaton crashed to their first home defeat since Christmas 1973. It was not only the Borough's pride that was hurt, talented teenage full back Kirk Stephens was stretchered off, only a couple of minutes after midfielder player Dennis Oakes had gone off. Stephens twisted his knee badly and was taken by car to hospital, leaving Nuneaton to carry on for the last 22 minutes with ten men.

That was when the teenage striker Brian Gregory, making his debut for the Kent side, administered the killer blow. Ten minutes earlier the league leaders had shown their true grit by going all out to draw level. Steve Briscoe was put through by Neil Matthams and was pulled down by Bowtell. Referee Michael Beard booked Bowtell and then pointed to the spot, from where Dietmar Bruck scored.



The moment Borough thought they had a chance when Briscoe was through on his own, only to be pulled down by the sprawling Margate keeper.

Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune

Bruck's name went into the book for a foul on Fusco just before he scored. Tempers frayed as the game dragged into injury time, and the referee had to step in to break up fighting between Butterfield, Clewlow and Joey Owen. Owen had set the fans cheering on the half hour with a speculative goal. His explosive shot from 22 yards out scorched the far corner of the net after he had received a short free-kick from Bruck.

Playing with the wind at their backs, Borough created havoc in the first half. The ball rarely strayed out of the Margate half as Borough's barrage of shots were either scrambled out by a shaky defence or stopped by the woodwork. At the other end, Bob Knight was challenged only four times in the first 45 minutes, the best effort coming from ex-Nuneaton player Bruce Walker. It was against the run of play that Margate equalised nine minutes after the re-start.

Their leveller resulted from one of those rare moments of



hesitancy that soccer is all about. Defenders Bill Baxter and Bob Newton dithered over clearing Walker's centre and Gilbert took advantage of the situation. He dived between the two defenders to head home the equaliser. Margate survived tremendous pressure. Bruck's shot was kicked off the line by Summers and then Dave Lewis hit the upright. The Kent side made a miraculous recovery from that blitzkrieg and broke away. Butterfield's cross was palmed down by Knight in the 65th minute and Gilbert went charging in to put Margate in front.

Gary Holbrooke replaced the injured Oakes, but the striker missed a great chance of putting Borough in front just after Bruck's penalty. Borough were counted out when Gregory picked up a short pass from Fusco, following a Margate corner two minutes from time, and the teenage striker side-footed the ball into the net.

Yeovil Town v Nuneaton Borough 01-02-1975

Yeovil Town: Clark, Irwin, B. Thompson, Sandercock, Cotton, Harrison, Verity, Brown, Plumb, K. Thompson, Clancy. **Sub:** Housley.

Borough: Knight, Jones, Newton, Bruck, Baxter, Oakes, Fleet, Turpie, Holbrooke, Lewis, Matthams. **Sub:** Haywood.

Borough made the journey to The Huish to play Yeovil Town in a Southern League Premier Division game.

Defeat at the Huish meant no disgrace. In fact, Borough were magnificent. Their fight-back in this potential championship decider was a fierce warning to any pretenders to the throne. Robbed of a blatant penalty in the first half, Borough were trailing by one goal and determined to right the issue. Skipper Dave Lewis clenched his teeth and would have steam-rolled his way through the enemy single-handed, if the man in black had not been there.

Bob Knight played the game of his life to stop the Somerset side from humiliating the under-strength Borough at one stage. At least half a dozen times the ex-Wolves player was on the spot to rescue Nuneaton from disaster. It was a travesty of justice in the 38th minute when Borough failed to gain a certain penalty. Clark came out of his goalmouth to meet the danger of Bob Turpie, racing away on the left flank. Turpie delivered a fierce shot and Clark was beaten as he miscalculated the angle. The ball was racing into the far corner of the net when Yeovil defender Brian Thompson handled on the line. He finger tipped the ball around the post and the referee awarded a corner.

With that sort of luck going against them, it was not going to be Borough's day. And Yeovil worked the oracle seven minutes after the interval when the club's second leading scorer Dickie Plumb capitalised on a defensive error. Ken Sandercock, Town's new signing from Torquay, had crossed a centre which was blocked by the Borough centre-half Dennis Oakes, who had passed a fitness test just before kick-off.

Oakes tried to square the ball to Alan Jones, but Plumb, a former team-mate of Dietmar Bruck at Charlton, intercepted

the move. Plumb's left footed shot from the edge of the box went into the top left hand corner of the net.

Then the Huish's second biggest gate of the season witnessed a Nuneaton fightback to give the Green and White fans palpitations. Sensing the Borough aggression, Coleman replaced Bob Turpie up front with his midweek signing Paul Haywood, 13 minutes from time to add some extra power. But Haywood, like Gary Holbrooke, playing his first 90 minutes for Borough, were not to be the answer.

It was Gary Fleet, with four minutes left on the clock, who almost gained a point. Holbrooke's centre found him on target but Clark ran out of his goal to smother the ball at Fleet's feet.

Adders Refuse Preston Swap

Nuneaton Borough striker Bob Turpie has been offered in part exchange for Atherstone centre-half Mick Preston. But the Sheepy Road club have turned down the swap: "I prefer to keep the player I have," said manager Gil Merrick.

Borough manager Geoff Coleman disclosed that he had tried to set up the move when he knew Ian Goodwin was suspended.

Nuneaton Borough v Wealdstone 03-02-1975

Borough: Knight, Jones, Baxter, Goodwin, Newton, Bruck, Lewis, Fleet, Turpie, Holbrooke, Matthams. **Sub:** Haywood.

Borough welcomed Wealdstone to Manor Park for a Southern League Premier Division game.

Youngster Gary Holbrooke and back to form Bob Turpie salvaged Borough's championship hopes. Holbrooke, playing only his second full game for the club, blasted them in front with a superb goal after 56 minutes. He pivoted and cracked a left foot shot into the net from 16 yards. And four minutes later, Turpie stabbed the ball over the line for the second from a goalmouth scramble. Holbrooke played a major part in the second goal as well after two shots from Turpie had been blocked.

The lanky centre-forward powered a header towards the net and goalkeeper John Morton failed to hold it – and Turpie snapped up the chance. The goals turned an hour of frustration into half an hour of hope for Borough in a game they had to win. Defeat or a draw would have dealt a savage blow to their championship chances. All of their challengers have games in hand and two successive defeats had increased the pressure on Geoff Coleman's side.

They responded to the challenge with grit and determination against a Wealdstone side that played with a packed defence. But they lost centre-half Ian Goodwin, who limped off with a knee injury only 20 minutes into the match. Goodwin, just back from a two week suspension, twice went down injured before he signalled to the trainer's box, shook his head and walked sadly to the dressing room.

The injury unnerved Borough and they struggled while substitute Paul Haywood settled into the centre-half berth. But the ex-Stourbridge player showed his potential with an impressive debut appearance to plug the gap. Both he and Holbrooke did well on a night when the result was more important than the quality of play. Before the two goal burst, Nuneaton had failed to expose a Wealdstone defence that struggled badly in the air.

The Manor Park side had chances. Turpie headed into the side netting, Fleet shot wide and then Turpie had a shot blocked by Chris Kinnear. That was before Holbrooke and Turpie grabbed their goals and relieved the tension that had built up on the Manor Park terraces. After the goals, Borough took command and should have widened the winning margin. Fleet hammered a shot across the face of an empty net, Holbrooke drove the ball over the top – and then Turpie missed a golden chance. He prodded a weak shot straight at Morton from four yards out after Fleet had threaded his way through midfield to lay on the chance.

In the closing minutes, Turpie, vastly improved after his recent poor form, flung himself at a Neil Matthams cross, but failed to connect. By that time, though the game had been won and Borough had restored their six point lead at the top of the table.

Bath City v Nuneaton Borough 08-02-1975

Bath: Allen, Crampton, Rogers, Smart, Edwards, Taverner, Fairbrother, Fiocca, Gibbons, Radford, Legg. **Sub:** Habbutt.

Borough: Knight, Jones, Newton, Bruck, Goodwin, Baxter, Fleet, Turpie, Holbrooke, Lewis, Matthams. **Sub:** Haywood.

Borough made the journey to Twerton Park to play a Southern League Premier Division match.

Borough dragged up their last ounce of effort to bridge a two goal gap. They lifted themselves off the floor when all seemed lost with an incredible revival. And they could have won the game in the dying minutes. With just 15 minutes to go, Bath held a 2-0 lead and looked impregnable. The Somerset side had dominated much of the match; had been by far the better side and were coasting home.

Borough looked doomed until the Bath defence missed a Dietmar Bruck corner as it skidded across the face of the goal. Gary Holbrooke ran in, lunged at the ball – and it trickled into the net off the foot of the post. That brought Borough back to life, resurrected their chances and changed the face of the game. The goal had an element of luck about it, but Nuneaton have had more than their fair share of setbacks this season.

Borough then went at Bath with everything they had, and in the 85th minute, Bob Turpie grabbed the equaliser. Neil Matthams, who had his best game since his debut, stranded goalkeeper Ken Allen with a left wing cross and Turpie ran in to score with a diving header. Matthams deserved his part in the goal that saved a precious point. He troubled Bath throughout the game, but all of his work had been wasted

before the two goal burst. Bath went to pieces after Turpie's goal and Nuneaton went desperately close to snatching a winner. Gary Fleet was only inches away from winning an aerial challenge with the goalkeeper and Ian Goodwin forced Allen into a full-length save only seconds from the end.

Before the thrilling finale, Bath had held all the aces. They took a deserved lead in the 21st minute through newcomer Roger Gibbens and increased it with a John Fairbrother goal six minutes into the second half. Powerful Gibbens, on loan from Spurs, caused Borough a load of problems and scored with a goal-line header after Dick Edwards had beaten Knight with a pin-point chip. Fairbrother netted after Edwards had rapped a shot against the woodwork.

Wimbledon's Friday night defeat at Kettering leaves them with the task of accumulating 12 points from their games in hand to overtake Borough. And that could be too much for any side.

Nuneaton Borough v Tonbridge 15-02-1975

Borough: Knight, Stephens, Newton, Bruck, Goodwin, Baxter, Fleet, Briscoe, Holbrooke, Lewis, Matthams. **Sub:** Owen.

Tonbridge: Seymour, Evans, Prince, Kinsey, Keirs, Crush, Stonebridge, Flood, Putman, Hancocks, Walsh. **Sub:** Rodgers.

Borough welcomed Tonbridge to Manor Park for a Southern League Premier Division encounter.

Listless Nuneaton struggled to show their top of the table form. At times they looked more like relegation strugglers than Tonbridge, who stifled them in the midfield mud. The Kent club strung four men across the middle of the park and left two players up front. And Borough, who lacked imagination and flair, struggled to fight their way through.



Tonbridge goalkeeper Ian Seymour rises to take a high ball under pressure from Steve Briscoe in a second half attack.

Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune

Tonbridge relied on quick breaks – and got one to go ahead in the 26th minute through centre-forward George Putman. He flicked a Paul Stonebridge cross into the net, although a linesman had flagged for offside. Borough's strikers, lacking in service from midfield were rarely in a position to make an impression as Tonbridge defended solidly, sensibly and in depth. Tonbridge held their lead for half an hour – until Gary



Fleet struck a superb equaliser which saved a precious point.

Fleet fired a 20-yard shot into the roof of the net from a Briscoe cross and a Gary Holbrooke challenge. Still Nuneaton searched for co-ordination as Tonbridge continued to ambush their attacks in the mud. Borough had no-one to match tiny Dave Crush, a terrier of a player in midfield and the two Tonbridge strikers kept Borough's defence on its toes.

Ian Goodwin almost snatched a win when he headed against the woodwork eleven minutes from time and Fleet had a chance. But the three front runners did not have one opportunity between them – a fact that must have worried manager Coleman. The news that Wimbledon had lost at home to Kettering helped to ease Borough's disappointment at dropping a home point. But Yeovil beat Cambridge City to threaten the Manor Park side's proud place at the top of the table. Geoff Coleman's new year forecast that his side would win the title if they were still top by the end of this month still holds true.

But they will have to show a vast improvement on Saturday to combat the pressure that is building up against them. Tonbridge did what most clubs in their position will do between now and the end of the season. They came for a point that increased their chances of staying in the premier division and decreased Borough's hopes of winning it.

Bobby Vincent Operation

Bobby Vincent, who had hoped to leave hospital this weekend, has been told he must have another operation on his thigh. Doctors at Leicester Royal Infirmary, where the Nuneaton Borough centre-forward has been since his November car crash, broke the news last night.

"Apparently the bone has bowed and the operation is to straighten it," said Borough manager Geoff Coleman.

Guildford & Dorking v Nuneaton Borough 22-02-1975

Guildford: Spratley, Peters, Westburgh, Summerhill, Wright, Harris, Walker, Oates, Harman, Chapple, Moody. **Sub:** Hopkins.

Borough: Knight, Stephens, Newton, Bruck, Hayward, Baxter, Fleet, Owen, Briscoe, Lewis, Matthams. **Sub:** Turpie.

Borough made the journey to Guildford and Dorking to play a Southern League Premier Division game.

Guildford reached up from the foot of the Southern League to threaten Borough's hopes of staying on top. And the defeat cast more doubt on the Manor Park side's ability to stay the pace in the final weeks of the season. For the title they have held in their grasp for so long is in danger of slipping away. Borough are still on top, but Kettering, Yeovil and Wimbledon are set to hack away at the soft underbelly of their slender lead. No-one who saw their performance in Surrey would put money on their chances of staying there.

Their confidence has been eroded in the past two months and they need a remarkable improvement against

Wimbledon and Yeovil in the next two games. Before the game Guildford were in joint bottom place with Romford and are struggling to survive. But this was not a shock result achieved by a side making a desperate final effort to stay up. Far from it. Guildford are so poor they would struggle in the West Midlands League.

There is a big question mark over the Borough's ability to hold their lead at the top. Bob Turpie struggles to get in; Gary Holbrooke and Steve Briscoe are young, brave, but inexperienced – and Joey Owen was pulled off with a quarter of an hour to go. Neil Matthams, as an out and out winger, can only be effective when he has the ball wide and there are enough people in the box to make use of his crosses.

Matthams nearly saved the game with two good efforts when he moved into the box himself in the closing minutes. But before then Borough had managed only a handful of shots at goal and only three throughout the first half. Guildford's goal was in keeping with the rest of the game – scrappy and confusing. With so little power up front a heavy responsibility again fell on the Nuneaton back four. They mastered a poor Guildford front line until they conceded a goal in a tragic mix-up in the 75th minute.

Full back Kirk Stephens under pressure from behind, touched the ball towards his own goal. Goalkeeper Bob Knight had already committed himself, and was caught in no man's land and the ball went past him. Only Bill Baxter was alert enough to have spotted the danger and he chased back in a bid to avert a goal. But Guildford striker Peter Harman got there first to force the ball over the line.

Borough Injury Jinx Strikes Again

Nuneaton Borough's injury jinx struck again last night when Bob Turpie had an operation to save the sight of his right eye. He was injured in an accident at work and had an emergency operation at the Paybody Eye Hospital in Coventry.

Doctors removed a piece of metal from the eye and he is expected to be in hospital for a week.

Wimbledon v Nuneaton Borough

01-03-1975

Wimbledon: Guy, Stockley, Bryant, Donaldson, Edwards, Bassett, Cooke, Aitken, Connell, Somers, Mahon. **Sub:** Lucas.

Borough: Knight, Stephens, Newton, Bruck, Hayward, Baxter, Fleet, Owen, Briscoe, Lewis, Matthams. **Sub:** Holbrooke.

Borough made the journey to Plough Lane to take on Wimbledon in a Southern League Premier Division match.

Borough's proud reign at the top of the Southern League came to an end on Saturday. Leaders since last September, they lost to a 49th minute Kieron Somers goal. And their hopes of winning the title are fading fast. They went down fighting to the FA Cup giantkillers in front of a near 4,000 crowd. But their pluck could not disguise the flaws in the side – particularly up front. Again the defence did a fine job – but

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again the forwards failed. Steve Briscoe put one shot wide in the first-half and Gary Fleet shot over after a break from midfield. Those were the only chances they set up throughout the whole game. No wonder manager Geoff Coleman locked the dressing room door at the end of the game.

When the players emerged, their faces told the story – their confidence has gone. And Coleman now faces the biggest test since he took over at Manor Park. Without the arrogance of Bobby Vincent and the impish skills of Bob Turpie, Borough are just a pale shadow of the side that promise so much. Sadly, both strikers are now in hospital and centre-half Ian Goodwin is out with suspected cartilage trouble.

The front line is badly struggling without the Vincent and Turpie partnership that carried them to the top of the Southern League table. Wimbledon, a well drilled side, would not have held a candle to that Nuneaton team. They thump long balls up to their bearded front runners, Roger Connell and Somers, and bludgeon teams to defeat. Their skill comes from Ian Cooke and Mick Mahon who move up to feed off the front runners.

Borough's defence dealt with the threat of Somers and Connell, but they were stifled in midfield and the Wimbledon back four had it easy. But Nuneaton fought hard enough to have deserved a point – until they were hit by a sucker goal. Mahon pulled the ball back from the line, Connell sold the Borough defence a dummy at the near post and Somers ran in to score. It was a classic from the Londoners' point of view, but the Nuneaton defence was caught on the hop.

A feeling of defeat crept over the Manor Park side as they made a desperate attempt to hit back. But they were unimaginative and lacked the power and skill to beat goalkeeper Dickie Guy. Borough made a last ditch attempt to save the game, spurred on by skipper Dave Lewis in the closing minutes. But they could not force a way through and the defeat has given them a lot to do if they are to stay in the championship race.

First Team Turn Out For Reserves

Geoff Coleman's attempt to inject fresh confidence into his ailing side almost backfired at Manor Park last night, as the first team squad played a reserve team fixture against Chasetown. But they toiled for 75 minutes to find the net against the West Midlands League first division side. And when they scored it was through a speculative effort from 35 yards by full-back Bob Newton. Five minutes later Gary Holbrooke headed the second from a right wing cross with the Chasetown defence in disarray.

Turpie Set For Another Operation

Nuneaton Borough forward Bob Turpie is to have another operation on his damaged right eye. And the chances of him playing football again this season are slim. The second operation has been scheduled and he will probably stay in hospital for another fortnight.

Nuneaton Borough v Yeovil Town

08-03-1975

Borough: Knight, Stephens, Newton, Bruck, Hayward, Baxter, Fleet, Briscoe, Holbrooke, Lewis, Matthams. **Sub:** Jones.

Yeovil: Clark, Irwin, B. Thompson, Sandercock, Cotton, Harrison, Housley, McMahon, Plumb, K. Thompson, Clancy. **Sub:** Cottie.

Borough welcomed Yeovil Town to Manor Park to play a Southern League Premier Division game.

Borough clambered back on top of the Southern League table on Saturday on the strength of two Steve Briscoe goals. And the message from a vastly improved performance is clear – they intend to stay in the title hunt until the last kick. Yeovil, who usurped first place in the table last week, just could not match Nuneaton's determination. Borough knew they dared not lose after the confidence sapping run of four games without a win.

And they responded to the challenge with the effort and grit that makes champions. No-one did more than skipper Dave Lewis, Borough's Captain Courageous in midfield. He drove himself and his side to a state of near exhaustion in a game that more than made up for some of the grim struggles Manor Park has witnessed this season.



Gary Fleet, who showed his attacking skills on Saturday, causes trouble for the Yeovil defence in the first half. Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune

The first goal came after 17 minutes and had more than an element of luck about it. Briscoe half lost the ball as he forced his way past Tony Clark and then only half hit it towards the net. Defender Mike Harrison should have stopped it on the line, but was off balance and miskicked. The second, 17 minutes from the end, was a stunner from brave Briscoe, who carries a heavy burden on his young shoulders. He collected a through pass from Gary Fleet, stranded centre-half Terry Cotton, and cracked the ball past Clark as the keeper left his line.

In between the goals, Lewis hit the bar with a thundering drive and Yeovil went close with two headers. Those were the only real chances the Somerset side set up against a superb Nuneaton defence. Bill Baxter and his battling back four again proved they have few equals on the Southern League scene. But the biggest feature of the game was the effort Nuneaton put into everything they did.

Borough were tight at the back, strong and creative in midfield and showed an improvement up front where their

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main problems lie. Gary Fleet returned to something like his real form in the middle of the park and caused problems when he moved forward in the second half.

The big question is can Borough keep it up? Will they be able to put as much into all of their remaining games as they gave on Saturday? They showed beyond doubt that they have the courage, character and grim determination to carry them through the final weeks.

Margate v Nuneaton Borough 11-03-1975

Borough: Knight, Stephens, Baxter, Hayward, Newton, Lewis, Bruck, Matthams, Briscoe, Holbrooke, Fleet. Sub: Jones.

Borough travelled to Hartsdown Park to play Margate in a Southern League Premier Division match.

Carl Gilbert, Margate's record transfer buy, left another stain on Borough's championship hopes. Robust Gilbert, a battering ram of a centre-forward, demolished their hopes when he forced a 30th minute goal. And it added to the two he scored at Nuneaton when Margate wrecked Borough's home record a few weeks ago and upset their top of the table plans. Gilbert, who cost Margate £4,000 from Rotherham, contested a long right wing cross with goalkeeper Bob Knight. And Knight tried to punch clear, but they collided in a heap and the ball went off Gilbert into the net.

The challenge looked illegal, but the goal won the match and left Nuneaton uncomfortably at the top of the table. They are just one point clear, but all of their rivals have games in hand. Last night's performance was a disappointment after the effort they displayed in the 2-0 win against Yeovil. They could have won the match in the first 25 minutes when Margate lacked fight. Yet they had faded badly well before the end.

Borough opened in an aggressive mood and took the Kent club by surprise. They were much the better side and should have been in front after a quarter of an hour. Steve Briscoe beat Bruce Walker and pulled the ball back into the middle where goalkeeper Steve Bowtell could only palm it out. It needed a touch from Gary Fleet – but he tried to break the net and blasted it over the top. That was one of the handful of chances that Nuneaton created and they were fortunate to escape less than two minutes later.

Paul Haywood made a hash of a casual back pass to Knight and let in Brian Gregory, who fired across the face of the goal. Nuneaton, with Fleet again pushed forward and Neil Matthams in midfield were then hit by Gilbert's goal. It was followed by a point blank save by Knight from Gregory and Borough began to lose their composure. A determined bid for the equaliser just before half-time faded out and the game took on a different aspect in the second half.

Margate became the aggressors, although Briscoe did scoop one shot wide from a good position. Nuneaton began to wilt, much the same way as their opponents had in the first half hour, and offered less and less of a threat.

Nuneaton Borough v Dartford 15-03-1975

Borough: Knight, Stephens, Newton, Bruck, Hayward, Baxter, Fleet, Briscoe, Holbrooke, Lewis, Matthams. Sub: Jones.

Dartford: Keen, Read, Shovelar, Carr, Sampson, Robinson, Light, Marshall, Payne, Henderson, Halliday. Sub: Burns.

Borough welcomed Dartford to Manor Park to play a Southern League Premier Division game.

Flame haired Gary Holbrooke brought a touch of colour to a grey afternoon. He guided a glancing header into the Dartford net to give Borough a precious win. The importance of the goal was magnified by the news that Yeovil and Kettering had both lost. So Nuneaton, who seldom looked like a top of the table side, moved three points clear in the championship hunt.

And the chase for the title has now become a crazy race as the season moves towards its close. Borough have clung on to top place through every kind of problem imaginable – but their form has failed to convince their once faithful fans. On the day their title hopes increased, their gate dropped by nearly 1,000 on the previous Saturday.

Dartford, in relegation trouble, travelled for a point and sat back while Borough struggled to put their game together. But the Kent club looked far better organised than the Manor Park side. At times, it was difficult to see which side was striving to win the premier division and which was struggling to stay in it.

Nuneaton struggled where they have been sound – in the middle of their back four and the defence had some shaky times. But they survived their mistakes, overcame their frustration and continued to plug away. Gary Fleet, their busiest and best player, had a header touched onto the bar in the first half. Fleet, pushed forward into an attacking role, was urgent and inventive, but lacked support.

Danny Light, Dartford's best player, missed a chance after Holbrooke had scored his goal. And top scorer Tommy Henderson should have made better use of a glorious through ball from Alan Payne that exposed the Borough defence. By that time, though, Dartford had been forced to come out and attack in an attempt to save the game.

Desperation rather than pride fired their play and they could not pull back the goal. Borough now have seven games to go before the season comes to a close. The championship could be decided on the last kick – or the next mistake.

Peal: Support Is Diabolical

Nuneaton Borough are three points clear at the top of the Southern League – and losing £200 a week. Only 1,500 fans turned up for Saturday's game against Dartford, the second lowest crowd of the season. And with only three home games left, they are sure to show a heavy loss on the year.

“We lost £200 last week and we shall lose another £200 this week,” said club chairman Ken Peal. “It's diabolical. How can we justify going for Football League status on crowds of 1,500.”

National League Talks Fail

Attempts to call a special Southern League meeting to discuss the setting up of a National League have failed. And there is now no hope of the competition being launched before the 1976-77 season. But the battle is far from over.

For Nuneaton Borough intend to force another debate on the issue at the Southern League annual meeting in June. Borough have been one of the main clubs behind the plan and secretary John Evans has played a major part in negotiations. But the campaign fell slightly short of the two-thirds majority backing it needed from the clubs to call an extraordinary general meeting.

Most of the top clubs had already pledged their support to a nationwide "Super League" for the semi-professional sides. It met with overwhelming support in the north of England where the Northern Premier League clubs voted 20-4 in favour. The four clubs against did not oppose it – they just wanted it held up for another year.

Bobby Mackay Recalled From Enderby

Bobby Mackay is to be recalled from Enderby Town to bolster Nuneaton Borough's final championship push. Manor Park manager Geoff Coleman took the decision last night – after reviewing the injury situation.

Romford v Nuneaton Borough

22-03-1975

Romford: Lightfoot, Parmenter, Tapping, Bickles, Robinson, Woodward, Sanders, Chandler, Davies, Burge, Perry. **Sub:** Button.

Borough: Knight, Stephens, Newton, Bruck, Hayward, Baxter, Fleet, Briscoe, Holbrooke, Lewis, Matthams. **Sub:** Jones.

Borough made the journey to Brooklands to play Romford in a Southern League Premier Division match.

When Nuneaton arrived at Romford the ground was a sea of mud with pools of water in places. It looked more like a rice field than a soccer pitch – and churned into a treacherous quagmire. But Borough manager Geoff Coleman refused to blame the conditions for the defeat that rocked the club's championship chances.

The Essex side are second from bottom and in desperate trouble, but they looked the best of the relegation threatened sides Nuneaton have played in recent weeks. Romford play at Manor Park in the second of the Easter matches, and the two points they collected on Saturday have given them fresh hope and will make it even more difficult for Borough.

Romford won because they tailored their style to combat the mud. They used the wings to escape the midfield bog while Nuneaton tried to drive a wedge down the middle. Borough tried to plough furrows through the middle of the park – disastrous tactics – and had few chances. Romford on the other hand, forced Nuneaton's defence into errors and went into the lead with a Paul Davies goal in the 27th minute.

Davies, brother of Manchester United forward Ron Davies,

scored with a header after Terry Parmenter had lifted a free-kick into the Nuneaton goalmouth.

Both goalkeepers covered themselves with credit in the second half with some brave saves. But Romford made the running and it came as no surprise when they settled the game 13 minutes from time. Robin Chandler set up the chance down the left wing. He played the ball inside and the Borough defenders slithered in the mud as Tony Burge ran on to score.

Bob Knight saved Nuneaton from a heavier defeat with point blank range saves in quick succession, from Ferry and Burge, in the closing minutes. So Romford, who wrecked Borough's championship hopes eight years ago, could have done it again. And the Easter games takes on even greater significance as Nuneaton bid to keep their now slender hopes alive.

Borough Sign Hawkins

Nuneaton Borough have snapped up Telford United midfielder Dennis Hawkins to strengthen their championship push. Hawkins, a Welsh Under-23 international, was sold by Leeds to Shrewsbury for £12,000, and joined Telford at the start of last season.

He played 97 times for the Shropshire side and will make his Borough debut against Romford at Manor Park on Saturday.



Manager Geoff Coleman and skipper Dave Lewis welcome new signing Dennis Hawkins (centre) to Manor Park. Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune

Nuneaton Borough v Romford

29-03-1975

Borough: Knight, Stephens, Bruck, Lewis, Goodwin, Baxter, Mackay, Fleet, Briscoe, Hawkins, Matthams. **Sub:** Holbrooke.

Romford: Lightfoot, Parmenter, Tapping, Mann, Peck, Mickles, Pitson, Chandler, Davis, Burge, Ferry. **Sub:** Woodward.

Borough welcomed Romford to Manor Park for a Southern League Premier Division game.

Ian Goodwin passed a mid-day fitness test and returned to the Borough side, Dennis Hawkins made his debut in midfield and Bobby Mackay was recalled from Enderby. But full-back Bob Newton, troubled by a leg injury, failed to recover in time and Dietmar Bruck was at number three.

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New signing Dennis Hawkins scored a goal and hit the post in an impressive debut, But his performance was overshadowed by a result that dealt a damaging blow to Borough's top of the table pride. For they struggled to compete with Romford who have mounted a last desperate effort to avoid relegation.

Romford raced into a two goal lead inside 17 minutes – both of them from centre-forward Paul Davies. The first was set up by Tony Burge after just five minutes and the second followed a forceful run by Robin Chandler, who was half tackled by Kirk Stephens.

But both cast doubts against a Borough defence that was once the strongest in the Southern League Premier Division. Even Hawkins' goal, set up by a glorious pass from Gary Fleet in the 32nd minute, failed to inspire Borough. And when Tony Burge scored Romford's third goal eleven minutes into the second half after a slip by goalkeeper Bob Knight, the confidence drained out of the side.

Nuneaton Borough v Atherstone Town 31-03-1975

Borough: Knight, Stephens, Baxter, Goodwin, Bruck, Hawkins, Lewis, Mackay, Fleet, Holbrooke, Matthams. **Sub:** Haywood.

Atherstone: Peyton, Russell, Preston, G. Smith, Beard, R. Smith, Kurila, Kiernan, Webster, Franklin, Mellor. **Sub:** Kavanagh.

Borough welcomed Atherstone Town to Manor Park to play a Southern League Premier Division game.

Borough yesterday picked up the shattered fragments of a fading Southern League championship dream when they swept aside a feeble challenge from disappointing Atherstone Town in an Easter derby that failed to live up to expectations. The game ceased to be a contest after new signing Dennis Hawkins had shot Nuneaton in front with a superb 20th minute goal. Gary Fleet wrapped up the points with a gift goal 17 minutes into the second half.

Manager Geoff Coleman still thinks Borough can take the title, but only a supreme optimist can ignore the challenge of hot favourites Wimbledon who should win the league at a canter. But on the evidence of yesterday's display Nuneaton can at least stay in the hunt until the last kick.

Borough dominated the game as Adders crumbled after a bright start. Malcolm Beard was the only Adders' defender to show coolness and composure and the visitors were poor up front. Borough on the other hand turned in a revitalised performance – they looked a different side from the one beaten by Romford.

The architect of the win was winger Neil Matthams, who had a hand in both goals – and rattled the bar with a power packed drive in the 65th minute. He turned in his best performance since his debut and was always a thorn in the Adders' side. Dietmar Bruck did well at left back, the position where he played most of his First Division football, and Gary Fleet shone up front. Bill Baxter supplied the class with another peerless display in the middle of the back four.



Gary Fleet rises unchallenged to head Borough's second goal in the 62nd minute to kill off any hopes Adders had of a comeback.

Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune

Adders, without injured Ernie Hunt, had no-one to match Baxter and they fell away badly after Hawkins had scored. Matthams headed an Ian Goodwin pass across the box and Hawkins smashed a shot past goalkeeper Gerry Peyton that seared into the net. Peyton, bound for the First Division with Burnley, saved the Adders four minutes later when he saved a shot from Fleet with his legs after Baxter had shown superb control. Ten minutes from half-time Beard kicked another Fleet shot off the line after Matthams had played a major part in the move.

Fleet then scored the goal he deserved in the 62nd minute when Matthams bewildered Beard and chipped the ball to the near post. Fleet, the smallest player on the field rose unchallenged for a free header – and Adders' chance of saving the game had gone. After that the match deteriorated rapidly. Atherstone had nothing to offer and Borough were able to sit back on their lead.

Adders failed to create one single clear cut chance in the whole of the second half and Borough keeper Bob Knight had one of his quietest games of the season. But Nuneaton's improvement may have come too late – the damage has surely, already been done.

Kettering Town v Nuneaton Borough 01-04-1975

Borough: Knight, Stephens, Baxter, Goodwin, Bruck, Hawkins, Lewis, Mackay, Holbrooke, Fleet, Briscoe. **Sub:** Oakes.

Borough made the journey to Rockingham Road to play Kettering Town in a Southern League Premier Division game.

Top of the table Borough walked tall. They matched Kettering stride for stride in an often fiercely contested game in front of a 3,578 crowd. And they underlined manager Geoff Coleman's



proud boast that they will cling on to their championship hopes until the bitter end. Tight in defence, competitive in midfield and unselfish up front, they cramped the Poppies' style to take a richly deserved point. Yet the irony of it all is that the result made Wimbledon even stronger favourites for the title.

Nuneaton weathered early pressure from the home side and Kettering winger Alan Pawley caused them some problems in the opening stages. He forced Bob Knight into two fine saves and Mick Goodall also offered a powerful threat with some strong runs from midfield. But Nuneaton pulled themselves together. Skipper Dave Lewis gradually mastered Goodall and Bill Baxter and Ian Goodwin pulled the back four together.

Roy Clayton missed a gaping chance set up by Pawley after 25 minutes before Nuneaton slowly balanced up the play. By half-time the game had reached stalemate and frustration began to creep into the play. Goodwin was booked for a foul on Clayton and Knight did well to stop a shot from the Kettering centre-forward with his legs. Lewis and Goodall, who had their own private competition in midfield, were then lectured at some length by the referee after another clash.

Borough almost snatched a goal when Gary Holbrooke hit a rising left foot shot just wide of the angle nine minutes from time. And then superb covering by Kirk Stephens, who had a magnificent second-half, prevented a Kettering goal when Pawley almost dribbled his way through. So the game ended all square and Nuneaton, who have led the table since last September are still there.

They have shown in their last two games that they are worthy of a place among the top clubs and that, in itself, is an achievement for a side that has spent a lot of time in the other half of the Premier Division in recent years. Whatever else happens this season Borough have earned a reputation as a difficult team to beat. They are worthy to be in at the end of what should be a scramble to see who can finish second to Wimbledon. For second place is surely the best that Borough, Yeovil and Kettering can now hope for as the Dons move remorselessly towards that number one spot that Borough have held for so long.

Telford United v Nuneaton Borough 05-04-1975

Telford: Weir, Harris, Croft, Mallander, Ross, Ray, Fudge, Tynpack, Bentley, Chambers, Head. **Sub:** Garbott.

Borough: Knight, Stephens, Bruck, Lewis, Goodwin, Baxter, Mackay, Fleet, Holbrooke, Hawkins, Matthams. **Sub:** Briscoe.

Borough made the journey to the Buck's Head to play Telford United in a Southern League Premier Division game.

Gary Holbrooke's match-winning goal at Telford broke one Borough record and equalled another. It gave them their 22nd win – the most in a season since they joined the Southern League. And it took their points tally to 51, which equalled the club record for a premier division season, set in 1966-67.

But the most significant statistic to emerge from Saturday's matches was that Wimbledon lost and are now eight points behind with nine games in hand. Wimbledon have to go up to Grantham tonight and are at Burton on Thursday. Borough's return to form has sadly come too later to capture the imagination of the fans. Instead of cashing in, they will now have to finish their programme and then sit back and wait for the championship to be decided away from Manor Park.

Yet they are determined to make Wimbledon win the title the hard way. Holbrooke's 30th minute goal at Telford made sure of that and it put severe pressure on the other challengers for the top. The young striker, who improves with every game, scored at the near post from a right wing cross. And the goal crowned a stubborn, workmanlike performance from Nuneaton in a scrappy game. The sides created only a handful of chances between them in what was often a negative midfield tussle.

Keeper Bob Knight snuffed out the only two efforts that could have brought Telford a goal. He saved from Mickey Fudge midway through the first half – and rescued his side with a spectacular save in the dying minutes. Full back Alan Harris hit a volley from outside the box and Knight pushed it around the post as it headed for the top corner. The goal apart, Nuneaton's two best chances fell to Matthams and Lewis.

Matthams needed too much time after Dennis Hawkins had carved out a clear cut chance and Lewis blasted a shot across the face of the net. The defences coped with the rest of the attacks without too much discomfort and Ian Goodwin turned in another powerful display.

Joey Owen May Be On The Move

Joey Owen, who cost Nuneaton Borough a club record transfer fee 16 months ago, may be on the move from Manor Park. Telford, the club who sold Owen to Nuneaton for £3,000 have already been given permission to open talks.

Billy Baxter Moving Back To Scotland

Billy Baxter has told Nuneaton Borough that he intends to leave the club at the end of the season. The ex-Ipswich Town defender, who has made a massive contribution to Borough's success, intends to return to his native Scotland.

Baxter, a self-employed painter and decorator, has struggled to find work in the Midlands since he gave up full-time football. The news comes as a blow to Borough's hopes for next season. For Baxter is one of the finest defenders to play for the Manor Park club – perhaps the best.

Players Released

Joey Owen has been give a free transfer by Nuneaton Borough. Also released are Tom Starkey, currently on loan at Coventry Sporting, and defender Alan Jones, the club's longest serving player. Two others, Dietmar Bruck and Bob Newton are both on the borderline and Coleman has postponed the decision to release them until the end of the season.

Wealdstone v Nuneaton Borough 12-04-1975

Wealdstone: Morton, Kinnear, Watson, McCormack, Byrne, Fulton, Godfrey, Henderson, Moss, Duck, Eglite. **Sub:** Dyson.

Borough: Knight, Stephens, Bruck, Lewis, Goodwin, Baxter, Mackay, Fleet, Holbrooke, Hawkins, Matthams. **Sub:** Briscoe.

Borough made the journey to the Lower Mead Stadium to play Wealdstone in a Southern League Premier Division game.

Borough played like champions for nearly an hour. They attacked the home side with the skill, style and panache of a top of the table team. But they missed chances, almost threw the game away – and their title hopes now hang on an even more slender thread. By half-time they should have been three goals ahead and free from the problems they faced late in the game. Unfortunately most of the chances fell to one player – Gary Holbrooke – and he fluffed them all.

Wealdstone then almost stole a winner when George Duck glanced a header wide five minutes from the end. Under different circumstances, a point from Wealdstone – fifth in the table – would have been a fine performance. Nuneaton, however, needed both to keep the pressure on their rivals. Now, with just one game to go, they can win the title – or finish in fourth place. Not only that, they have to sit back helplessly and hope that others slip up.

Borough had Wealdstone in a daze as Dennis Hawkins, Dave Lewis and Bobby Mackay took absolute control in the middle of the park. But the misses slowly sapped the confidence of the side and Wealdstone were able to get back into the game. The match could have gone either way in the closing minutes as both goals had narrow escapes.

Duck, the home side's most impressive player, was only inches away with his headed chance. And then Kirk Stephens almost snatched it with a fiercely hit shot from a narrow angle three minutes from time. Stephens, who should be playing League football, ran on to a pass from Dave Lewis and goalkeeper John Morton managed to push the shot across the face of the net.

In the last seconds of the game, Ian Goodwin powered forward and shot from the edge of the box as he was tackled. But Borough could not get the goal they needed – and deserved and they face an anxious fortnight.

Stephens Watched By League Clubs

Kirk Stephens, Nuneaton Borough's brilliant young full-back, is attracting more attention from League clubs. Luton and Tottenham have both had him watched in recent games and Spurs had a scout at Wealdstone on Saturday.

Stephens, who is just 20, has recaptured the form that made him a target for top clubs when he first broke into the Borough side.

Luton are due to play Borough at the end of the season in a game requested by former Borough manager David Pleat.

Borough Push For National League

Nuneaton Borough are to make one final effort to form a National League for non league clubs. They have put forward a proposition to the Southern League annual meeting in June that the competition be launched without delay. "This is the crunch," said Borough secretary John Evans.

Nuneaton Borough v Dover 19-04-1975

Borough: Knight, Stephens, Bruck, Lewis, Goodwin, Baxter, Mackay, Fleet, Holbrooke, Hawkins, Matthams. **Sub:** Briscoe.

Dover: Gadsby, Reynolds, Thornley, Fursdon, Hamshere, Yorath, Wallace, Lloyd, Cooper, Glozier, Simpson. **Sub:** O'Brien.

Borough welcomed Dover to Manor Park to play a Southern League Premier Division match.

Borough rounded off a record breaking season on a high note. They have won more games, picked up more points than ever before in the Premier Division, and finished at the top of the table. But an air of anti-climax hung over the ground after their 3-1 defeat of Dover. The champagne stayed uncorked, the celebrations were subdued and crowds of anxious fans stayed behind to hear the Wimbledon result. Their faces said it all – they have to sit back in helpless resignation while Wimbledon complete their fixtures.



The picture tells it all – delighted Dave Lewis receives the acclaim of the fans after making it 2-0 seven minutes into the second half.

Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune

This season will be remembered more for the set-backs the club suffered in their rise to the top. But Nuneaton Borough, who have rarely been above average in the past, are now a force to be reckoned with in the Southern League. That, in itself is an achievement of which they can be proud.

Borough beat Dover, a strong, physical side, easily enough after showing obvious signs of tension early on. They had a let off when Dover full-back Barrie Thornley rattled the underside of the bar from a free-kick. But Neil Matthams eased their tensions when he steered them into the lead with his left foot, five minutes before half-time. Matthams, who had another good game, scored after goalkeeper Mike Gadsby had reached a Dennis Hawkins cross with his fingertips.

Borough skipper Dave Lewis figured in the build-up and scored the second, seven minutes after the break. He

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hammered a shot past Gadsby after Bobby Mackay had set up the chance. Lewis almost scored a second two minutes later before he made it 3-0 twenty minutes from time.



Dover goalkeeper Mike Gadsby gropes in vain as Lewis rifles home his second – and Borough's third goal. Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune

Dover then reduced the deficit with a scrambled goal from Bob Glozier three minutes after that. But the game had already been won and the fans interest switched to the results at Yeovil and Margate. Afterwards they were left to reflect on what might have been.

If only Bobby Vincent had not been injured in a car crash on the Narborough Road in November. If only the club had picked up a few more points in one spell that saw them win just three out of 13 games. If only Bob Turpie had not damaged his eye at work and Ian Goodwin had not missed so many vital games – and so it goes on.

Nuneaton Borough v Luton Town 24-04-1975

Borough: Knight (Pomroy), Stephens, Baxter, Goodwin, Bruck, Owen, Lewis, Mackay, Fleet, Holbrooke (Lomonaco), Matthams.

Borough welcomed Luton Town to Manor Park to play a friendly match.

Gary Fleet hit a superb goal to sink Luton. He drilled the ball into the roof of the net from a chance set up by Joey Owen and Gary Holbrooke. That separated the two teams and gave Nuneaton a narrow win – but they should have romped home. They were five goals better than a Luton side sprinkled with big money buys. Even the news that Wimbledon were 3-1 up at Barnet failed to dampen their spirits. They cut Luton down to size and only bad finishing let them off the hook.

Goalkeeper Bob Knight had to make only one save in the first half when he pushed a shot from Stewart Russell around the post. His deputy, youngster Steve Pomroy had even less to do after the break.

Even players like Rodney Fern, Bobby Thompson, Brian Chambers, a £30,000 buy from Arsenal, and Eddie Spring, who cost £60,000 from Liverpool, failed to make an impression. Gary Fleet, Joey Owen and Kirk Stephens all had good games for Nuneaton. And Gary Holbrooke turned in his best performance for the club before he was replaced by teenager Francesco Lomonaco for the last half-hour.

Nuneaton Borough v Cambridge United 29-04-1975

Borough welcomed Cambridge United to Manor Park for an end-of-season friendly match.

Borough did the Southern League proud – and then sent a telegram of congratulations to Wimbledon. For minutes after the end of the match they learned that the Dons had pipped them to the championship. The inevitable happened. The Londoners picked up the two points they needed and Nuneaton had to settle for second place.

News from Wimbledon added interest to a dour, physical friendly that never reached any great heights. But Borough did add more weight to the argument that there is little or nothing to choose between Southern League soccer and the Fourth Division of the Football League. With better finishing, they would have beaten Cambridge, the most improved side in the Fourth Division.

Neil Matthams shaved the post with a left foot shot early in the second half and Gary Fleet was foiled by a superb save from Graham Howell 20 minutes from the end. United's best effort was a header from Tommy Horsfall that Bob Knight pushed over the top in the first-half.

Nuneaton Borough v Charlton Athletic 06-05-1975

Borough welcomed Charlton Athletic to Manor Park to play Dietmar Bruck's testimonial match.

Dietmar Bruck crowned his testimonial game with a 53rd minute goal against Charlton at Manor Park. He put Borough in front with a well taken penalty after Gary Holbrooke had been pushed off the ball. But Charlton, who fielded their promotion winning side, saved the game on the brink of full-time. Winger Mick Flanagan forced the ball over the line from a corner with just a few seconds to go. Nuneaton again did well against Football League opposition.

They played with skill and confidence, but again missed chances. They were the better side for long spells, and should have had the game won before Flanagan equalised.

Charlton goalkeeper Graham Tuft made a number of fine saves while Bob Knight was rarely tested. Knight was beaten in the 25th minute by a shot from Arthur Horsfield, but Bruck was on hand to clear the ball off the line.



Nuneaton Borough players celebrate their runners-up spot in the Southern League after being presented with the trophy before their game with Charlton.
Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune



Cambridge United manager Ron Atkinson presents the Player of the Year award to Billy Baxter.
Photo: The John Moore Collection

Hayward Released

Defender Paul Hayward has been released by Nuneaton Borough after only three and a half months at Manor Park. Hayward, an amateur, joined Borough from Stourbridge in January to provide cover in the back four. He made half-a-dozen Southern League appearances when centre-half Ian Goodwin was injured and was substitute four times.

Bruck For Weymouth

Dietmar Bruck is all set to leave Nuneaton Borough and take over as player-manager of Weymouth. He has been offered a two year contract by the Dorset club and meets their board for further talks next week. The 31-year-old, who is a fully qualified FA coach, has already been linked with two jobs on the managerial side. Cheltenham Town wanted him last year and he was on the short list at Wigan before he joined Borough.

Nuneaton Borough v East Stirlingshire 23-05-1975

Borough welcomed East Stirling to Manor Park to play an end-of-season friendly game.

Borough were well beaten, losing 3-0 to their Scottish League Division 2 visitors.



A picture Borough fans have waited six months to see – Bobby Vincent's return to Manor Park. The injured centre-forward walked on to the pitch before the East Stirling game for the first time since his car crash. But there was one gesture the fans didn't see. For Vincent discarded his crutches in the players' tunnel and walked unaided for the first time since last November. His come back is a long way off, but he is already showing the courage that took him past Southern League defences. And that cannot be bad for the club that missed him so much on the field.

Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune

Southern League Premier Division 1974-75

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Wimbledon	42	25	7	10	63	33	57
Nuneaton Borough	42	23	8	11	56	37	54
Yeovil Town	42	21	9	12	64	34	51
Kettering Town	42	20	10	12	73	41	50
Burton Albion	42	18	13	11	54	48	49
Bath City	42	20	8	14	63	50	48
Margate	42	17	12	13	64	64	46
Wealdstone	42	17	11	14	62	61	45
Telford United	42	16	13	13	55	56	45
Chelmsford City	42	16	12	14	62	51	44
Grantham	42	16	11	15	70	62	43
Dover	42	15	13	14	43	53	43
Maidstone United	42	15	12	15	52	50	42
Atherstone Town	42	14	14	14	48	53	42
Weymouth	42	13	13	16	66	58	39
Stourbridge	42	13	12	17	56	70	38
Cambridge City	42	11	14	17	51	56	36
Tonbridge AFC	42	11	12	19	44	66	34
Romford	42	10	13	19	46	62	33
Dartford	42	9	13	20	52	70	31
Barnet	42	10	9	23	44	76	29
Guildford & Dorking Utd	42	10	5	27	45	82	25

Borough Call For Yes Vote

Nuneaton Borough have called for a massive “yes” vote from Southern League clubs to the setting up of a National League. “It is what is wanted to show the Football League that we are in favour of their plan to set up a Fifth Division,” said Borough secretary John Evans before the meeting.

“Already the Northern Premier League has voted for a national league for non-league clubs and the Southern League should do the same.”

The Football League say the new section – to be called the Football Alliance – will have automatic promotion and relegation links with the league.

“It is the best news for non-league soccer for more than 50 years,” said Mr Evans. Borough have been among the leading campaigners for a Fifth Division – even when others believed any such scheme was doomed.

“Just 12 months ago today at the Southern League’s annual meeting things seemed dead. But we, along with Gateshead, kept campaigning and it looks as if this has tipped the balance in our favour.”

An outline of plans for the Alliance was given by League secretary Alan Hardaker at yesterday’s annual meeting in London. He said that detailed talks would begin now and the Alliance – to be formed from teams in the Southern League and Northern Premier League – could begin in season 1976-77.

It could mean too that the four bottom clubs in Division Four next season could well find themselves founder members of the new Alliance instead of applying for re-election.

“Details of how many Southern and Northern clubs will be in the Alliance and how many will be promoted have not yet been worked out,” said Mr Hardaker.

“But it is possible some League clubs could be in it from the start. Probable strength of the Alliance will be 18 or 20 clubs.”

Facilities at the non-league clubs will be taken into account. “We would expect to be one of the Southern League sides in the Alliance,” said Borough’s Mr Evans.

“It is ironic, though, that a number of clubs who have sat on the fence and sneered at us, will also benefit,” he added.

Mr Evans hopes that the Alliance will be extended to a pyramid system. “That will be even better for non-league soccer.”



Nuneaton Borough 1974-75

Back: Malcolm Allen (coach), Ian Goodwin, Dennis Oakes, Bobby McKay, Bobby Vincent, Billy Baxter, Bob Knight, Bob Newton, Steve Briscoe, Geoff Coleman (manager), Stan Marshall (trainer).

Front: Alan Jones, Bob Turpie, Tom Starkey, Gary Fleet, Dave Lewis, Kirk Stephens, Joey Owen, Dietmar Bruck.

Banbury United – 1st Qualifying Round

Borough welcomed Southern League Division One North Banbury United to Manor Park to play a 1st Qualifying Round FA Cup tie.

Borough: Knight, Stephens, Newton, Bruck, Goodwin, Baxter, Starkey, Owen, Vincent, Lewis, Turpie. Sub: Oakes.

Banbury: Rennie, Casey, Mouldsdale, Matthews, Welch, Svenson, Jim Flannagan, Cassidy, Jacques, Pollard, Jarvis. Sub: John Flannagan.

It was all too easy for the Borough against a no-punch Banbury United.

Bill Baxter set the home side on the victory trail with a 16th-minute goal, Bob Vincent added a second in the 51st minute from a twice taken penalty and Dave Lewis completed the scoring with a goal nine minutes from time.

Bruck won two challenges on the half-way line before Borough won a free-kick when Vincent was held by Matthews. But Newton's kick, headed on by Owen, ran out of play.

Banbury's first real attack, set up by Jarvis, ended when Jacques, hampered by a Goodwin tackle, hit tamely at the keeper. An Owen cross from the right sparked the first real danger.

Turpie headed down to Vincent, who got caught up with his own feet – and

Banbury cleared. Owen pushed a short pass to Vincent, but he was forced out to the touchline and eventually won a corner. Turpie's kick was only half cleared and Owen hit a shot over.

Banbury centre-half Welch put his own keeper under pressure from a Bruck centre. His back-header went for a corner – from which Borough took a 16th minute lead.

Owen's kick was headed towards goal by Vincent and Bill Baxter stabbed it home on the line. The goal brightened a previously scrappy opening by both sides. Borough, in firm control, should have increased their lead in the 32nd minute when Vincent completely mis-kicked in front of goal.

Bruck sent the ball goalward again and Vincent got a foot to it, only for Rennie to save. Lewis was given a stern warning by referee Kenny for retaliating after a Welch late tackle.

Turpie worked himself through Banbury's defence on a determined run – only to slip 30 yards out with just the keeper to beat.

Borough won a free-kick in the opening minute of the second half when Vincent was fouled by Matthews. Two quick comers for Borough came to nothing before Vincent put the home side further in front from the penalty spot in the 51st minute.

Lewis crossed from the right, keeper Rennie mistimed his jump, and as the ball ran clear to Turpie he was adjudged to have been fouled by full back Matthews. Vincent's first spot kick was saved by the keeper. But Mouldsdale entered the area before the kick – and Vincent made no mistake when he re-took the penalty. Two minutes later, Rennie brought off a fine save when he pushed a Goodwin goal-bound header from a Turpie corner kick over the bar.

Borough keeper Bob Knight, not tested during the game with any real shots from the opposing forward line, calmly took a Cassidy cross without a challenge.

Turpie threatened with a cross – before Joey Owen was substituted in the 67th minute by Dennis Oakes.

Dave Lewis added a third nine minutes from time when he was left unmarked after centre-half Welch completely missed a Turpie cross from the left.

Alvechurch – 2nd Qualifying Round

Borough travelled to Lye Meadow to play Alvechurch in a 2nd Qualifying Round FA Cup tie.

Alvechurch: Green, Bayliss, Bryan, Jewkes, Francis, Inchmore, Lyne, Phelps, Deehan, Horne, Travis. Sub: Brass.

Borough: Knight, Stephens, Newton, Bruck, Goodwin, Baxter, Owen, Turpie, Vincent, Lewis, Briscoe. Sub: Mackay.

Borough ploughed their way through the clinging Lye Meadow mud and into the third qualifying round of the FA Cup. But they had to overcome a first-half of apprehension and uncertainty – and 13 minutes of torment. Alvechurch, though not the side they were, should have been in front at the break after a first-half of missed chances.

The home side went into the lead with a shock goal from teenager Malcolm Phelps before the second half was a minute old. But a tragic own goal from Alvechurch defensive midfielder player Bill Francis after 59 minutes changed



Bobby Vincent (hidden) fires home Borough's second goal from the penalty spot at the second attempt. His first effort was saved by keeper Rennie, but a Banbury player had entered the box before the kick and so the penalty had to be retaken.

Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune

the face of the game – and Nuneaton romped home. Wyn Bowen, coach to the Worcestershire side, who had gone 29 matches without defeat, afterwards paid tribute to both sides.

“It was a good Cup tie,” he said. “I thought we had the better of the first half, but Nuneaton were better after half time. I knew we had to stop Vincent and Turpie and we did that until the second half when we lost them.” Borough made a tense start, skilful, but anxious and not as tight at the back as they have been.

But the conditions made it difficult for the players to stop and turn on a muddy morass. Both defences were fortunate to survive the first 45 minutes – it could easily have been 3-3 at the break, although Alvechurch had the better chances.

The second half opened in sensational style when Phelps rose at the far post to head a Kevin Deehan cross past Bob Knight. Bob Turpie had a goal ruled out with Bobby Vincent offside and Vincent missed a glorious chance with a diving header. Borough struggled to put their game together, but Dave Lewis, a magnificent skipper, drove his side on.

And he played a major part in the equaliser that put the Manor Park side back into the tie. Steve Briscoe ran the ball at the home side’s defence, it was half cleared to Vincent who pushed it forward to Lewis on the overlap. The Nuneaton captain’s cross hit Francis at the far post and the Alvechurch number five – under pressure from Joey Owen – put the ball past his own keeper.

That was the signal for Borough to burst into life and Briscoe and Bob Newton began to expose Alvechurch’s defensive weakness down the left flank. Brave Briscoe got his reward 13 minutes from time when he followed up to score after a power packed shot from Owen had rebounded off the underside of the bar.

Five minutes from the end Newton crowned a fine display with a superb

run and a perfect cross for Vincent to side-foot the ball home. Both sides had penalty appeals turned down – and the referee overruled a linesman after an Ian Goodwin challenge on Phelps when Alvechurch were a goal up.

In the end, though, Nuneaton won well and the Worcestershire side’s teenage goalkeeper, Ronnie Green grabbed himself a slice of glory with some fine saves. Borough packed too much power, skill and determination for their West Midland League opponents.

Their trump cards were the inspiration of Dave Lewis, the bravery of Steve Briscoe – and the hard work, application and thoughtfulness of Bob Newton in his best game of the season.

Atherstone Town — 3rd Qualifying Round

Borough made the journey to Sheepy Road to play Atherstone in a 3rd Qualifying Round FA Cup tie.

Atherstone: Withers, Kavanagh, Russell, Kurila, Preston, Kiernan, R. Smith, Dyer, Franklin, Webster, Mellor. Sub: G. Smith.

Borough: Knight, Stephens, Newton, Bruck, Goodwin, Baxter, Mackay, Turpie, Vincent, Lewis, Briscoe.

Gil Merrick and Geoff Coleman summed up the tense FA Cup tie that split North Warwickshire. “A good game,” said pleased Adders’ manager Merrick.

“Disappointing,” remarked Borough team boss Coleman, struggling to raise a smile. And that was it – a deadlock of opinion after 90 minutes of stalemate on the pitch.

Borough had the edge before half-time when they took the lead, only to see it wiped out by a soft goal. And Adders had the better of the tie after the break when they put the Borough defence under fierce pressure. But it was a typical local derby Cup tie, staged against an ugly backcloth of crowd trouble.

Both sides emerged with dignity and self-respect, while a minority of fans, Nuneaton supporters, laid a memorial to commonsense.

Two players were booked – Bobby Vincent and Steve Briscoe – in a game that was always intense, often scrappy – but always exciting. Bobby Vincent shot Nuneaton into the lead after 26 minutes with a well taken goal. A shot from Bob Newton cannoned off Ian Goodwin and Vincent latched on to the ball to plant it into the angle from the edge of the box.

Vincent ran half the length of the field in triumph, but Borough’s success was short lived. Two minutes from half-time, Adders drew level with a give-away goal.

Bobby Mellor hit a tame shot from 25 yards. Bob Knight had it covered as he dived full length – until it caught his



Borough fans acclaim Vincent’s goal at the Gipsy Lane end of Sheepy Road – only to be silenced a few minutes later by Mellor’s equaliser.

Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune



Borough goalkeeper Bob Knight gropes at the foot of the post after being beaten by a soft shot from Bobby Mellor for Adders' 43rd minute equaliser.

Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune

trio of Barry Franklin, Ray Webster and Mellor also fell short on cohesion and penetration.

So it ended in stalemate and the sides meet again with everything at stake. The odds must have swung heavily in Nuneaton's favour – but Adders showed they can raise their game.

Atherstone Town — 3rd Qualifying Round Replay

Borough welcomed Atherstone Town to Manor Park for a 3rd Qualifying Round FA Cup Replay.

Borough: Knight, Stephens, Baxter, Goodwin, Newton, Lewis, Mackay, Bruck, Vincent, Turpie, Briscoe. Sub: Owen..

Atherstone: Withers, Kavanagh, Preston, Kurila, Russell, R. Smith, Kiernan, Dyer, Franklin, Webster, Mellor. Sub: G. Smith.

Goal-a-game Bobby Vincent lifted a mistake ridden FA Cup replay with a magical goal in the dying minutes. And Borough swept into the final qualifying round in front of a 5,000-plus crowd. Vincent's goal against the club he left last October sealed a tie that was often scrappy and mediocre.

With seven minutes left, he ran on to a Dietmar Bruck pass, beat Adders' defenders Micky Russell and John Kurila and scored from 16 yards out. Borough had been given the lead an hour earlier by Bill Baxter – but had struggled as Adders hit back.

Again, it was a typical cup tie which fell away after a bright start and threatened to engulf itself in free-kicks, errors and

fingertips, hit the foot of the post and went in. Both sets of forwards struggled for openings against defences that gave little away.

Mick Preston and John Kurila did a fine job for Adders in the heart of their back four and Ian Goodwin and Bill Baxter did the same for Borough. And Borough full-back Kirk Stephens, the youngest player on the pitch, emerged as man of the match.

Right back Stephens turned in a magnificent performance although he had a few problems with Mellor late in the game. Mellor looked a potential match winner in the closing stages and one header from Stephens kept Nuneaton's hopes alive.

Hard working Gerry Kavanagh hit a cross to the far post. Mellor and Ray Webster both went for it – but Stephens managed to head it out for a corner. Adders cancelled out Nuneaton in midfield where they were expected to struggle.

Merrick took a gamble and left out Steve Quinney in favour of John Dyer – and it worked. Joe Kiernan, Roger Smith and Dyer cancelled out Dave Lewis, Bobby Mackay and Dietmar Bruck and neither side was able to dominate. It was up front where both sides struggled. Steve Briscoe, Bob Turpie and Vincent were all below par in a Nuneaton front line that lacked width and mobility. Adders front running



Bobby Vincent's moment of triumph as he scores the goal that secures Borough's place in the final qualifying round of the FA Cup.

Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune

sub-standard soccer. Tension obviously played a major part as two anxious, almost neurotic sides battled with everything at stake.

Borough opened with a purple patch and stretched the Atherstone defence to panic stations. Vincent shaved the post from a Briscoe pass after just six minutes. And Briscoe hit the woodwork with a fierce cross shot after he had stranded Gerry Kavanagh.

That was before Baxter shot Nuneaton into the lead in the 21st minute with the Adders defence in a tangle following a Newton free-kick. It was a goal that Borough deserved and they almost scored again when Newton drove a shot across the box that only needed a touch.

But the Manor Park side's early fire died away and the soccer began to deteriorate to a level from which it never really recovered. And then Adders, just as they did on Saturday, picked themselves up and searched for an equaliser.

Dave Lewis hooked the ball out of defence as Adders built up pressure and needle crept into the game. Colin Withers made a fine save from Briscoe in the dying minutes before the interval and Adders should have equalised on the stroke of half-time. Top scorer Barry Franklin ran in unmarked at the far post to meet a Kavanagh free-kick - only to fluff the chance.

Nuneaton opened the second half with another bright patch. Withers saved from Briscoe and then Kurila was booked. He kicked Vincent, who took some harsh treatment from the Adders' defence but, sensibly, refused to retaliate.

Good goalkeeping by Withers denied Turpie a goal after the Borough forward had been put clear by an inch perfect Vincent pass that cut out Preston and Kurila. And Kavanagh cleared a Mackay header off the line before Franklin had another glorious chance to put Atherstone back in the game.

Knight half punched a Kavanagh free-kick which landed at Newton's feet. The full-back dithered, Franklin ran in – and screwed a shot wide from in front of the net. Again the game fell away and the sides went through another patch in which they struggled to put two passes together.

Atherstone got on top midway through the second half but failed to create any clear cut chances. But Vincent's goal settled it to send the fans home in a happy mood. Nuneaton deserved their place in the next round – if only for the way they turned it on in the first 25 minutes.

And the size of the crowd, one of the biggest for a Cup qualifying round in the history of the competition, rolled back the years. Manor Park, a graveyard just 12 months ago, has regained its rightful place as one of the top arenas in non league soccer – and the Royal Blue bandwagon rolls on.

Grantham — 4th Qualifying Round

Borough welcomed Grantham to Manor Park to play a 4th Qualifying Round FA Cup tie.

Borough: Knight, Stephens, Newton, Bruck, Baxter, Goodwin, Owen, Turpie, Vincent, Lewis, Briscoe. Sub: Oakes.

Grantham: Gardiner, Bloomer, Crawford, Thompson, Harrison, Chambers, Clapham, Taylor, Nixon, Norris, Horobin. Sub: Dixon.

Five players were booked and two sent off in an explosive final qualifying round cup tie at Manor Park today.

Borough striker Bobby Vincent and Grantham defender Ron Harrison were both given their marching orders following sensational scenes in the closing minutes.

Borough were a ahead after 10 minutes and Grantham equalised with a tragic own goal from Bob Newton 11 minutes from time. The sendings off were sparked off after Bill Baxter had headed what appeared to be Nuneaton's second goal – six minutes from time.

Borough skipper Dave Lewis passed a fitness check and the side was unchanged. Grantham manager Terry Bly sprang a surprise when he left out winger Dennis Benskin in preference to Graham Clapham, a defensive midfielder player.

Knight was in action when he pushed a header from Harrison over the bar as Grantham swept forward from the start.

A swift Grantham attack spelled danger for Nuneaton. Horobin, Norris and Thompson had all figured in the move before Crawford, who had moved up unmarked, lobbed the ball behind.

But Borough went into the lead after just 10 minutes with a goal from Vincent. Grantham failed to cut out a Bruck free-kick, Vincent hooked the ball goalwards and Gardiner stretched full length in an attempt to save. He managed to get a hand to it – but it crept over the line.



Bobby Vincent salutes the goal that put Borough in front against Grantham, Joe Owen moves in to offer his congratulations.

Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune

A Norris cross flew across the face of the Nuneaton goal and Gardiner then gathered a centre from Stephens. Knight, more confident in the air, took a centre from Norris before Borough put together their best attack.

Turpie found Stephens, he put Vincent away and Gardiner left his line to take the forward's cross as Briscoe closed in.

Chambers sparked off a Grantham attack with a superb run from midfield and Horobin flashed a shot across the Borough goal. Borough replied with a raid sparked off by an inch perfect first



Billy Baxter dances away in delight as goalkeeper Gardiner sprawls to the turf holding his side. Vincent is half hidden by defender Ron Harrison.
Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune

time pass from Stephens to Lewis. It ended when Briscoe tried to squeeze in a shot as he was tackled.

Seconds from half-time Gardiner pushed a shot from Briscoe around the post after a scramble, just inside the visitors' penalty area.

Borough piled on the pressure at the start of the second-half when Grantham failed to clear a Newton free-kick.

Nuneaton began to win the battle in the middle of the park and get on top.

Newton played a ball forward to Bruck, who pulled it across the face of the goal with no-one there to cash in. And then Briscoe flung himself at a Vincent cross in front of the net which should have been taken out by Gardiner.

Three minutes later, Briscoe hit the foot of the post with a left foot shot after Turpie and Vincent had set up a chance. Free kicks became common place and Taylor was booked for a tackle on Newton which cartwheeled the Borough full back. Chambers was then sent crashing by a tackle from Bruck.

Lewis was then booked for feet up on Norris as the ill temper threatened to spill over. But the players calmed down and Grantham forced Borough to defend for a spell without being able to create a clear cut chance.

Briscoe should have scored when he rose to a Turpie centre with 15 minutes to go. And Gardiner made a magnificent save from a superb piece of work by Stephens a few minutes later.

Stephens switched the ball inside to

his left foot and unleashed a shot, which Gardiner palmed around the post. The excitement built up as the tie moved towards its closing stages – and Grantham equalised with 11 minutes left. Thompson ran in on a left wing cross and his shot was blocked by Knight, but the ball rebounded off the goalkeeper's legs, hit Newton and rebounded into the net.

A minute later Turpie was only inches away with a spectacular diving header that skimmed the crossbar. Vincent was booked for something he said and Turpie sprawled on the edge of the box after another wild tackle.

The game then exploded with some of the most sensational scenes at Manor Park in years. Newton swung a centre into the middle and Baxter beat the goalkeeper with a header from the far post.

The Borough players went wild with

delight – before the referee was surrounded by a mass of players.

He appeared to give the goal and then Vincent suddenly emerged from the ruck and walked towards the dressing rooms. Sent off for a foul on Gardiner.



Bobby Vincent receives his marching orders to add to the four bookings he had already collected since the start of the season.

Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune

The angry scenes continued and Grantham centre-half Harrison was sent off – and the referee awarded a free-kick. The game restarted and with two minutes to go Owen fired a shot wide.



The end of the game – and Borough skipper Dave Lewis and three policemen escort Mr Martin from the pitch through a gauntlet of angry fans.

Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune

Grantham — 4th Qualifying Round Replay

Borough made the journey to London Road to play a 4th Qualifying Round FA Cup Replay.

Borough: Knight, Stephens, Baxter, Goodwin, Newton, Lewis, Owen, Bruck, Vincent, Turpie, Starkey. Sub: Jones.

Borough swept into the First Round with a magnificent extra-time win in a replay cliff hanger. And transfer listed Bobby Vincent repaid a debt he owed his team-mates with two goals.

Arrogant, petulant – and brilliant Vincent, fined and put on the list after costing Borough a goal on Saturday, shot them ahead after 16 minutes. Then, seven minutes from the end of extra time he snatched a dramatic winner after Grantham had hit back from behind. But it was no one man show – it was a victory for a side that refused to believe they could lose.

Borough went to Grantham convinced they could win – and finished the job they started at Manor Park on Saturday. They went into a two goal lead, saw it wiped out – and then dragged up their last ounces of courage, effort and grim determination to defy the odds.

The game started with a booking for Joey Owen after a clash with Grantham centre-half Ron Harrison. That was a signal from Winslow referee Mr Brian Martin that he intended to cut out any sign of trouble from the start.

After a quiet 15 minutes Vincent struck with the goal that lifted Borough's confidence sky high. Kirk Stephens played a ball down the line, Grantham sweeper Gerry Taylor slipped and Vincent ran on, beat the goalkeeper and scored.

Grantham, dangerous on the break, hit back, but Borough were the better side. And centre-half Ian Goodwin began to emerge as the dominant figure in the middle of a superb back four. Goodwin held them together and inspired with his best display since he joined the club.

His massive presence, Bill Baxter's vast experience and the sheer efforts of full backs Kirk Stephens and Bob Newton, denied Grantham. Seven minutes from half time Borough struck with their second goal – scored direct from a corner by Joey Owen, his first goal of the season.

But Grantham pulled one back two minutes from the break when a cross shot from Dennis Benskin hit Owen's arm and took a deflection.

It was a bad goal to concede at a critical time and Grantham pegged Nuneaton in their half for the first ten minutes after the break. Borough weathered the pressure – only to concede a 62nd minute equaliser when Bob Knight failed to cut out a Brent Horobin cross and Benskin scored with a header.

That should have been the signal for Grantham with the most feared attack in the Southern League, to throw everything at the Nuneaton defence. Yet Borough shrugged them off, Dietmar Bruck blasted a shot wide – and Bob Turpie cracked a shot against the woodwork from an Owen free-kick. Nuneaton, mobile and imaginative when they attacked, survived a miss by Ernie Nixon and Bob Norris lifted a shot over the top.

Still Goodwin and Co reigned supreme – and skipper Dave Lewis drove, urged

and inspired his side to greater efforts. The minutes ticked away and Vincent missed the kind of opening he usually gobbles up with relish.

The referee eased the tension with the whistle for the end of 90 minutes. And Lewis then took the decision that held the key to extra-time. He won the toss – and decided to defend the slope for another 15 minutes. It worked – and sapped Grantham's strength, the same way as Muhammad Ali drained George Foreman in the boxing ring.

Bill Baxter went off injured six minutes into extra time to be replaced by Alan Jones and Grantham took off Nixon for Graham Clapham, a defender. Socks were rolled down to combat cramp as the darkening gloom began to creep over London Road.

Owen almost scored direct from another corner – before Vincent grabbed the decider. Goodwin played a free-kick into the heart of the Grantham defence, Taylor and Harrison missed it and Vincent took it on his chest and swept it through Gardiner's legs.

It was a fairy tale ending to three and a half hours of gruelling Cup soccer. Borough were through to the First Round for the third time in four years – and no-one on the ground could deny them their triumph.



Bob Turpie turns to acclaim the goal that put Borough on the victory trail – scored by Bobby Vincent after 16 minutes.

Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune



A section of happy Borough fans who went to Manor Park to cheer their side through to the Second Round of the FA Cup.

Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune

Maidstone United — 1st Round Proper

Borough welcomed Maidstone United to Manor Park for a 1st Round Proper FA Cup tie

Borough: Knight, Stephens, Baxter, Goodwin, Newton, Oakes, Lewis, Bruck, Owen, Turpie, Briscoe. Sub: Jones.

Robbie Stepney, effervescent manager of ambitious Maidstone United, bubbled with delight after his side had earned a Cup replay. Stepney the acrobat did cartwheels of joy along the touchline at the final whistle.

Manor Park manager Geoff Coleman knew his side had not played well. But he refused to use Bobby Vincent's car crash as an excuse.

Nuneaton were below par and hesitant – but teams only play as well as they are allowed to. Maidstone hustled them out of their stride from the start. They rushed Borough in midfield and caused

problems for a shaky and often terribly square defence.

And they had the boost of a goal after just six minutes, scored by former Borough forward Alan Morton. He latched on to a ball that had bobbed around the box waiting to be cleared and scored with a left foot shot.

Steve Briscoe forced Nuneaton's equaliser ten minutes from half-time after a similar scramble in the Maidstone goalmouth. Nuneaton improved after the break, but never enough to take a firm hand on another typical cup tie.

Five players were booked – Maidstone's Phil Basey, Dickie Plume and Colin Priestley, along with Borough's Joey Owen and Briscoe.

And Priestley was sent off for dissent amid the protests that followed Nuneaton's second goal 13 minutes from time. It was credited to Dave

Lewis, but was, in fact, scored by Steve Briscoe and Maidstone argued that he punched the ball out of the goalkeeper's arms.

That looked enough to put Borough into the second round – whether they deserved it or not.

Yet Maidstone were far from finished and found enough to hit back with a Jimmy McVeigh match-saver just five minutes from the final whistle.

The Kent club deserved their second chance and, after two replays already this season, Borough's resources are again set to be tested to the full.

Maidstone United — 1st Round Proper Replay

Borough made the journey to Maidstone United for a 1st Round Proper FA Cup Replay.

Borough: Knight, Stephens, Baxter, Jones, Newton, Oakes, Lewis, Bruck, Owen, Turpie, Briscoe. Sub: Starkey.

Borough's FA Cup flame, which had burned like a beacon through eight games and twelve and a half hours of football, was snuffed out last night. It flickered and died under the peppermint glow of the London Road floodlights.

There was no glorious epitaph for the Manor Park side this time – only bitter disappointment. For they never looked like raising their game against Maidstone, who are a long way from being a good side.

And their performance threw up nagging doubts about their ability to live up to the standards they have set since the start of the season. At no time did Borough look like the side that has transformed the face of football at Manor Park in a few short months.

Far from it. They were poor – and made to look second raters by Maidstone, who did not play as well as they did on Saturday. Again, too many players were mediocre, despite the motivation of instant acclaim, national recognition, and cold hard cash.

Nuneaton Borough 1970-1979 – Part 1



The prize was a Second Round trip to Third Division Swindon Town and the promise of a 15,000-plus gate. Borough never looked like making it from the word go – they were just not good enough when the crunch came.

Their hopes were destroyed in a fifteen minute spell in the second half when they gave away a goal, survived a penalty miss, and then conceded the “decider”.

Maidstone went ahead in the 65th minute with a goal from Phil Basey, the best forward on the park. Paul Everest hit a free-kick into the middle which should have been taken out of the air by Borough goalkeeper Bob Knight.

He fumbled it, the ball dropped loose to Basey and he coolly looked up and planted it into the net. Basey, a constant source of worry to the Nuneaton defence, had hit the woodwork with a goalbound shot a few minutes earlier.

Six minutes later Bill Baxter was adjudged to have handled a right wing cross and conceded a harsh penalty. But justice was done when Dickie Plume hit the spot kick too close to Knight and the goalkeeper pulled off a fine save.

Baxter did not deserve to give away a goal. For he, above all others, did not let the club down. He had a magnificent game alongside superb Alan Jones, drafted in at centre-half when Ian Goodwin cried off with flu.

The ex-Ipswich defender inspired a Nuneaton back four that almost kept the club in the match. But Baxter and Jones, flanked by Kirk Stephens and Bob Newton fought a losing battle against a tide of Maidstone attacks.

For Borough struggled badly in midfield and did not create one clear cut chance up front throughout the replay.

And it was no surprise when the Kent club hit their second and decisive goal in the 80th minute – and what a goal.

Borough failed to clear the ball which

drew players like a magnet in the penalty box. Steve Briscoe eventually tried to bang it clear, but it fell to Peter Tough, who cracked a stupendous volley into the net from 25 yards.

Tough, who did so much to keep Maidstone in the match at Nuneaton, will never score a better goal. That was the killer blow – or rather the coup de grace – for Borough, who never inspired any great confidence.

Skipper Dave Lewis ran himself ragged

in a bid to make up for the players who let the club down. He, the back four and Bob Knight, could not be blamed, despite the goalkeeper’s 65th minute error. Too much of their attacking play was stereotyped. It lacked skill, flair and invention.

And it screamed out for cup tied Gary Fleet and, inevitably, Bobby Vincent. One could not help feeling that the club’s hopes really died on the Narborough Road at twenty minutes past six a week last Saturday.



Maidstone goalkeeper Johnny Maggs plucks the ball out of the air under pressure from Bob Turpie – and another Nuneaton raid breaks down.

Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune

King's Lynn — 3rd Qualifying Round

Borough made the journey to The Walks to play King's Lynn in a 3rd Qualifying Round FA Trophy tie.

King's Lynn: Halstead, Spooner, Johnson, Stewart, Smith, Wright, Eastall, McCullum, Rudd, Lindsay, Reynolds. Sub: Gribble.

Borough: Knight, Stephens, Bruck, Starkey, Jones, Baxter, Goodwin, Owen, Turpie, Lewis, Briscoe. Sub: Gore.

Unhappy Borough crashed out of the Non League Cup at Kings Lynn to round off a disastrous week. Beaten only four days earlier at Maidstone in the FA Cup, they now face the biggest crisis since the new regime took over.

For they are now just a pale shadow of the team that has carried the club to the top of the Southern League. There were no hard luck stories from The Walks – Kings Lynn were by far the better team.

And only a series of fine saves from goalkeeper Bob Knight prevented a much heavier defeat. Knight was involved in the mix up that led to the Linnets' winning goal eleven minutes from time. He and Alan Jones left the ball for each other on the edge of the box and Dave Rudd ran on to notch the winner.

Knight accepted the blame, but had earlier kept the side in the game with his best performance of the season. Borough's problems were obvious from the start – without Bobby Vincent they have no punch up front.

But they had chances against cautious Lynn, who expected much stronger opposition. When they realised Borough were not the side they thought they were they grew in confidence and took control.

And in the second half Borough, two points behind the premier division leaders with two matches in hand, struggled to look like a Southern League first division side.

Their problems spread to midfield – and into the back four – and their frustration was summed up when Ian Goodwin was sent off in injury time.

Boston referee Mr T. S. Page had already played five minutes over when Goodwin was involved in an incident off the ball with Lynn skipper Mick Wright as Nuneaton were about to take a free-kick. Wright fell to the ground clutching his face, the referee consulted a linesman – and Goodwin was sent to the dressing rooms.

Goodwin had earlier scored the

equaliser that raised Borough's hopes of a replay. He beat goalkeeper Steve Halstead to a Bob Turpie corner in the 73rd minute to cancel out a goal scored by Malcolm Lindsay six minutes earlier.

It almost earned Nuneaton a reprieve – until Knight and Jones gifted the winner for Rudd. Goodwin played in the middle of the park with Alan Jones at centre-half, a move Geoff Coleman had been urged to make after Vincent's car crash.

Early on, it looked as if it might work. For Goodwin added strength in midfield, but Borough had too many other problems. They missed Bob Newton at left back and went from bad to worse as Lynn improved and grew in stature.

Manager Coleman, who has done so much to put Borough back on the map in the past twelve months now faces a mammoth task.

His first job is to restore confidence in the side and rediscover the sparkle that brought the club back from the wilderness.

The Non League Cup was the one competition that could have done that – now it is a thing of the past. And the future looks far from bright.





Nuneaton Borough 1974-75

First Team and Reserves

Rear: Paul Wilkinson, Gordon Ritchie, Bob Tedds, Percy Rooke, Keith Evans.

Standing: Vic Openshaw, David Tinney, Greg Downes, Alan Fogarty, Bob Mackay, John Gore, Bob Vincent, Bob Knight, Steve Briscoe, Bob Newton, Tom Starkey, Dennis Oakes, Geoff Coleman (manager), Peter Barratt, Ken Peal, Alf Scattergood.

Seated: Malcolm Allen, Martin Hall, Paul Whitehurst, Steve Pomroy, Dietmar Bruck, Bob Turpie, Dave Lewis, Billy Baxter, Kirk Stephens, Alan Jones, Robin Litman, Frankie Lomanaco, Dave Looms.

Seated Front: John Williams (reserves assistant manager), Steve Knowles, Paul Shute, John Abbott, Paul Greenaway, Craig Davies, Stan Marshall.

Southern League Premier Division: Fixtures, Results & Scorers- 1974-75

Nuneaton Scores First

Date	Opposition	Venue	Competition	Score	Scorers	Attendance
08.03	East Stirlingshire	A	PSF	3-0	Vincent (2), Turpie	
08.05	Albion Rovers	A	PSF	0-0		
08.08	Banbury United	A	PSF	0-0		
08.10	A.P.Leamington	A	JST	0-3		
08.17	Wimbledon	H	L	2-0	Vincent (2)	1576
08.19	Grantham Town	A	L	2-4	Lewis, Vincent	1208
08.22	Redditch United	A	BSC1	5-2	Briscoe (2), Vincent, Bruck, Starkey	
08.24	Maidstone United	A	L	1-0	Vincent	1126
08.26	Worcester City	H	SLC1-1L	2-0	Goodwin, Turpie	
08.31	Guildford & Dorking United	H	L	2-0	Turpie, Mackay	1513
09.02	Worcester City	A	SLC1-2L	0-0		948
09.07	Chelmsford City	A	L	2-1	Briscoe, Vincent	1851
09.09	Burton Albion	H	L	1-0	Turpie	2061
09.14	Banbury United	H	FAC1Q	3-0	Baxter, Vincent, Lewis	2013
09.18	Stourbridge	A	L	1-1	Briscoe	1078
09.21	Dover	A	L	1-0	Turpie	694
09.24	Barnet	A	L	2-1	Vincent, Turpie	694

Nuneaton Borough 1970-1979 – Part 1



Southern League Premier Division: Fixtures, Results & Scorers- 1974-75

Nuneaton Scores First

Date	Opposition	Venue	Competition	Score	Scorers	Attendance
09.28	Chelmsford City	H	L	2-1	Vincent (2)	2250
10.05	Alvechurch	A	FAC2Q	3-1	Francis (o.g.), Briscoe, Newton	855
10.12	Dartford	A	L	2-4	Vincent, Turpie	853
10.14	Grantham Town	H	L	2-0	Vincent, Briscoe	2250
10.19	Atherstone Town	A	FAC3Q	1-1	Vincent	3053
10.21	Atherstone Town	H	FAC3Qr	2-0	Baxter, Vincent	5018
10.22	Enderby Town	A	SLC2	1-1	Vincent	
10.26	Weymouth	A	L	0-2		1305
10.28	Cambridge City	H	L	0-0		2015
11.02	Grantham Town	H	FAC4Q	1-1	Vincent	3431
11.06	Grantham Town	A	FAC4Qr	3-2aet	Vincent (2), Owen	1537
11.09	Barnet	H	L	4-1	Fleet, Vincent, Owen (2)	1985
11.11	Bedworth United	H	BSC2	0-1		1136
11.14	Enderby Town	H	SLC2r	1-0	Gore	1070
11.16	Bath City	H	L	2-0	Turpie, Stephens	2482
11.23	Maidstone United	H	FAC1	2-2	Briscoe, Lewis	3778
11.26	Maidstone United	A	FAC1r	0-2		4104
11.30	Kings Lynn	A	FAT3Q	1-2	Goodwin	665
12.07	Stourbridge	H	L	2-0	Owen, Baxter (pen)	1893
12.14	Northwich Victoria	H	F	2-4	Bruck, Fleet	c300
12.17	Dartford	A	SLC3	2-2	Briscoe, Stephens	493
12.21	Weymouth	H	L	3-2	Turpie (2), Stephens	1560
12.26	Atherstone Town	A	L	0-1		2099
12.28	Maidstone United	H	L	3-1	Briscoe, Bruck (pen), Turpie	2010
01.01	Kettering Town	H	L	1-1	Loughlan (o.g.)	2310
01.04	Burton Albion	A	L	1-0	Briscoe	1866
01.06	Dartford	H	SLC3r	0-1		1372
01.11	Tonbridge	A	L	1-0	Briscoe	626
01.18	Telford United	H	L	2-1	Briscoe, Owen	2166
01.21	Cambridge City	A	L	0-0		802
01.25	Margate	H	L	2-3	Bruck (pen), Owen	1910
02.01	Yeovil Town	A	L	0-1		3077
02.03	Wealdstone	H	L	2-0	Holbrooke, Turpie	1767
02.08	Bath City	A	L	2-2	Holbrooke, Turpie	1847
02.15	Tonbridge	H	L	1-1	Fleet	1853
02.22	Guildford & Dorking United	A	L	0-1		c350
03.01	Wimbledon	A	L	0-1		3856
03.08	Yeovil Town	H	L	2-0	Briscoe (2)	2471
03.11	Margate	A	L	0-1		563
03.15	Dartford	H	L	1-0	Holbrooke	1536
03.22	Romford	A	L	0-2		881
03.29	Romford	H	L	1-3	Hawkins	1699
03.31	Atherstone Town	H	L	2-0	Hawkins, Fleet	2282
04.01	Kettering Town	A	L	0-0		3578
04.05	Telford United	A	L	1-0	Holbrooke	911
04.12	Wealdstone	A	L	0-0		1650
04.19	Dover	H	L	3-1	Matthams, Lewis (2)	2214
04.24	Luton Town	H	F	1-0	Fleet	1311
04.29	Cambridge United	H	F	0-0		
05.06	Charlton Athletic	H	T	1-1	Bruck (pen)	
05.23	East Stirlingshire	H	F	0-3		

KEY : L = Southern League Premier, FAC= F.A.Cup, FAT= F.A.Trophy, SLC= Southern League Cup, BSC= Birmingham Senior Cup, PSF= Pre season friendly, F= Friendly T = Testimonial, JST = Jack Scamp Trophy

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